

Domestic Abuse Procedure

Safeguarding

Version Control Sheet

Document Title	Domestic Abuse Procedure
Author	
Owner	
Doc version/status	Initial Draft
Date issued	19/11/19

Version History

Version	Date	Summary of changes
V1	19 th November 2019	Initial draft
V1.1	9 th June 2020	Final draft

Change Control

Any requested changes to this document should be emailed to:

Contents

1. Purpose and Aim	3
2. Summary	3
3. Process	6
4. What information to record	7
5. Contact Details	7
6. Confidentiality	7
7. Appendix	8

1. Purpose and Aim

This policy has been developed to provide information and detail practice requirements regarding the management of Service Users who are accommodated with Serco who have been or are a victim of domestic abuse. The purpose of this advice is to:

- Provide a clear process to follow when a Service User is or has been a victim of domestic abuse;
- Outline the reporting requirements;
- Reduce the level of uncertainty and stress for staff in managing service users who is or has been a victim of domestic abuse.

2. Summary

Definition of **domestic abuse**:

There is no specific legal definition of domestic abuse, also referred to as domestic violence. The UK Government definition is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality and anyone can be an abuser. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Other forms of abuse

The Government definition includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage (different processes exist for these with AASC), and is clear that victims of any form of domestic abuse are not confined to one gender or ethnic group. Asylum seeking women and LGBTQI+ individuals may be particularly vulnerable to domestic abuse if they are in a situation of destitution. They may find themselves in exploitative, coercive relationships in return for food and shelter.

All relationships are different. There isn't such a thing as a 'normal' relationship, but there are healthy relationships and unhealthy relationships. If you recognise any of the negative signs below, take action.

Physical Signs of Abuse

If someone is being physically abused, they will likely have frequent bruises or physical injuries consistent with being punched, choked, or knocked down—and they'll likely have a weak or inconsistent explanation for these injuries. Some signs of physical abuse include:

- Black eyes
- Busted lips
- Red or purple marks on the neck
- Sprained wrists
- Bruises on the arms

It's also common for someone to try to cover up the physical signs with clothing. For example, you may notice that someone you care about is wearing long sleeves or scarves in the hot summer. Wearing heavier than normal makeup or donning sunglasses inside are also common signs of domestic abuse.

Emotional/Psychological Signs of Abuse

- Sense of helplessness, hopelessness, or despair.
- Can cause people to believe that they will never escape the control of the abuser.
- A constant state of alertness to the point they never can completely relax.
- Low self-esteem
- Extremely apologetic or meek
- Seeming fearful
- Changes in sleep habits (sleeping too much or not enough)
- Agitation, anxiety, or constant apprehension
- Developing a drug or alcohol problem
- Symptoms of depression
- Loss of interest in daily activities
- Talking about or attempting suicide

These symptoms, of course, could be due to many other conditions or factors, but they are typical of domestic abuse victims who feel they are trapped in an abusive relationship.

Behavioural Changes

If you notice that someone who was once outgoing and cheerful has gradually become quiet and withdrawn, it could be a sign of domestic abuse.

You may notice that the person:

- Is reserved and distant
- Drops out of activities they would usually enjoy
- Cancels appointments or meetings with you at the last minute
- Is often late to work or other appointments
- Exhibits excessive privacy concerning their personal life or the person with whom they're in a relationship
- Begins isolating themselves by cutting off contacts with friends and family members

Control

Domestic abuse is not about violence, it's all about control. If you notice that someone seems to be controlled or extremely manipulated in all areas of their life, it could be a sign they are being abused at some level. Here are some examples of control:

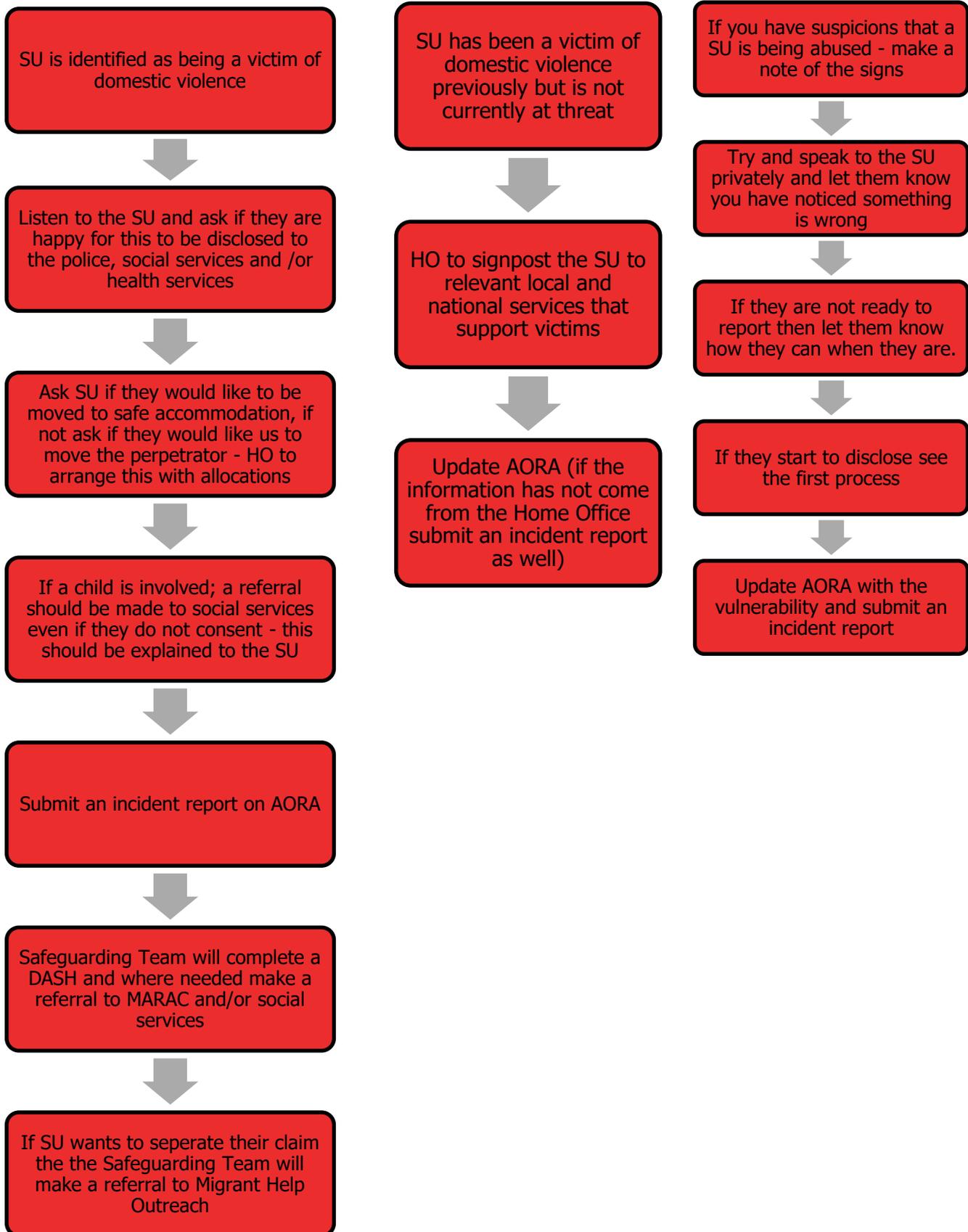
- Asking permission to go anywhere or to meet and socialize with other people
- Referring to their partner as "jealous" or "possessive," or always accusing them of having affairs

-
- Their partner constantly calls or texts them wanting to know where they are, what they are doing, and who they are with. The partner may even follow the victim to check up on them.
 - Having very little money available to them or having to account for every penny spent

Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Loss of sleep
- Unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour
- Bruising
- Soreness around the genitals
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear
- A preoccupation with anything sexual
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy
- Rape
- Indecent Assault

3. Process



If someone is concerned about a SU's welfare they should tell the Safeguarding Manager, Housing Officer and Field Operations Manager. For further guidance around Safeguarding please see the Safeguarding Policy.

There is also further guidance from the Home Office: [Domestic abuse: responding to reports of domestic abuse from asylum seekers](#).

4. What information to record

We need to record:

- Name
- NASS/Port Ref
- Address
- The details that are disclosed to you or the signs that you identify
- Who identified the domestic abuse
- Details of referrals already made
- Details of any contacts for other stakeholders involved.

5. Contact Details

The following people must always be made aware:

- Housing Officer of the property
- Field Operations Manager
- Safeguarding Team –
- Home Office -
- Home Office Safeguarding Hub
 - NW
 - MEE –

In the appendix you will find national and regional agencies that you can sign post or refer Service Users to.

The Safeguarding Team will be responsible for making the referrals during normal working hours, support from the Housing Officer may be needed. If anything, urgent is needed out of hours the on-call Housing Officer should complete.

6. Confidentiality

Information should only be shared with people who need to know. This includes the above contacts and any relevant external stakeholders i.e. social services. If there is a request for information regarding a case that they have not previously been in contact about or we have not referred to them you must advise that they contact Refer to

7. Appendix

National

Police: 101/999

English National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Galop (for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people): 0800 999 5428

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327

The National Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Live Fear Free: 0808 80 10 800

The Mankind Initiative: 01823 334244

Respect Phonenumber: 0808 802 4040

Victim Support: 0808 16 89 111

Local Authority	Contact
Birmingham	
Blackburn with Darwen	
Bolton	
Bury	
Cheshire East	
Cheshire West	
Coventry	
Derby	
Dudley	
Halton	
Knowsley	
Lancashire County Council	
Leicester	
Liverpool	
Manchester	
Norfolk	
Nottingham	
Oldham	
Peterborough	
Rochdale	
Salford	
Sandwell	
Sefton	
St Helens	
Stockport	
Stoke	
Suffolk	
Tameside	
Trafford	
Walsall	
Warrington	
West Brom	
Wigan	

Wirral	
Wolverhampton	