



Domestic Abuse Policy – ‘Sharon’s Policy’

Introduction

This policy covers the internal and external support available to employees experiencing, or involved in, domestic abuse. Everyone has the right to live free from abuse in any form and the responsibility for abuse lies with the perpetrator. It is recognised that there is an increased awareness of the prevalence of domestic abuse in society and the Company understands that there may be colleagues who are experiencing domestic abuse, or who want to support friends, colleagues or family members who are going through it.

Aims of the policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- Support all employees experiencing domestic abuse and promote their health, safety and well-being at work;
- Enable employees experiencing domestic abuse to remain productive, efficient and at work;
- Aid Line Managers seeking to help staff who are experiencing domestic abuse; and
- Assist colleagues of staff who are experiencing domestic abuse.
- Support perpetrators who voluntarily wish to seek advice and support to address their behaviour.

It is the Company's intention to deal constructively, compassionately and sympathetically with cases of domestic abuse.

You can speak in confidence to your Line Manager, your HR contact, or First Responders¹ who can provide initial support, signpost you to resources and help you with any disclosure conversations you would like to have with colleagues and, if you have not done so already, with your HR contact. Your HR contact will work with you to formulate a response including:

- (a) Discussing and agreeing ways to help you stay safe in the workplace;
- (b) Directing you to the appropriate domestic abuse resources; and
- (c) Facilitating referrals.

Please refer to the paragraph below relating to confidentiality.

¹ Note to Company – please define who the appointed First Responders are within your organisation.



Line Managers have a role to play in enabling employees experiencing domestic abuse to seek help and support. The role of the Line Manager is to:

- Identify employees who may be experiencing difficulties as a result of domestic abuse, for example, employees coming to work with unexplained injuries or who appear distressed or have unexplained periods of time off work or show an uncharacteristic deterioration in work performance.
- Provide initial help and support, including advice on the options available for the employee and referrals to appropriate sources of professional help and support.
- Protect confidentiality as far as possible (see the paragraph on confidentiality below).
- Discuss measures to prioritise safety at work and ensure that the health and safety of all employees is protected.
- Enable the employee to remain productive, efficient and at work.

Confidentiality

Where an employee has discussions with their Line Manager, an alternative Line Manager, an HR contact or First Responder that they are experiencing domestic abuse, confidentiality will usually be maintained as far as possible. There are, however, some circumstances in which confidentiality cannot be assured. These circumstances occur when there are concerns about children or vulnerable adults, where high risk to safety has been identified, or where we need to act to protect the safety of members of the public, including other colleagues.

Where a perpetrator may be placing their partner or family member (s) in genuine danger this may be reported to the police. This will be subject to prior discussion with the employee wherever it is reasonably practicable to do so.

Personal data will be stored in accordance with the company's data protection policy.²

Safety at work

We acknowledge our duty to protect the health, safety and well-being of all employees at work, including those employees affected by domestic abuse. This includes situations where the perpetrator of the abuse is harassing the employee at work, for example, turning up at the workplace unannounced, constantly telephoning/e-mailing/texting the employee during the working day or harassing the employee's work colleagues.

² Note to Company – please include hyperlink to current data protection policy.



Employees need to disclose to the Company that they are at risk from domestic abuse in order to receive this protection and the Company therefore actively encourages employees to disclose such facts. Other employees should also disclose to the Company if they are being harassed by a work colleague's current or former partner or family member.

Perpetrators of domestic abuse

The Company will not tolerate or condone domestic abuse, regardless of the identity or seniority of the perpetrator. However, the Company recognises the need to offer appropriate support to employees who disclose that they themselves are perpetrators of domestic abuse but who genuinely want to change their behaviour. If the Company becomes aware that an employee is or may be perpetrating domestic abuse, it will take appropriate action. Any domestic abuse that endangers another employee or uses company equipment to inflict that abuse, such as mobile phones or laptops, may result in disciplinary action under the organisation's disciplinary policy up to and including dismissal for Gross Misconduct. In some cases it may be appropriate for the Company to provide support to an employee who is seeking to address their behaviour, for example by providing access to specialist support services and this will be decided on a case by case basis.

Reasonable adjustments

Where an employee needs time off in respect to accessing support, managing any legal issues or family requirements, the Company will provide a reasonable amount of [paid]³ time off up to a maximum of [10 days] per year. Employees who need time off should discuss this with their Line Manager and HR contact to agree how much leave is required, how and when it will be taken and whether leave will be paid or unpaid. Other examples of flexible working arrangements are outlined in the guidance notes that accompany this policy.

Guidance Notes

Please refer to the attached guidance notes for practical details on how to manage domestic abuse in the workplace.

ENDS

Hogan Lovells International LLP has reviewed and provided comments on this Domestic Abuse Policy in March 2021. It is for information only. It is not intended to create, and receipt of it does not constitute, a lawyer-client relationship with Hogan Lovells International LLP.

³ This is for the Company to decide. There is no statutory obligation to provide paid leave in circumstances of domestic abuse, but it is best practice for the Company to do so.

This policy may be used free of charge. Selling without prior written consent is prohibited. In all cases this policy should be implemented alongside the attached guidance notes.