

Domestic Abuse Policy



Title: Domestic Abuse Policy (Customer)
Originator: Communities Director
Approval body and date approved: Chief Operating Officer, February 2025
Date for review: February 2028

1. Introduction

Domestic abuse is a cross cutting issue and needs to be tackled through a broad response and on many levels. It can have a devastating and long term effect on the lives of survivors, their children and the communities in which they live. In 2021 the Domestic Abuse Act came into force creating a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling or coercive, and economic abuse.

Children living in families affected by domestic abuse are over-represented in statutory children and family services, with concerns about abuse and neglect. Up to two thirds of cases seen at child protection conferences involve domestic abuse. Research with children indicates that domestic abuse has implications for education, health and wellbeing, as well as for civil and criminal justice.

Magenta Living will respond appropriately to reports of domestic or suspected domestic abuse within a multiagency, partnership framework.

2. Statement of Intent

This policy outlines Magenta Living's commitment to ensuring that everyone has a right to live free from abuse in any form. To this aim:

- Customers and employees of Magenta Living experiencing domestic abuse are able to report incidents of domestic abuse and can access relevant help and services.
- Employees, third parties and those acting on behalf of Magenta Living are supported in reporting incidents of domestic abuse or suspected domestic abuse. To support this Magenta Living employees will complete awareness training on understanding domestic abuse.
- To further support colleagues who may be experiencing domestic abuse we have a separate colleague facing policy which is available on the People Team Insite page.

Magenta Living operates within a multi-agency framework and information sharing protocol, which allows for disclosure of relevant agencies or partners. As part of this multi-agency framework Magenta Living attends and contributes to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) where information about high risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of serious harm or murder) is shared between local agencies.

3. Policy

This policy covers Magenta Living's role as a provider, employer and commissioner of services. We are committed to responding sensitively, effectively and appropriately to those customers and employees wishing to report domestic abuse and those wishing to access help and support. Magenta Living also has a dedicated colleague policy outlining the commitment to our employees.

Magenta will act as a reporting agency and point of contact for those wishing to report domestic abuse.

We operate within a multi-agency framework and if a child or adult is deemed to be at risk then relevant agencies may also be advised of this information. We may exchange information relating to both suspected perpetrators and victims in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR], Crime and Disorder Act 1998 or other relevant legislation.

Enforcement action may be taken against perpetrators or suspected perpetrators of domestic abuse this can include taking action to end the tenancy of perpetrators living in a Magenta home. In the event of an allegation affecting an employee, volunteer or contractor's employee then where there has been a breach of internal policy and or procedure then the relevant disciplinary process may be considered.

3.1 Aims of the Policy

- To provide a point of contact for reporting domestic abuse in a private and confidential manner as identified in the safeguarding policy
- To provide managers and team leaders with support and guidance that assist them in reporting, managing, recording and responding to incidents of domestic abuse
- To provide a central point for advice and support e.g. for signposting to local authority statutory obligations and risk assessment.

3.2 Definition of Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 outlines for the first time a statutory definition of Domestic Abuse³. This is outlined in the act as:

“Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—
(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other,
and

(b)the behaviour is abusive.

(3)Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—

(a)physical or sexual abuse;

(b)violent or threatening behaviour;

(c)controlling or coercive behaviour;

(d)economic abuse (see subsection (4));

(e)psychological, emotional or other abuse;

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

(4)“Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to—

(a)acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or

(b)obtain goods or services”

All other forms of harassment will be dealt with under the Magenta Living Anti Social Behaviour policy, Hate Harrasment policy, or other policy as deemed appropriate.

3.3 Our Approach

Magenta Living is committed to treating domestic abuse seriously.

It is our policy to:

- Enable the reporting of domestic abuse 24 hours a day
- Raise awareness of forms of abuse amongst all employees
- Ensure that all new employees receive relevant induction training
- Work in partnership working through the multi agency domestic abuse partnership
- support victims of domestic abuse by providing tenancy advice and signposting to other services including the statutory homeless service
- Consider prioritising repairs which may otherwise compromise the health and safety of the household E.g. lock changes
- Investigate all alleged cases promptly and thoroughly, if the victim agrees
- Support victims of domestic abuse within a multi-agency partnership framework.
- offer a private interview with a person of the same sex, if requested
- Consider enforcing tenancy breaches where safe to do so
- Magenta Living will consider providing reasonable support and opportunities for victims to remain in their home e.g. target hardening
- and lock changes following risk assessment
- Refer victims to domestic abuse refuges if appropriate

Where appropriate, Magenta Living will take action against its tenant perpetrators of domestic abuse. Where there is evidence that a household victim is at risk and needs to be relocated, Magenta Living will consider a management transfer where

there is a serious risk to life. We will also refer them to Housing Options and Property Pool Plus or equivalent to ensure the person has the widest choice of re-housing options.

In general terms, the response of Magenta Living to domestic abuse will align to the organisation's Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Practitioner's procedures and the approach of Safeguarding Boards approaches to children and adults at risk.

3.4 Responsibility

All employees are responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy. Employees and contractors who deliver services on behalf of the organisation will be expected to report incidents of actual or suspected domestic abuse. In taking the appropriate action individuals should not put themselves or a customer at direct risk and should seek immediate advice if necessary.

3.5 Confidentiality and the Data Protection Act

All reports of domestic abuse will be handled sensitively and in the strictest confidence, in line with the organisation's Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy. In some circumstances there is a duty to cooperate under local authority Safeguarding frameworks. This may involve formal notification to the local authority where of children or adults at risk.

Where a criminal offence may have been committed, victims will be advised to contact the police. Magenta Living will support victims in this process

3.6 Complaints

If a victim or perpetrator/suspected perpetrator are unhappy with the action being taken, employees should refer them to Magenta Living's complaints procedure.

4. Implementation

Recognising the impact domestic abuse has on customers and employees, Magenta Living will:

- Update its leaflet for domestic abuse as required
- Ensure information on domestic abuse is available on the Magenta Living website
- Raise awareness of domestic abuse with employees and contractors
- Publicise relevant articles in employees and tenant newsletters to raise the profile of the impact that Domestic Abuse has on families and society.
- Update guidance and procedures for front line employees in responding to incidents of domestic abuse

5. Consultation

The updated policy has been discussed with Partners in within the local authorities that we operate in. Their views have been fully considered and incorporated where applicable within the body of the policy.

6. Equality Impact Analysis (EIA)

We believe all people should be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion, belief or non belief, sex or sexuality or by association with someone with any of these characteristics or perception of having any of these characteristics.

The EIA was undertaken in March 2025 by the Communities Director and was rated as Green.

7. Monitoring Performance

Performance reporting is produced on a quarterly basis identifying the number of incidents annually, this data is produced in the quarterly safeguarding and community safety reports. These are reported quarterly to the Executive Leadership Team and Magenta Living Board members.

8. Scheme of Delegation

Responsible authority for approving this policy is Executive Leadership Team delegated to the Chief Operating Officer.

The Communities Director is responsible for formulating this policy and ensuring its effective implementation.

The Community Safety & Emergency Response Team Manager is responsible for formulating, reviewing and monitoring implementation of procedures.

9. Policy Review

Magenta Living will review this policy on a rolling three-yearly basis in conjunction with tenants, stakeholders and Wirral MARAC Group members. Changes to legislation, regulatory codes, equality analysis, adult safeguarding reviews, domestic homicide reviews, good practice or guidance will prompt an earlier review if necessary.

10. Amendment Log

Date of revision:	Record of amendments:	Reason for revision:
May 2014	Definition of domestic abuse	Changed to included people aged 16 years and over
May 2014	Inclusion of honour based violence and female genital mutilation	In line with Government policy
June 2014	Updated forced marriage	In line with Circular 010/2014: new forced marriage offences
June 2014	Safeguarding Adult review and domestic homicide review	Changed due to new definitions in Care Act 2014, effective April 2015.
September 2018	DPA / Terminology updates	GDPR DPA update, alongside addition of descriptive terminology
September 2018	Policy Review and update	DPA / GDPR update. Revised E+D template Shared with strategic partners
December 2021	Policy Review	Update as a response to Domestic Abuse Act 2021, to include statutory definition.
February 2025	Policy Review	Policy updated to make reference to separate colleague facing policy. Removed statistics so policy is up to date and relevant.