DOMESTIC ABUSE

Created: September 2026

Contents

1. Purpose 3
2. Ownership 3
3. Statement of policy 3
4. INTRODUCTION 3
5. IMPACT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE AT WORK 3
6. MANAGEMENT SUPPORT 3
7. IF A MANAGER SUSPECTS AN EMPLOYEE IS A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC ABUSE 4
8. IF BOTH THE VICTIM AND THE PERPETRATOR ARE EMPLOYED BY FOUR PILLARS 5
9. IMPACT ON PERFORMANCE 5
10. CONFIDENTIALITY 5
11. Responsibilities 5
12. Risk Assessment 6
13. Premises 6
14. Reports 6
15. Policy Development 6
16. Review 6
17. LIST OF ORGANISATIONS THAT CAN PROVIDE ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE 6

1. Purpose

This policy is to be accepted and observed by all members, staff and volunteers within Four Pillars. Breaches of the policy may be regarded as gross misconduct.

2. Ownership

This is the Domestic Abuse Policy of Four Pillars. The ownership of this policy is to that of the Four Pillars board of trustees, who discharges its implementation to the management of Four Pillars. The management may discharge duties to a nominated member of staff or volunteer.

3. Statement of policy

Our policy is to provide guidance on support to employees, volunteers and service users. We also accept responsibility for all other people who may be affected by our activities.

4. INTRODUCTION

4.1 Domestic abuse includes, but is not limited to, controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse.
4.2 It can be physical, emotional and/or psychological abuse, as well as financial, and can take place in person or through digital means.
4.3 The abuse is usually between adults who are, or have been, in an intimate relationship or family members.
4.4 Domestic abuse is usually a pattern of behaviour although it can be a one-off event.
4.5 We recognise that any member of our workforce could be subject to domestic abuse, and in some cases, the victim may not realise that the behaviour displayed towards them is abuse.
4.6 Research shows that those who are experiencing domestic abuse are targeted at work.
4.7 It can occur at any time in a person's life, though may be triggered by specific events or become more extreme or frequent as a result of those events.
4.8 The purpose of this policy is to set out that Four Pillars will treat domestic abuse seriously and how Four Pillars aims to provide a safe and supportive workplace environment to employees who are experiencing domestic abuse.
4.9 It applies to Four Pillars' employees (permanent and temporary), workers, volunteers, agency workers and self-employed contractors.

5. IMPACT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE AT WORK

5.1 Four Pillars is aware that the challenges that domestic abuse victims face can manifest themselves in problems such as chronic absenteeism or lower productivity.
5.2 We recognise that domestic abuse does not occur only within the home and an employee can experience domestic abuse:
5.2.1 Through threatening visits, phone calls and emails from the perpetrator while they are at work or
5.2.2 when travelling to and from work.
5.3 Colleagues can experience threatening or intimidating behaviour from the perpetrator of the abuse.

6. MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

6.1 If an employee confides in a manager that they are being subjected to domestic abuse, that manager must treat all conversations as confidential.
6.2 However, the manager should not get involved in the situation themselves by,
6.2.1 for example, confronting someone accused of being abusive.
6.3 The manager's role is primarily to help the employee find expert help and be supportive of the employee.
6.4 The manager should encourage the employee to seek expert help.

6.5 This could include reporting incidences to the police or seeking help from a specialised organisation.
6.6 The manager should encourage the employee to make contact personally with such organisations instead of making contact themselves. A list of organisations can be found at the end of this policy.
6.7 If employees do not feel comfortable raising their circumstances with their manager, they are also able to speak to any member of the Board of Trustees
6.8 The manager, or chosen contact, should also be supportive of the employee and should not ask for proof of abuse.

6.9 Support could include, but is not limited to:
6.9.1 Regularly checking in with the employee
6.9.2 Permitting use of company equipment to search for online assistance or to speak to an expert who can help
6.9.3 Ensuring websites of organisations who can offer assistance are accessible from work equipment i.e. are not blocked under an internet usage policy
6.9.4 Allowing the employee time off to visit one of the advice organisations, the police or a doctor or to address concerns, such legal, financial or housing
6.9.5 Adjusting targets to reduce any undue pressure on the employee
6.9.6 diverting phone calls if the perpetrator is attempting to call the employee at work
6.9.7 Ensuring there is no public access to the workplace where possible
6.9.8 Agreeing code words or hand signals to be used during a telephone or video call to signal that the employee is in a threatening situation, and what action needs to be taken when one is used
6.9.9 A salary advance to a bank account other than that which is normally used.
6.7 Employees who are experiencing domestic abuse are entitled to emergency leave
6.8 If leave is needed, the employee should speak to their manager/chosen contact.

7. IF A MANAGER SUSPECTS AN EMPLOYEE IS A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

7.1 Managers will receive training in how to recognise the signs that an employee may be experiencing domestic abuse, including silent signals that can be used during a video conference with employees working remotely, and also ways to support the employee.
7.2 Signs could include:
7.2.1 Sudden changes in behaviour or quality of work
7.2.2 Changes in the way an employee dresses e.g. excessive clothing on a hot day or changes in the amount of make-up worn
7.3 If a manager suspects that an employee is being subjected to domestic abuse, but has no evidence, then great care must be taken.
7.4 The manager should give the employee an opportunity to confide but should not question the employee or put any undue pressure on the employee to discuss the situation.
7.5 Great care should be taken when the employee in question works at home because the perpetrator of the abuse may be monitoring communication or be in earshot of video or telephone calls.
7.6 If an employee is clearly distressed but will not confide in the manager then the manager should suggest that the employee contacts a member of the board of Trustees, the HR department or some other suitable person.
7.7 On some occasions a colleague or friend of an employee might confide in a manager that an employee is being subjected to domestic abuse.
7.8 It must be realised that this information might be incorrect, hence care should be taken.
7.9 The manager should give the employee an opportunity to confide but should not question the employee or put any undue pressure on the employee to discuss the situation.

8. IF BOTH THE VICTIM AND THE PERPETRATOR ARE EMPLOYED BY FOUR PILLARS

8.1 In cases where both the victim and perpetrator of domestic abuse work for Four Pillars, we will take appropriate action including:

8.1.1 Considering utilising different work locations both within the building at which the employees work, or another of our work locations, working hours, shift patterns etc.

8.1.2 Minimising the potential for the perpetrator to use their position or work resources to find out details about the whereabouts of the victim.

8.1.3 Offering impartial support and where possible ensure both the victim and perpetrator have different supervisors who are able to provide appropriate information to each party.

9. IMPACT ON PERFORMANCE

9.1 If an employee is underperforming it is important to make that employee aware of the concerns about performance.

9.2 Four Pillars will make reasonable efforts to consider all aspects of the employee's situation to support them through a challenging time.

9.3 The manager should agree reasonable targets with the employee and provide any necessary support.

9.4 If the poor performance continues and the employee does not appear to be able to improve their performance at work notwithstanding the support given, further discussions will be held with the employee.

9.5 Although the use of formal procedures e.g. disciplinary or capability is not prohibited, this should be a last resort.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

10.1 There are some circumstances in which confidentiality cannot be assured.

10.2 These occur when there are concerns about children or vulnerable adults or

10.3 Where Four Pillars needs to act to protect the safety of employees.

10.4 In these circumstances the manager will discuss with the employee the reason for disclosing any information to a third party and will seek the employee's agreement where possible.

10.5 All records concerning domestic abuse will be kept strictly confidential and in line with our obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018.

10.6 Improper disclosure of information i.e. breaches of confidentiality by any member of staff will be taken seriously and maybe subject to disciplinary action.

11. Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for Domestic Abuse Policy is shared collectively by the trustees.

The trustees delegate the responsibility of following this policy to the management team.

The management will:

- Arrange for the implementation of this policy in consultation with staff and volunteers
- Arrange for the adequate instruction and training of staff and volunteers in all matters related to this policy
- Arrange for the contents of this policy to be known to all staff and volunteers

The staff and volunteers of Four Pillars have a duty to:

- Follow this policy
- Co-operate with the management to ensure that the requirements of relevant statutory provisions are complied with

- Report potential or actual hazards as soon as possible

12. Risk Assessment

The trustees will ensure that all risk assessments are undertaken for any part of the charity's activities to which they are applicable, copies of these risk assessments are available upon written request.

13. Premises

The management team will ensure that all premises used by Four Pillars whether owned, leased or rented are:

- Health and safety compliant
- A full risk assessment has been completed
- Insurances are in place and displayed
- Fences are erect and secure at all times, if applicable
- Gates are manned at all times, if applicable
- Any potential danger is reported to the management

14. Reports

The delegated manager/person in charge at each event shall be responsible for making any necessary reports relating to this policy or ensuring that others make such reports.

15. Policy Development

The trustees shall endeavour to progressively develop the charity's policy on Domestic Abuse Policy in response to risks and hazards identified. Specific procedures and policies so developed shall be appended to this document and form part of the charity's statement on support.

16. Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually by a member of the Four Pillars board of trustees. If appropriate, action will be taken as necessary to update this policy to ensure effective delivery on the objectives laid out at the start of this document.

17. LIST OF ORGANISATIONS THAT CAN PROVIDE ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

General

National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0808 2000 247 (Freephone and 24 hour) / www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
Citizens advice bureau - www.adviceguide.org.uk
National centre for domestic violence – 0800 970 2070 / www.ncdv.org.uk
Galop: 0800 999 5428 / www.galop.org.uk

For women

Women's aid - www.womensaid.org.uk
Scottish Women's aid – 0800 027 1234 / www.scottishwomensaid.co.uk
Refuge - 0800 2000 247 / www.refuge.org.uk
Aberdeen Cyrenians – 0300 303 0903 / https://www.weareac.org

For men

ManKind Initiative: 01823 334 244 / www.mankind.org.uk
Respect Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327 / www.respect.uk.net

For perpetrators

Respect: 0808 802 4040 / www.respect.uk.net