



Domestic Abuse Policy

Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, 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. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

1.2 This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes honour-based violence and abuse (HBV), female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

1.3 With regards to non-intimate or familial abuse, the term family member includes:

- mother
- father
- daughter
- son
- brother
- sister
- grandparents
- in-laws
- step family

1.4 Officers and staff are required to interpret this definition; Family members do not necessarily have to be related by blood. Officers should consider the way they live as a family unit; It would not, for example, make sense to exclude common law in-laws and relations if this resulted in less protection being afforded to victims of domestic abuse simply because they were unmarried. Likewise, although foster parents or family are not explicitly referenced in the definition, similar dynamics and considerations apply, particularly in long-term foster placements, and victims should be offered the same protection as any other domestic abuse victim.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 This policy and linked procedure are required to ensure domestic abuse related incidents are correctly identified and investigated with the overarching aim of reducing risk to those most in danger.

2.2 It complies with the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) guidance on domestic abuse related crimes and incidents.

- 2.3 The approach of Surrey Police to incidents of domestic abuse will be one of risk management. Our aim will be to reduce the risk of serious harm or homicide; increasing the safety, health and wellbeing of victims, as well as any children.
- 2.4 This objective is over-arching: Even where a victim does not wish to pursue a criminal prosecution, we will use all appropriate preventative options to reduce risk and safeguard the victim and wider family as necessary.
- 2.5 The framework will ensure our overarching aim to keep people safe is met and the correct safety measures are adopted to suit the needs of the individual.
- The priorities of Surrey Police in responding to domestic abuse are as follows:
 - To protect the lives of both adults and children who are at risk as a result of domestic abuse;
 - To investigate all reports of domestic abuse;
 - To facilitate effective action against offenders so that they can be held accountable through the criminal justice system and other routes as appropriate.
 - To adopt a proactive, multi-agency approach in preventing and reducing domestic abuse.

Team: Information Management