

# Policy

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Title: Domestic Abuse Policy

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This document relates to:

the  
**calico**  
group



  
**syncora**  
the **calico** group together



**calico**  
homes



**calico**  
enterprise



  
**acorn**  
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## **1.0 Introduction**

This Policy aims to support an organisational culture where it is understood that anyone can experience domestic abuse and that seeking support at the earliest opportunity is a positive action. We aim to provide a supportive response that helps reduce risk and enhance safety.

## **2.0 The Calico Group Stance on Domestic Abuse**

Calico takes a zero-tolerance approach to domestic abuse. We will treat all reports sensitively and confidentially with a person centred ethos.

We will work closely with partner agencies to respond effectively to cases of domestic abuse.

We will raise awareness of domestic abuse with our customers highlighting our zero-tolerance approach.

We will support and be actively involved in local and National initiatives such as the Make a Stand pledge, White Ribbon UK Campaign and 16 Days of Action to raise awareness of domestic abuse issues.

This policy applies to domestic abuse experienced or perpetrated by our customers.

Calico recognise that people experiencing abuse may not consider themselves a "victim" and would not want to be labelled this way. Calico also recognises that domestic abuse is a criminal act and as such those experiencing it are considered victims of crime. In this policy we have used the term victim/survivor to refer to anyone experiencing abuse.

## **3.0 Aims & Objectives**

The policy aims to ensure that Calico provides an appropriate and effective response to domestic abuse. This includes:

- Ensuring staff are trained to confidently support victims/survivors of domestic abuse and their families to

increase safety and reduce risk, in partnership with specialist agencies.

- Taking action against and supporting perpetrators of domestic abuse using legal remedies and behavior change programmes where appropriate.
- Working with partner agencies and contributing to local and national initiatives to raise awareness of domestic abuse.

#### **4.0 Definitions & Types of Abuse**

We adopt the following definitions of domestic abuse issued by the Government (2019);

“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 sexual orientation. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, economic and emotional forms of abuse.

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.”\*

\*This definition includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

#### **Types of Abuse**

This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical

- Sexual
- Economic
- Emotional

Examples of behaviour that amount to domestic abuse include:

- **Physical abuse** e.g. slapping, pushing, kicking, punching, stabbing, attempted murder or murder
- **Sexual abuse** e.g. rape and non-consensual sex acts
- **Emotional or psychological abuse** e.g. intimidation, isolation, verbal abuse, humiliation, degradation, not allowing visitors
- **Destruction of belongings**, threat of legal sanctions e.g. deportation, custody of children
- **Economic abuse**, denial of rights or restriction of personal freedom e.g. withholding money, preventing people from working, raising debt in victim's name, preventing medical help, or hiding/refusing travel/immigration documents
- **Using coercion and intimidation to control someone** e.g. forcing someone to marry, taking someone abroad against their will, threats, isolation, exhaustion, degradation.

## **Female Genital Mutilation**

Female genital mutilation (FGM), also known as female circumcision, involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is traumatising and has serious physical and emotional health consequences both at the time of mutilation and in later life.

It is an offence to:

- Perform female genital mutilation
- Assist a female to carry out female genital mutilation on herself

- Assist anyone (whether a UK national or not) to carry out female genital mutilation on a UK national anywhere in the world
- Fail to protect a girl aged 16 or under from female genital mutilation

Where female genital mutilation is reported to us, we will respond to the report in accordance with this policy and the Safeguarding Policy. We will cooperate with relevant agencies and refer victims and other family daughters to appropriate sources of support.

### **Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or cannot, in cases of individuals with learning disabilities) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical, emotional, economic and/or psychological. Where forced marriage concerns are reported to us, we will respond to the report in accordance with this policy and the Safeguarding Policy.

### **Elder Abuse**

Any older person can potentially be a victim of elder abuse which is exacerbated by their additional vulnerabilities, such as; limited mobility, mental health and social isolation. In the context of domestic abuse, elder abuse is perpetrated by an intimate partner or wider family, who are often in caring roles.

### **Wellbeing**

The Care Act 2014 specifies that freedom from abuse and neglect is a key part of a person's wellbeing. The guidance outlines that abuse takes many forms, and practitioners should not be constrained in their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect.

### **Safeguarding**

A number of adults who need safeguarding are often experiencing domestic abuse in some way. If domestic abuse is the main factor and there are no other safeguarding concerns, support can be provided by specialist domestic abuse services, Multi Agency Risk

Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and/or the Police. If there are multiple safeguarding concerns identified a referral should also be made to adult social care.

## **5.0 Victims and survivors of domestic abuse**

Given that domestic abuse is perpetrated predominantly within homes, housing providers can play a unique role in supporting victims/survivors of abuse who are their tenants and holding perpetrators to account.

Any person can experience domestic abuse, regardless of age, culture, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion or other characteristics. Domestic abuse does not only occur in intimate partner relationships, but includes violence between family and household members.

Whilst both men and women may experience incidents of interpersonal violence and abuse, women are considerably more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of abuse, including sexual violence. They are also more likely to have experienced sustained physical, psychological or emotional abuse, or violence which results in injury or death.

Victim/survivors of domestic abuse are often isolated, experience high levels of fear and trauma, feel ashamed and disempowered and often need extensive support around a range of issues.

Domestic abuse may include hate behaviour directed towards the victim due to their personal characteristics.

## **6.0 Policy Description**

### **How we will respond**

We believe that our customers should not live in fear of abuse or violence. We take domestic abuse seriously and are committed to providing a sensitive and confidential response to anyone approaching us for assistance in cases of domestic abuse.

If a victim/survivor reports domestic abuse in person, we will ensure that they can be supported confidentially and discreetly by

a member of staff. If they make a disclosure by other means, ie, over the phone, they will be offered immediate domestic abuse support contact numbers and safety advice.

## **The support we offer (all services)**

### **We will:**

- Attempt to identify victims/survivors when they become our customer and during our relationship with customers. Where customers tell us they are experiencing domestic abuse we will offer information about support and safety advice.
- Enable service users to report domestic abuse to us in different ways, including; in person, in writing, by telephone, online or via a third party such as a police officer or IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate).
- Ensure that victim/survivors know that they can meet staff in confidence at our offices or at an agreed choice of safe venue.
- Where domestic abuse is identified, aim to carry out a risk assessment (using the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and 'Honour'-based violence (DASH) Risk Identification Checklist) and work with specialist agencies to help with safety planning and support for the victim/survivor and their children.
- Share information with the local MARAC. We are participants in MARACs at which information is shared between agencies involved in domestic abuse cases and they produce multi-agency action plans in response to high risk cases. For cases which meet the MARAC risk rating threshold or if we have child protection concerns, we have a legal duty to share this with agencies. In cases where the threshold is not met, with the agreement of the victim/survivor, we will make referrals to other support from relevant agencies.
- Agree an action plan with the victim/survivor, monitor the situation and review at a frequency agreed with them.



- Provide improved security to a victim/survivor's home where a need is identified. This may be in partnership with local Sanctuary Schemes.
- Help people experiencing domestic abuse access appropriate services as early as possible and provide advice to allow them to make choices about what to do next.
- Ensure that where children and young people are affected by domestic abuse, they have access to services as early as possible.
- Make use of civil laws to offer maximum protection to all victims/survivors to stop the abuse reoccurring.
- Follow our Safeguarding Policy for protecting children where we believe a child is at risk due to an abusive relationship.
- Make domestic abuse awareness training available for all frontline staff.
- Provide support and guidance to staff experiencing domestic abuse through the Calico Group Domestic Abuse Policy for employees .
- Publicise our approach to raise awareness amongst staff and residents, with the aim of increasing reports of domestic abuse.

### **Other Support (Calico Homes)**

Calico Homes can take other action to assist victim/survivors, such as:

- Repairing damage to the property (if a Calico Homes resident)
- Offering extra security at the property
- Making a referral to emergency safe refuge accommodation.

Security measures may be arranged and provided at our discretion, or a referral made to an external agency for assistance.

### **Accommodation and Rehousing (Calico Homes)**

Calico Homes recognise that housing is normally a key issue in domestic abuse cases. We understand that many victims may not wish to move home in order to maintain local and family connections or avoid disruption to their children and their schooling. We aim to work with the victim/survivor to take action to manage the risks posed to them in remaining at home and where possible we will support the rights of the victim/survivor to ensure that they are not deprived of accommodation.

In cases where the victim/survivor is a household member but not a tenant, we will ensure they are supported to access help and advice from specialist agencies and they will be advised to approach a local authority for rehousing assistance. We may in exceptional circumstances consider granting a tenancy to the victim when they are not a tenant.

### **Emergency Move (Calico Homes)**

Calico Homes are unable to directly provide emergency accommodation to victim/survivors. We will refer victim/survivors to local housing advice services or safe refuge accommodation.

### **Long Term Transfer (Calico Homes)**

Calico Homes will assist the victim/survivor to move to another property where we believe that this would help in decreasing the risk presented to them. We will seek the advice of outside agencies in making assessments of risk for rehousing purposes, such as Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs), support agencies and the Police. We will not consider a transfer if it would not reduce the risk presented.

Transfer may be achieved by any of these means:

- Direct Offer (Management Transfer)
- Choice-Based Lettings (Be With Us)
- Reciprocal arrangements with a another social landlord
- Referral to local authority for housing assistance

Where there is an immediate or elevated risk to the victim/survivor, the usual means of enabling a transfer to safe

alternative accommodation is for the victim/survivor to approach a local authority for assistance as a homeless person.

A reciprocal arrangement (where another social landlord agrees to allocate the victim/survivor a property in return for nomination rights on one of our properties) may be considered in exceptional circumstances in line with our Allocations Policy.

Where we assist a victim/survivor to move home, we will consider their housing needs to ensure that the accommodation offered is appropriate. This may mean we offer a different type or size property to victims/survivors, providing this meets the customers' housing needs.

### **Priority (Calico Homes)**

We will make a direct offer where we decide to facilitate a transfer for the victim on domestic abuse grounds. We will make only one reasonable offer of alternative appropriate accommodation, in accordance with the victim/survivor's housing needs.

### **Joint Tenants (Calico Homes)**

Where the victim/survivor and perpetrator have a joint tenancy we cannot intervene to decide which party should occupy the property. We will support the victim/survivor to obtain legal advice on their options, which include:

- Seeking an occupation order
- A court order to transfer the tenancy to their sole name
- The victim/survivor serving Notice to Quit to end a periodic or 'lifetime' tenancy

### **Notice (Calico Homes)**

Under the tenancy agreement, victims/survivors can serve the Calico Homes with a Notice to Quit to end their joint tenancy.

This must be done in collaboration with Calico, to explore the possibility of granting a sole tenancy to the victim/survivor; this may be for an alternative property or the same property where it

is considered safe to do so. Any decision will be based on the risk posed to the victim/survivor and the suitability of the property for their housing needs.

Where a Notice to Quit is served by the victim/survivors to end their joint tenancy and the perpetrator fails to vacate, we will take possession proceedings to remove the perpetrator.

### **Action Against Perpetrators (Calico Homes)**

Calico Homes may support victims/survivors to take legal action against perpetrators of domestic abuse and help them access advice about their options.

Where the perpetrator is a Calico Homes resident or household member, we may initiate legal action against them in accordance with our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. Where the perpetrator is not a resident or a household member, we will refer the victim/survivor to access appropriate support to increase their safety and seek advice on taking legal action.

Any action taken will be pursued in consultation with the victim/survivor as far as is reasonable. The overriding consideration of any intervention taken by Calico Homes is to reduce the risk to the victim/survivor. Legal action will not be pursued where this is likely to increase the risk to the victim. Civil remedies available to Calico Homes include:

- Possession proceedings
- Injunctions

Calico Homes will also assist victim/survivors to access support from specialist support agencies which can advise them on specialist legal remedies, including:

- Non-molestation orders
- Occupation orders
- Restraining orders

### **Multi-Agency Work (Calico Homes)**

Calico Homes will encourage a joint and co-ordinated approach to addressing domestic abuse. We will liaise with the Police, local authorities, voluntary agencies and community groups.

We will participate in Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) to support and protect victims/survivors and will follow any recommendations made.

### **Confidentiality and Consent (all services)**

Calico will respect confidentiality when dealing with reports of domestic abuse.

There are some circumstances in which we are required by law to disclose information given to us, for example in cases involving safeguarding children or vulnerable adults, or for the purposes of the prevention and detection of crime.

We will discuss this obligation with the person making the disclosure where possible. Where we are under a duty to disclose safeguarding concerns we will refer the matter to the relevant agency in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy.

### **7. Equality and Diversity (all services)**

Calico will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people. We will act sensitively towards the diverse needs of individuals and communities and will take positive action where appropriate.

We will make appropriate arrangements where necessary to ensure that customers are not unreasonably and disproportionately affected.

### **8. Legislative and Regulatory Framework**

This policy is informed by the following legislation and regulation:

- RSH Regulatory Consumer Standards
- Domestic Abuse Bill (draft 2019)
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012

- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Crime and Security Act 2010
- Family Law Act 1996
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Equality Act 2010
- Housing Act 1996
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007

## **9 Benchmark Analysis**

We have benchmarked against several organisations' Domestic Abuse Policy including:

Gentoo Group  
Peabody  
Durham City Homes

## **10 Related Strategies, Policies and Procedures**

- Employee Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedure
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Procedure
- Safeguarding Policy
- Safeguarding Procedure
- Allocations Policy

## Appendix 1 Advice and Support

There are a number of avenues for advice and support available for both employees living with domestic abuse, and for managers with concerns about how Calico can support employees.

### Calico Group Safeguarding Leads

A referral should be made and advice sought from one of the safeguarding leads following all disclosures and any concerns for an employee.

#### **LIST OF SAFEGUARDING LEADS**

For the specific service areas approach your dedicated lead in the first instance unless unavailable, for all other services all of the below can be accessed at any time.

Lead	Area	Contact Numbers	Email
<b>Nicola Crompton-Hill</b>	Calico Group Lead	01282 686315 07956549455	ncrompton-hill@acornrecovery.org.uk
<b>Jane Williamson</b>	Barley View	01706 655917 07542229367	JWilliamson@calico.org.uk
<b>Kate Heelas</b>	Gateway Services/Floating Support Services	01282 686367 07855232353	kheelas@calico.org.uk
<b>Alex Atkinson</b>	Safenet	01282 414130 07974157405	aatkinson@safenet.org.uk
<b>Stacey Garvin</b>	Acorn	01282 686321 07854 247 792	sgarvin@calico.org.uk

Safeguarding Leads can provide;

- Support and guidance for the referring staff member on their course of action
- Access to counselling and support

## **SafeNet Domestic Abuse Services**

Tel: 0300 3033581  
(7 days per week, 24 hours a day)  
or e-mail: [contact@safenet.org.uk](mailto:contact@safenet.org.uk)

SafeNet can provide:

- Information and advice for managers in their course of action
- Confidential support for all domestic abuse victims/survivors
- Risk management and prevention of further harm through various initiatives

### **Support available in Lancashire districts;**

Click the link below for the contact details on Lancashire Victims Services website for community based domestic abuse support services available across Lancashire;

<https://lancashirevictimservices.org/>

Contact Calico Group's SafeNet Domestic Abuse and Support Services for refuge provision and assistance accessing refuges nationally.

0300 3033581 [www.safenet.org.uk](http://www.safenet.org.uk)

### **Support available in other areas of the UK;**

Web link for Victim Support -  
<http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

Web link for female victims – Women's Aid  
<http://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

Web link for male domestic violence victims – MALE  
<http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk/> or telephone 0808 801 0327

For information and advice for children and young people, please visit the Childline website or telephone Childline free on 0800 11 11.



- Web link for Galop – anti-LGBT hate crime charity  
<http://www.galop.org.uk>
- If you are worried you might be forced into marriage or are worried about a friend or relative contact the Forced Marriage Unit on 0207 008 0151.
- If you are a man either experiencing abuse, or are concerned about your abusive behaviour, or for professionals and victim/survivors looking for help for an abuser, or male victim, contact the Respect Phone line on 0845 122 8609 or visit [www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk).
- National Domestic Violence Helpline – 0800 247 2000. This helpline is run in partnership by Refuge and Women’s Aid and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- SafeLives (SafeLives) - Web link for victims of domestic abuse - [www.safelives.org.uk](http://www.safelives.org.uk)
- Web link for female victims and legal advice - [www.rightsofwomen.org.uk](http://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk)

## **Appendix Two Managing a report of Domestic Abuse**

<p>1. Ensure the environment is safe for disclosure. If this is at the place of work, try to use a private room or where a disclosure is made in the home ensure the alleged perpetrator is not present.</p>
<p>2. If a victim/survivor reports an incident in person at one of our offices, they should be offered an interview with a member of staff straight away wherever possible.</p>
<p>3. Take a non-judgmental approach to disclosures and avoid being reactive in response to disclosures, don't appear shocked, upset, angry or any other strong emotional reaction as this can close down disclosure.</p>
<p>4. Listen and support the victim/survivor, provide them with the contact details for the local domestic abuse services. In the majority of cases, where there is no immediate danger, the victim/survivor sets the pace. This may mean that no immediate action is taken.</p>
<p>5. Where there are concerns for the person's immediate safety, encourage them to seek advice from SafeNet or a local domestic abuse service. Ask if there are children and young people in the home. If you have concerns for a child's welfare refer to the Calico Safeguarding Policy.</p>
<p>6. Complete a Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment Risk Checklist (DASH) with the victim. Where high risk domestic abuse is identified, refer into MARAC with the victim/survivor's consent where possible/required. For further support and advice liaise with Safenet and Complex Case Officers.</p>
<p>7. If possible this should be with a Complex Case Officer or, if no one is available one of the Neighbourhood Officers or Tenancy Sustainment Officers. (Calico Homes). Or a Domestic Abuse ambassador from the Group.</p>
<p>8. If the staff member is at the victim/survivor's home when the disclosure is made, it is important to get as much information as possible- if safe to do so. If the alleged</p>

<p>perpetrator is at home imminently, the staff member should pass the details to the Complex Case Officers who will try to contact the victim/survivor safely. (Calico Homes)</p>
<p>9. Staff may receive reports from a third party e.g neighbour, or a family member stating they suspect domestic abuse.</p> <p>Alternatively a neighbour may report a noise nuisance; the noise may be coming from shouting or arguing within the household. This should be referred through to the Complex Case Officers. (Calico Homes) or a Domestic Abuse ambassador from the Group.</p>
<p>10. If the report is not made in person, or via email the details should be passed without delay to the Complex Case Officers (Calico Homes) or a Domestic Abuse ambassador from the part of the Calico Group where it was reported.</p>
<p>11. If you suspect that any form of abuse is occurring such as elder abuse please refer to Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure for further guidance.</p>
<p>12. Where a person discloses they use abusive behaviour, signpost to a local perpetrator programme and support services. Inform your direct line manager to risk assess your own safety together.</p>
<p>13. Always follow up the conversation, being mindful to make contact when it is safe to do so.</p>
<p>14. Hearing disclosures of domestic abuse can have an impact on our emotional wellbeing. Ensure that following any disclosures you speak with a manager as you feel would help.</p>