

## Supporting Staff Experiencing Domestic Abuse Policy

### 1. Introduction

The organisation has developed this policy as part of our commitment to support staffs' physical and mental health, safety and wellbeing. It covers the internal and external support available to staff experiencing domestic abuse, including appointing a colleague as a nominated point of contact, special leave provisions and signposting to external sources of advice and help.

This document does not form part of a contract of employment and may be changed from time to time in line with current best practice and statutory requirements and to ensure business needs are met. Staff will be consulted and advised of any changes as far in advance as possible of the change being made, unless the change is required by law.

### 2. Policy Aims

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Support staff experiencing domestic abuse
- Enable staff experiencing domestic abuse to remain productive and at work
- Aid managers seeking to help team members experiencing domestic abuse
- Assist colleagues of those experiencing domestic abuse
- Reinforce our corporate social responsibility objectives by demonstrating the organisation values and staff support during difficult periods

### 3. Responsibilities

#### Manager Responsibilities

Line managers have a crucial role to play in enabling staff experiencing domestic abuse to seek help. The organisation will provide training to all managers in handling sensitive issues (including domestic abuse), raising awareness of domestic abuse in teams and operating the procedures for handling instances of domestic abuse.

The role of line managers is to:

- Identify staff experiencing difficulties as a result of domestic abuse (for example, using regular performance appraisal, or by fostering an open management culture which enables team members to disclose sensitive issues)
- Provide support in the first instance, including specific advice on the options available whilst recognising the limitations of their role (referring to professional counsellors or experts where necessary)
- Ensure and protect confidentiality in all instances (excepting the requirements of child protection)
- Refer individuals to the appropriate internal or external source of help and support
- Ensure the safety of all staff in the team is protected
- Support any affected staffs remain productive and at work during any difficult period in their domestic life, for example by using the organisation's special leave policies and procedures

#### **Organisation Responsibilities – standard for all templates, add to, do not delete**

To ensure fair, equal, reasonable and consistent treatment of all staff regarding any aspect of the implementation of this policy.

To ensure all those with line management responsibility are reasonably trained in the practical application of this policy.

To regularly review and update this policy in line with legislation and best practice.

#### **4. Defining Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse is defined as any incident of physical or mental abuse or threatening behaviour between adults who are, or who have been, intimate partners or family members. The policy applies equally to all staff whatever their sex and covers psychological, emotional and financial abuse in addition to physical abuse.

#### **5. Internal support**

In order to support staff who experience domestic abuse the organisation will:

- Nominate an appointed person in the workplace to act as a confidential first point of contact
- Offer access to counselling and publicise the availability of this support regularly through notice boards, the intranet and ongoing health and wellbeing initiatives
- Offer access to counselling and other support to staff perpetrating domestic abuse who seek help from us
- Raise workplace awareness of domestic abuse issues through a programme of regular information initiatives

#### **6. External support**

The organisation will signpost external sources of help and support for staff and managers, including information on:

- **Respect** provides practical information and advice on domestic abuse for perpetrators, the abused, health and social care professionals, and family and friends – [www.respect.uk.net](http://www.respect.uk.net)
- **The National Domestic Abuse Helpline** provides advice for those experiencing domestic abuse – 0808 2000 247
- **Business in the Community's** toolkit helps to ensure all staff feel supported and empowered by their workplace to deal with domestic abuse – [www.bitc.org.uk/toolkit/domestic-abuse-toolkit/](http://www.bitc.org.uk/toolkit/domestic-abuse-toolkit/)
- **UK Government** advice and guidance for those who are experiencing or feel at risk of domestic abuse during the coronavirus pandemic – [www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help)

#### **7. Attendance**

The organisation recognises those experiencing domestic abuse may need to be absent from work at times and will assist them by using our special leave policies.

Individual absences can be discussed and agreed between the staff member and the line manager.

#### **8. Security and Safety**



The organisation will protect the safety and security of all staff at work, including those affected by domestic abuse and their colleagues.

In order to receive this protection, staff need to inform their line manager they are at risk from domestic abuse and the organisation will seek to enable staff to disclose such facts by fostering a supportive and open management culture.

#### **9. Data Protection Act 2018**

The organisation will treat all personal data in line with obligations under the current data protection regulations.