



Home Office

Guidance

## Coronavirus (COVID-19): support for victims of domestic abuse

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Measures announced over recent weeks to tackle coronavirus (COVID-19) have seen people's day to day life be drastically altered. These changes are essential to beat coronavirus and protect our NHS.

The government acknowledges that the order to stay at home can cause anxiety for those who are experiencing or feel at risk of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is unacceptable in any situation, no matter what stresses you are under.

For anyone who feels they are at risk of abuse, it is important to remember that there is help and support available to you. Guidance is also available to help perpetrators change their behaviour. The government supports and funds a number of charities who are able to provide advice and guidance and we are in regular contact with the charity sector and the police to ensure that these support services remain open during this challenging time.

### What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is more than physical violence. It can also include, but is not limited to:

- coercive control and 'gaslighting'
- economic abuse
- online abuse
- verbal abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse

### Where to get help

If you believe you are being abused, or worried you may commit domestic abuse, please use the following services which can help you.

If you suspect that your neighbours or those in your community are victims of domestic abuse, we encourage you to report it to the police.

### Call 999

If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police - the police will continue to respond to emergency calls

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call 999 and then press 55. This will transfer your call to the relevant police force who will assist you without you having to speak.

### **National Domestic Abuse Helpline**

The [National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. They can also be called, for free and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. The website also has a form through which women can book a safe time for a call from the team.

### **Women's Aid**

[Womens Aid](#) has provided additional advice specifically designed for the current coronavirus outbreak, including a live chat service.

### **Men's Advice Line**

The [Men's Advice Line](#) is a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic abuse and those supporting them. It can be contacted on 0808 8010327.

### **Galop - for members of the LGBT+ community**

If you are a member of the LGBT+ community, [Galop](#) runs a specialist helpline on 0800 999 5428 or email [help@galop.org.uk](mailto:help@galop.org.uk).

### **Economic abuse**

If you are concerned about how COVID-19 may affect your finances and leave you vulnerable to economic abuse, please see the [advice provided by HM Treasury](#) on what support is on offer. The charity [Surviving Economic Abuse](#) has also provided additional guidance and support.

### **Hestia**

[Hestia](#) provides a free-to-download mobile app, Bright Sky, which provides support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know.

### **Chayn**

[Chayn](#) provides online help and resources in a number of languages, ranging from identifying manipulative situations and how friends can support those being abused.

### **Support for professionals**

[SafeLives](#) is providing guidance and support to professionals and those working in the domestic abuse sector, as well as additional advice for those at risk.

### **Support if you are worried about hurting someone**

If you are worried about hurting the ones you love whilst staying at home, call the [Respect Phonenumber](#) for support and help to manage your behaviour, 0808 8024040.

### **More information**

For more advice and guidance on domestic abuse, please see [Domestic abuse: how to get help](#).