



Domestic Abuse Policy

This policy applies to all Channel 4 employees and does not form part of an employee's contract of employment. We may amend it at any time.



Domestic Abuse Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out 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 Channel 4 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. The workplace may often be an employee's only safe space.

Scope

This policy applies to all Channel 4 employees and does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. We may amend it at any time.

Why is this policy important?

It is Channel 4's intention to deal constructively, compassionately and sympathetically with cases of domestic abuse. Channel 4 will support all those who endure and/or witness domestic abuse. If you are concerned about your own personal situation or that of a colleague, you are encouraged to seek support.

You can speak in confidence to your Line Manager, or your People Partner 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 People Partner. Your People Partner and/or Line Manager will work with you to formulate a response including:

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

The aims of this policy are to:

- Support all employees experiencing domestic abuse and promote their health, safety and well-being at work;
- Recognise that an employee's ability to work may be impacted both directly by the perpetrator of domestic abuse, but also indirectly due to the physical and mental impacts of domestic abuse;
- Enable employees experiencing domestic abuse to remain productive, efficient and at work;
- Aid Line Managers seeking to help staff who are experiencing domestic abuse;
- Assist colleagues of staff who are experiencing domestic abuse; and
- Support perpetrators who voluntarily wish to seek advice and support to address their behaviour.



DEFINITIONS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone at any time in their lives. Domestic abuse happens to people regardless of their gender, age, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, or socio-economic status.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 ("The 2021 Act") has introduced a statutory definition of Domestic Abuse [1] in England and Wales: (See the Domestic Abuse Guidance document for more information about the types of domestic abuse and their impact). [2]

"Behaviour of a person ('A') towards another person ('B') is "domestic abuse" if -

(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and

(b) the behaviour is abusive."

'Personally connected' is defined as intimate partners, ex-partners, family members or individuals who share parental responsibility for a child (person under the age of 18). There is no requirement for the person impacted by domestic abuse and the perpetrator to live in the same household. Behaviour is 'abusive' if it consists of any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse,
- violent or threatening behaviour,
- controlling or coercive behaviour,
- economic, and/or
- psychological, emotional or other abuse (including gaslighting [3]).

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct. See the Domestic Abuse Guidance document for more information about the types of domestic abuse and their impact.

Whilst domestic abuse can happen to anyone, research shows that women are disproportionately impacted by domestic abuse with two women a week being killed because of domestic abuse in the UK. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (2022) estimated that 2.4 million adults experience domestic abuse per year (1.7 million women, 699,000 men)[4] and at Channel 4 we support all who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse. Due to underreporting of domestic abuse, this figure is likely to be higher.

Please see the Domestic Abuse Guidance for more information about differences in the definition of domestic abuse in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

[1] Domestic Abuse Act 2021

[2] Domestic Abuse: statutory guidance (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[3] Relate explain gaslighting as '...a form of psychological and emotional abuse that causes victims to question their reality, judgement and sense of self. At its worst, victims of gaslighting can doubt their own sanity.'

[4] Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview - Office for National Statistics



What are the details of the policy?

Confidentiality

Where an employee has discussions with their Line Manager, an alternative Line Manager, or People Partner and disclose 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 a 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.

Improper disclosure of information i.e., breaches of confidentiality by any member of staff will be taken seriously and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Personal data will be stored in accordance with Channel 4's Data Protection policy.

I'm a Manager at Channel 4, what do I need to know?

What steps can I take to support any of my direct reports experiencing domestic abuse?

- 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
- 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.

If a direct report discloses that they are at risk of domestic abuse, who should I inform?

Disclosures cannot be forced so whilst we strongly recommend that an employee informs their People Partner, they cannot be forced to do so. Let your direct report know that you will support them and use the steps above for guidance.

My direct report is at risk of domestic abuse and has asked if they can have more flexibility around their working hours.

At Channel 4 we're all about being flexible. Please speak with your direct report to informally agree what works well for them as well as the team.

You could also discuss agreeing formal flexible working arrangements with your direct report.



I'm an Employee at Channel 4, what do I need to know?

Do I have to disclose a domestic abuse risk to the Channel? And do I have to disclose it to my line manager?

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a legal duty of care on Channel 4 in providing support. Channel 4 therefore actively encourages employees to disclose that they are at risk from domestic abuse to allow us to offer you support and protection. Examples of how we can ensure safety at work can be found here.

We understand it can be difficult to tell someone that you are impacted by domestic abuse, and we are committed to creating an environment where you can choose to be open about your experiences in the knowledge that we will respond supportively. We encourage colleagues impacted by domestic abuse to speak with their (or an alternative) Line Manager and People Partner, but you do not have to disclose anything to your Line Manager if you do not feel comfortable doing so. We strongly advise that you disclose anything to a trusted colleague as well as your People Partner.

I think I may be at risk of domestic abuse, how can I tell if this is my situation?

None of us want to think that we, or someone we love, is experiencing domestic abuse. Here are some things to consider when you're thinking about your own situation. If you answer yes to any of the following questions, you may be experiencing domestic abuse. Does your partner, ex-partner or family member:

- cut you off from family and friends and intentionally isolate you?
- bully, threaten, or control you?
- monitor or limit your use of technology?
- physically and/or sexually abuse you?
- deny that abuse is happening, or play it down?
- accuse you of flirting or having affairs?
- tell you what to wear, who to see, where to go, and what to think?
- control your money, or not give you enough to buy food or other essential things?

It's important to remember that as domestic abuse can be perpetrated by family members or ex-partners, these behaviours can happen both inside and outside of the home. It's also important to understand that domestic abuse isn't always physical violence. It can also include:

- coercive control (a pattern of intimidation, degradation, isolation and control with or without the use or threat of physical or sexual violence);
- financial or economic abuse;
- online or digital abuse;
- harassment and stalking;
- 'gaslighting' – this is when someone tries to convince you that you're wrong about something, even when you're not. Gaslighting is a form of emotional abuse which can cause you to question your own feelings, instincts and sanity; and/or
- emotional or psychological abuse, or other abuse which makes you feel frightened or scared.



A work colleague is at risk of domestic abuse, and I am now being harassed – what should I do?

You should disclose to Channel 4 if you are being harassed by a work colleague's current or former partner or family member. You can do this to whoever you feel comfortable doing so as well as your People Partner. Channel 4 will also be able to offer you support and protection.

Will Channel 4 support me if I'm being financially abused?

We recognise that domestic abuse may also be in the form of financial/economic abuse. Economic abuse can be controlling or coercive. Trying to leave an abusive partner can create considerable financial hardship. Channel 4 will consider approving a salary advance if needed, (e.g. to move house or to make other significant financial outlay). Please speak to your People Partner for more information.

Additionally, consideration may be given to changing the method of salary payment if you've disclosed that your partner has access to your finances or is exerting financial pressure upon you. Please note that you can also change your bank details and correspondence address at any time on [REDACTED].

Are there any signs I can look out for if I think a colleague may be at risk of domestic abuse, but hasn't disclosed anything? Should I tell someone if I think a colleague could be at serious risk?

Some signs of domestic abuse that colleagues around them may recognise could include:

- unexplained injuries e.g. bruises, more makeup than usual, more tired than usual, wearing long sleeves, polo necks, etc even in warmer weather – to hide injuries, coming to work looking dishevelled, looking tired;
- secretive about home life (e.g. doesn't join in conversations about what life is like at home, is evasive when talking about their partner/family);
- partner/ex-partner/family seems to exert an unusual amount of control;
- decreased performance (e.g. missing meetings, social events or deadlines, seeming distracted, late); and/or
- change in use of technology (e.g. frequently checking phone, large number of calls/checks, getting upset after seeing messages).

You should always try to maintain confidentiality if you notice any of these signs, but if you are concerned for the safety of a colleague or a child, raise this in confidence with your People Partner.

What will Channel 4 do?

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.

Examples of meeting this responsibility may include:

- making emergency and safe contact arrangements;



- improving the safety of the employee whilst they are at work. For example, avoiding potential contact with an abuser in a customer facing role;
- granting leave or an opportunity to change their working pattern to support their personal circumstances;
- adjusting the colleague's responsibilities and workload; and/or
- reviewing communications and IT safety, for example changing a telephone number to avoid harassing phone calls.

Further Support

Channel 4 recognises that domestic abuse situations can arise suddenly whereby an employee no longer feel safe at home.

The [REDACTED] taxi service, operated by our preferred supplier [REDACTED], is available to those based in all our office locations. Additionally, it doesn't have to be used to or from the office. It can be used if you find yourself in a vulnerable situation and you have no other means of getting to a safe place. Please note that it can take around 45 minutes for a [REDACTED] taxi service to arrive and so, if you are in immediate danger, you should always call 999.

Journeys made on this account will be monitored for your wellbeing and our records. Look out for the physical [REDACTED] taxi cards in each of our offices that you can pop in your wallet. However this will only be shared with necessary departments from an administrative perspective.

Contact [REDACTED] on:

[REDACTED]

Note: All [REDACTED] taxi drivers in London have been vetted by [REDACTED]. Journeys made outside of London will be fulfilled by licensed private hire companies or black cab providers in the relevant area. The above password will change regularly, or if the account is compromised. We will publish any changes in the [REDACTED], on [REDACTED] and update this policy. More information can be found on [REDACTED] in relation to the [REDACTED] service.

Employees can use [REDACTED] to book an emergency hotel room near to their contracted work location for one night. Any bookings need to be put through the [REDACTED] project-code in order for Channel 4 to cover all costs. Please see the Travel & Expenses Policy for expense limits.

This booking would remain confidential to the business. Only employees from the necessary departments (Finance, Workspace & People Teams) will be able to see any booking information.

Employees will also be able to use the expenses system to claim back bookings if they were unable to book the hotel using [REDACTED]. Employees will just need to use the same project code ([REDACTED]) in the justification section of the Expenses system.

Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA)

Mental Health First Aiders are C4 employees who are a trained point of contact if you, or someone you are concerned about, is experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress. They are not therapists or psychiatrists, but they can give you initial support and signpost you to appropriate help if required.



Please see the Mental Health First Aiders page on [REDACTED] for more information and to see who Channel 4's Mental Health First Aiders are.

Employee Assistance Programme

Channel 4's Employee Assistance Programme Healthy Minds provides free 24/7 counselling, a confidential phone line which can be used whenever you, or any of your immediate family members, require support.

Channel 4 employee's also have access to EAP services via the Thrive: Mental Wellbeing app.

Please see the EAP page and EAP brochure on [REDACTED] for more information on these services, as well as the Wellbeing Hub on [REDACTED] for details of other support options.

BUPA

As part of our private medical insurance scheme, we have a fast-track mental health service in place that allows you to be assessed and given access to an appropriate therapist without seeing a GP. By calling the number below you will be put through to a mental health assessor who will gently walk you through the assessment and the next steps to get help. This can include face to face sessions with an appropriate therapist. When prompted you will need to state what kind of policy you have (whether you have opted to add your Partner and/or Children) and the excess (which is £0).

DIRECT MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT: Call [REDACTED]

Record keeping

All records concerning domestic abuse will be kept strictly confidential on a colleague's personal HR file. No local records will be kept of absences related to domestic abuse and there will be no adverse impact on the employment records of colleagues who are impacted by domestic abuse.

Any incidents of violence, threatening behaviour, or breaches of security in the workplace will be recorded and retained for evidential purposes in case required and retained in line with GDPR.

Perpetrators of domestic abuse

Channel 4 will not tolerate or condone domestic abuse, regardless of the identity or seniority of the perpetrator. However, Channel 4 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 Channel 4 becomes aware that an employee is or may be perpetrating domestic abuse, it will take appropriate action, which could include disciplinary action under the organisation's disciplinary policy. 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 Channel 4 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, appointments (such as court visits, counselling, etc), managing any legal issues or family requirements, Channel 4 will provide a reasonable amount of paid time off up to a maximum of 10 days per year. Employees who need time off should discuss this with their Line Manager and People Partner to agree how much leave is required as well as how and when it will be taken. This leave can be booked in the system through the leave options around the Exceptional, Compassionate and Emergency Leave Policy.

Employees should also discuss exploring other flexible working arrangements with their Line Manager and People Partner as Channel 4 will explore other supportive measures such as a temporary change in hours, where requested by employees who are experiencing domestic violence.

Request for relocation

Channel 4 will consider requests to move to an alternative role or Channel 4 office on a case-by-case basis. An employee's Line Manager and People Partner will consider the need to maintain the employee's safety and well-being with the alignment of business requirements.



WHERE CAN YOU GET MORE RELATED INFORMATION?

If you believe an employee is in immediate danger call the police on 999.

The following are links to external websites and organisations who can provide useful information and support. We are aware there is a lot of guidance available, and everyone is different, so please use this as a guide only and do let us know if there are any links that should be added to this list:

- National Domestic Abuse Helpline. Tel: 0808 2000 247.
www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk (run by Refuge)
- The Men's Advice Line, for male domestic abuse survivors. Tel: 0808 801 0327 (run by Respect)
- The Mix, free information and support for under 25s in the UK. Tel: 0808 808 4994
- National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline. Tel: 0800 999 5428 (run by Galop)
- Samaritans (24/7 service). Tel: 116 123
- DeafHope, providing support for deaf survivors of domestic abuse.
www.signhealth.org.uk
- Respond, a charity supporting people with learning disabilities, their relatives and professionals affected by trauma and abuse. Visit: www.respond.org.uk
- Southall Black Sisters, providing advice and information on domestic abuse, racial harassment, welfare and immigration, primarily for Asian, African and African-Caribbean women. www.southallblacksisters.org.uk
- Jewish Women's Aid, supporting Jewish women and children affected by domestic and sexual abuse and violence. www.jwa.org.uk
- Muslim Women's Network, supporting Muslim women and girls suffering from or at risk of abuse. Helpline: 0800 999 5786 / 0303 999 5786. www.mwnhelpline.co.uk
- Asian Women's Resource Centre, which provides a domestic abuse and advocacy service to women in need in the following languages: Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Hinko, Konkani, Marathi, Pashto, Patwari, Punjabi, Urdu, Farsi, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Kurdish, Turkish and Azerbaijani. Tel: 0208 961 6549
- IKROW, providing specialist advice and help to Middle Eastern and Afghan women and girls at risk of 'honour' based violence, forced marriage, child marriage, female genital mutilation and domestic abuse. Tel: 0207 920 6460.
- Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse, a growing network of employers that come from a wide variety of sectors, working collectively to take action on domestic abuse. Visit: www.eida.org.uk
- Domestic Abuse Alliance, for free legal advice and protection. Tel: 0800 1010 7110 Visit: www.domestic-abuse.co.uk
- Bright Sky, a mobile app and website for anyone experiencing domestic abuse, or who is worried about someone else. Visit: www.bright-sky.org.uk

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be local charities and support groups in your area that offer help and advice to those experiencing domestic abuse.