



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Police Perpetrated & Police Victim Domestic Abuse (PPDA/PVDA)

Domestic Abuse Involving Members of Staffordshire Police

Where the officer or staff member is the perpetrator:

Police officers/staff that commit domestic abuse related offences will be investigated and held accountable through the criminal justice system in the same way as any other person. Additional actions, however, should be completed to ensure impartiality and independence of the investigation.

The matter should be brought to the attention of the Force Incident Manager (FIM) who in turn will ensure that the appropriate Detective Inspector/Local Operations Inspector/Deputy Commander oversees the response, informs the relevant Duty Superintendent and notifies the Professional Standards Department using the following email address: psd@staffordshire.police.uk.

The STORM incident log should be also be tagged for the PSD and suitably restricted. A supervisor, of at least the rank of Sergeant, will attend all incidents involving PPDA or PPVA.

Attending officers and supervisors should be aware that Police Perpetrators can, given their enhanced understanding of the law and police processes, manipulate the system and act in bad faith.

Where a Staffordshire Police officer/member of police staff, or the partner of the same, is arrested for a domestic abuse related offence, professional judgement should be applied when deciding which custody facility to convey them to. For example, it would not be appropriate for them to be taken where they, or their partner are stationed.

To ensure the impartiality and robustness of any investigation, CID will allocate an Investigating Officer to the case who will be responsible for progressing the criminal investigation and for the safeguarding of the victim.

If the suspect is at Chief Inspector rank or staff equivalent or above, the matter will be considered for investigation by an external force.

In addition, PSD will appoint a Case Manager who will be responsible for monitoring the progress of the criminal case, maintaining a close relationship with the investigator and upon commencement of the investigation, will ensure that the matters are reviewed for

consideration under the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020/Police (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2020 or equivalent Police Staff Conduct Regulations.

PSD will then recommend what action if any, is required in relation to suspension, restrictive duties or movement of the officer/police staff involved.

Further to this, the PSD officer will consider requesting the ACU to perform any auditing functions that may assist with the criminal investigation or potential conduct matters. Relevant information will be shared with the investigating officer to assist the criminal investigation.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) will be notified in relevant cases.

To safeguard the integrity of the investigation, the DI of the investigating team/department will look to ensure any officers involved in enquiries and/or the arrest of police officers/police staff alleged to have committed domestic abuse related offences, should not be known personally to the suspect and do not work in the same area. This should not exclude officers making spontaneous arrests of colleagues at a domestic abuse incident where there is reasonable suspicion that the police officer/police staff has committed an offence.

Investigating officers should record that they have no conflict of professional or personal interest. They should be suitably experienced in investigating domestic abuse matters. The victim's views on who should investigate the offence should be considered. It is paramount that a lack of confidence in the impartiality of the process does not undermine the victim's confidence in the investigation and jeopardise their support of prosecution.

Consideration should be given to additional risk factors which may be present, such as knowledge or access to weapons, e.g. firearms and knowledge of police systems and investigations.

Victims of police perpetrated domestic abuse are likely to be concerned that work-based associates of the suspect will have access to police systems and records which could be a major barrier to reporting abuse or supporting a prosecution. Re-assurance should be offered to the victim to alleviate such concerns.

All incidents of domestic abuse involving police officers/police staff will be recorded on Niche and Centurion (The PSD complaints and Conduct database). Victims should be assured of internal policies on misuse of police systems and information. Flags can be applied to records according to flag policy if deemed prudent to do so, and if doing so would encourage the trust and support of the victim.

The report must be recorded in line with Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) and a crime number generated.

Recognising independent advocacy is particularly significant in cases of this nature, all survivors of police perpetrated DA will be offered advocacy support, regardless of the risk level of incidents.

Where the officer or staff member is a victim:

Victims who work in policing themselves, particularly those who serve in the same force as their perpetrator, face a unique set of barriers to reporting. They may:

- Feel uncomfortable about seeking help and advice from their colleagues
- Be concerned about the implications of people being aware of their personal issues,
- Feel that as they are police they should know what to do,
- Do not recognise the behaviour as abusive or controlling,
- There are additional barriers to LGBT+ employees whose personal circumstances may not be known to work.

Identifying that an officer/police staff member is experiencing domestic abuse at an early stage will lead to appropriate help being offered and allow that member of staff to deal with their situation far more effectively.

Incidents of domestic abuse may affect the individual's ability to function effectively in the workplace.

Supervisors must be alert to possible signs of domestic abuse such as:

- Changes in character, for instance members of staff who are normally outgoing may become introverted or reserved,
- Display a lack of participation with a reduction in normal performance,
- A change in the quality of work/performance,
- Visible bruising,
- Wearing of clothing not conducive to weather conditions to cover injuries,
- Excessive use of make-up to hide injuries may be indication of physical abuse,
- Uncharacteristic lateness, last minute requests for time off or annual leave, regular periods of self-certified sick leave,
- Receipt of repeated upsetting telephone calls, texts, emails etc.

This list is not exhaustive and there will be some victims who do not display signs of violence or abuse.

However, where line managers fear that an individual is suffering domestic abuse they must sensitively enquire as to their well-being and to offer support and advice where appropriate.

Shying away from the subject can perpetuate fear of stigma and increase feelings of anxiety.

Often individuals will not feel confident in speaking up, so a manager making the first move can be key.

If a colleague discloses that they are a victim of domestic abuse this must be taken seriously and a supervisor or manager must be informed.

Be aware of what support is available and explore these options with the member of staff.

Supervisors/Managers may have to consider additional factors following disclosures of domestic abuse such as incidents involving violent partners or expartners visiting the workplace, abusive phone calls, intimidation or harassment of members of staff by the alleged perpetrator.

Supervisors/Managers must record any incidents of domestic violence in the workplace, including persistent phone calls, emails or visits to a member of staff by their partner/ex-partner to include details of any witnesses as these records could be used as evidence in subsequent proceedings.

The sensitivity of the disclosure will be respected at all times.

Although consent of the victim is not required to make disclosures or share information with relevant agencies, it is essential that they are fully informed that partner agencies will be informed where appropriate, particularly for child protection matters or high risk of harm or death to the victim or any other identified person. There should be, "no surprises."

All lines of enquiry will be pursued and evidence led prosecutions will be undertaken where the victim doesn't wish to support a prosecution but where the evidence of a crime being committed is clear.

The CID DI or above (in consultation with PSD if the perpetrator is also a member of the police) will appoint an appropriate investigator to support the victim. If the perpetrator is a member of the police service, the DI will ensure that they fully brief PSD before taking action, if time allows. This process should not hinder the allocation of resources to progress any criminal activity/investigation and if cannot be done immediately, should be as soon as is practicable.

The investigator appointed to the victim should not be known personally to the survivor or the offender and should work in a different area if possible.

The DI will satisfy themselves that the investigator is providing updates to the victims, ensuring they are updated as per the Victims Code.

A Victim Contract will be completed in all cases.

The appointed investigator will complete a PPN unless a risk assessment has been completed already. The investigator should revisit this risk identification and assessment process, bearing in mind that this always remains a dynamic process.

The investigator will conduct relevant safety planning and risk management with the victim.

The investigator will signpost the survivor to internal support resources, where relevant, such as Occupational Health.

Onward referrals should be made in line with arrangements for all victims (currently New Era) as they provide a completely confidential service separate to police support.

It should not be assumed that police employees who are survivors of domestic abuse will necessarily have knowledge of police investigations, or DA. They should be treated as other victims are and offered the same level of explanation of actions that have been or are being taken, as well as access to the same support services as victims who do not work within the force.

Where a MARAC referral is made by HRH/IFD and the victim or perpetrator is an employee of the police, this should be highlighted to the Vulnerability Coordinator at the relevant HRH so a closed MARAC hearing can be considered. Dependant on circumstances and availability, this would be chaired by an independent organisation.

In the instance where there is no arrest the following actions must be taken:

The officer responding to a domestic abuse incident involving a Police employee must bring the matter to the attention of the FIM who in turn will ensure that the appropriate department oversees the response and informs the Duty Superintendent, the PSD (on-call PSD out of hours).

Officers should complete the PPN and decide the risk grading.

Where children form part of the household, whether or not they were present at the incident, their details should be included on the PPN. This is to ensure that alerts can be sent to the education setting where the child attends via Operation Encompass and so a triage process can take place with Children's Social Care in the IFD at the earliest opportunity.

Where a child is present the Voice of the Child should be recorded.

It is the responsibility of the relevant DI to review the incident ensuring that all necessary actions have been completed.

Incidents involving officers/staff from another police force:

Where a reported incident involves a police officer/police staff from another force, the FIM will be informed as soon as practicable.

If a criminal investigation is started the DI who takes ownership of the investigation will be responsible for ensuring that the PSD (on-call PSD out of hours) are notified.

PSD will notify the relevant Police Force's PSD with the details.

All updates provided to the other force will be recorded as part of the criminal investigation, so that accurate records are maintained.

Information for all officers and staff:

Police officers and staff will be required to notify their head of department (LPT Commander, DCI, etc.) and PSD via a change of circumstances form of any domestic abuse related civil court orders or domestic abuse-related child contact restrictions related to them.

Any Civil Orders will also be requested and will need to be disclosed as part of the annual PDR.

In cases where offenders are found guilty in criminal proceedings the full range of disciplinary options will be considered including dismissal.

In the absence of a criminal conviction, disciplinary proceedings may still take place, again with the full range of disciplinary sanctions being available, including dismissal.

A vetting review will take place on all Police Perpetrator reported incidents.

A LADO referral should be completed in all cases where the perpetrator of abuse is an officer or member of police staff.

Any officer or staff member who discloses to any member of the police service that they are committing domestic abuse-related criminal offences are not entitled to confidentiality.

Any report of such criminal conduct must be treated as an admission of a crime and investigated as such.

Commitment by Staffordshire Police:

- Ensure Police Perpetrated Domestic Abuse (PPDA) is taken seriously.
- Protect and demonstrate the integrity of the police response.
- Ensure and demonstrate that impartial investigations and case decisions are consistently applied.
- Ensure that appropriate decisions are being made regarding the deployment of officers under investigation for domestic abuse allegations.
- Ensure that allegations are investigated (both in terms of the criminal investigation and misconduct response) by someone with no prior connection to any of those involved in the allegations.

- Ensure investigators adhere to [The Victims' Code](#).
- Ensure that accessible information is provided for all non-police and police victims on how they can report PPDA and access confidential support.
- Monitor the numbers of PPDA incidents and offences.
- Undertake annual audits of PPDA investigations to ensure appropriate action has been taken.
- Establish mutual arrangements with another force if external investigation is required.
- Ensure that the PSD undertake appropriate vetting considerations.
- Ensure that any case involving serving police officers as defendants will be flagged to the CPS to be added to the CPS high-risk log.
- Work with the Police and Crime Commissioner to ensure that appropriate services are in place to deal with the specific vulnerabilities of PPDA.

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