



# Domestic Abuse Procedure

## February 2022

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V3.0	Full review	09/02/2022	ELT	February 2025
V2.0	Health check	01/08/2019	Senior Management Team	August 2022
V1.0	New document	05/05/2016	Heads of Service	May 2019

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## 1. What is this procedure for?

- 1.1 This procedure supports our Domestic Abuse Policy.
- 1.2 It is in place to ensure we comply with current legislation and regulation when dealing with and supporting those affected by domestic abuse. It provides our people or anyone providing a service on our behalf with appropriate guidance on recognising and handling instances where there are concerns relating to domestic abuse.
- 1.3 The procedure breaks down the process for reporting incidents or suspected incidents at Ongo and how these cases are managed.

## 2. Who does what?

This section sets out what our colleagues and teams across the organisation are responsible for implementing to ensure the decant process runs smoothly.

Position	Responsibilities
<b>All of our people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Whether you work directly for Ongo or carry out work on our behalf, you have a responsibility to report any concerns you have through the Report-It button on the Intranet</li></ul>
<b>Lettings Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Reports all new tenants who are being housed by OH when fleeing from domestic abuse through the Report-It button on the Intranet</li></ul>
<b>Safeguarding Lead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Has overall responsibility for all reports of Domestic Abuse referrals submitted via the Report-It button on the Intranet</li><li>✓ Triage and accurately record all reports and ensures correct support is provided to victims</li><li>✓ Works with the People &amp; Culture team to ensure appropriate support is given to any of our people who are experiencing domestic abuse</li></ul>
<b>Safeguarding deputy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Triaging all incidents that come through the Report-It button on the Intranet and recording as appropriate</li><li>✓ Arranging for target hardening to be put in place at Ongo Homes tenants' homes</li><li>✓ Making contact with tenants to follow up on cases and any further action / support required</li><li>✓ Produce case reports for multi-agency meetings</li></ul>
<b>Community Resolution Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Manage cases logged to ensure all appropriate agencies are involved to resolve issues of domestic abuse</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide the appropriate level of support to our tenants following a report of domestic abuse</li> <li>✓ Represent Ongo at multi-agency meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Tenancy Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Manage cases logged to ensure all appropriate agencies are involved to resolve issues of domestic abuse</li> <li>✓ Provide the appropriate level of support to our tenants following a report of domestic abuse</li> </ul>
<b>Managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide support to members of their team if they report incidents of domestic abuse</li> <li>✓ Understand how to recognise incidents of domestic abuse and ensure their teams are aware of how to report any incidents or suspected incidents</li> </ul>
<b>People &amp; Culture team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Work with the Safeguarding Lead in supporting any of our people who are experiencing domestic abuse</li> </ul>

### 3. What happens?

3.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines Domestic Abuse as:

*The behaviour of a person towards another person if they are aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive. Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following:*

- *Physical or sexual abuse*
- *Violent or threatening behaviour*
- *Controlling or coercive behaviour*
- *Economic abuse*
- *Psychological, emotional or other abuse*

*It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.*

*Economic abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on the victim's ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or, obtain goods or services.*

3.2 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 their everyday behaviour.

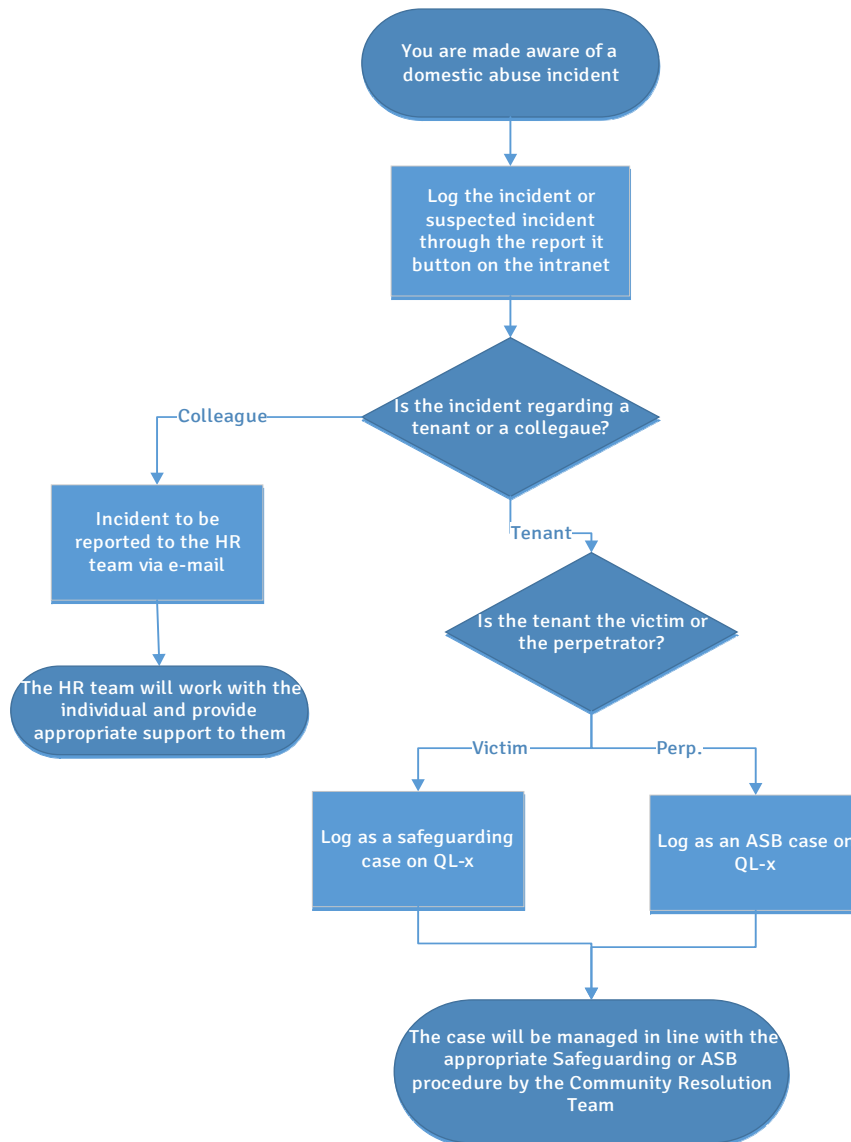
3.3 Coercive control is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that people who may experience such are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

- 3.4 At Ongo, we understand that it can take repeated incidents before someone who is experiencing domestic abuse seeks support. We will support and work with people who are experiencing domestic abuse for the first time or those who are repeat victims.
- 3.5 We provide a fair, victim-centred, confidential and consistent level of service, within the constraints of current legislation and the resources available to us.
- 3.6 We understand the impact that domestic abuse can have on a family and household and will always take this into consideration when taking action in relation to Ongo Homes tenancies. We are committed to delivering a service that will protect our tenants and families from harm.
- 3.7 We understand that our colleagues within the organisation may also experience domestic abuse and we will deal sensitively with any cases that involve our people.
- 3.8 **What is the process?**
  - 3.8.1 Reports of domestic abuse can come to us in a variety of ways. However these reports come to us, as soon as colleagues are made aware of an incident, actual or suspected (including where we are housing applicants who are fleeing domestic abuse), relating to a customer or colleague, they should report it through the Report-It button on the Intranet.
  - 3.8.2 The report will be picked up by the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy. They will establish the details of the incident by logging a Safeguarding contact, Target Hardening request or an ASB case. If the incident involves one of our people, the People & Culture team will be informed.
  - 3.8.3 For all applicants who are being housed by OH because they are fleeing from domestic abuse, the Lettings Officer will log this through the Report-It button on the Intranet providing details of the applicants circumstances and detailing what support is required from the Community Resolution team going forward (this could be a phone-call to the applicant, a request for target hardening or any other appropriate support, advice or guidance).
  - 3.8.4 If the incident involves one of our people, the People & Culture team will be informed and will support them appropriately, taking the lead from the individual as to the level of support that is wanted.

3.8.5 Where the incident involves a customer, the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy will log appropriately on QL-x. This could be as a safeguarding concern (where the tenant is the victim) or an ASB case opened (where the tenant is the perpetrator). See 3.6.2.

3.8.6 The flow chart below shows the process that should be followed when anyone at Ongo is made aware of or suspects incidents of domestic abuse:



3.8.7 Ongo Homes have a shared responsibility to issue some target hardening equipment – for example, external letterboxes when a letterbox is sealed, window and / or door alarms and CCTV (this list is not exhaustive). This could be requested internally or through other agencies working with our tenants. The measures put in place will be reviewed to establish if more action is required – i.e. have the measures been effective? Is more required?

3.8.8 Ongo Homes is able to provide some support to our tenants who are experiencing domestic abuse, if we are made aware. This could be provided directly by Ongo Homes or we may work in partnership with other agencies who specialise in supporting and providing access to services to anyone experiencing domestic abuse.

3.8.9 The safety of our people and our customers and their families is paramount. We will do all we can, working with the appropriate agencies, to make sure they are safe and supported.

### 3.9 **Providing safe accommodation for those experiencing domestic abuse**

3.9.1 When the current home is no longer safe or impacting the well-being of the victim or household members and there is need to move we will work with the client and partners to facilitate moving to another property or area. Please refer to lettings exception procedure.

### 3.10 **Supporting our colleagues who are experiencing Domestic Abuse**

3.10.1 As an employer, we have a duty of care for the health, safety and wellbeing of our people. When we are made aware that someone who works for us are experiencing domestic abuse, we will, wherever possible, provide flexible and adaptable measures that meet the needs of the individual experiencing the domestic abuse.

3.10.2 At Ongo, we will provide support and signpost our colleagues to appropriate agencies and services to provide specific support, advice and guidance. We will ensure the support and guidance we provide is aligned to the CIPD's *Managing and supporting employees experiencing domestic abuse: a guide for employers*.

### 3.11 **Enforcement action against perpetrators**

3.11.1 Ongo Homes may take action to exclude a perpetrator of domestic abuse from a property and / or surrounding area through the use of an anti-social behaviour injunction. Each case will be assessed individually.