

 West Mercia POLICE		POLICY
Security Classification	OFFICIAL	
Disclosable under Freedom of Information Act 2000	Yes	

POLICY TITLE	Internal Domestic Abuse And Other Vulnerability Related Crime (Officers And Staff)
REFERENCE NUMBER	WMP200
Version	1.0

POLICY OWNERSHIP	
DIRECTORATE	CRIME & VUNERABILITY
BUSINESS AREA	VULNERABILITY & SAFEGUARDING

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION DATE	November 2022
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	November 2025
RISK RATING	LOW
EQUALITY ANALYSIS	LOW

West Mercia Police welcome comments and suggestions from the public and staff about the contents and implementation of this policy.
Please e-mail policiesandprocedures@westmercia.police.uk

**INTERNAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR OFFICERS AND STAFF AFFECTED
BY DOMESTIC ABUSE AND OTHER VULNERABILITY RELATED CRIME**

CONTENTS

Section

- 1.0 [POLICY OUTLINE](#)
- 2.0 [POLICY INTENTION](#)
- 3.0 [DEFINITION](#)
- 4.0 [CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION](#)
- 5.0 [LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS](#)
- 6.0 [ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS](#)
- 7.0 [CONSULTATION](#)
- 8.0 [DOCUMENT HISTORY](#)
- 9.0 [DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT](#)

1.0 POLICY OUTLINE

For the purpose of this policy and guidance any reference to a West Mercia employee includes any Police officer, Special Constable, member of Police Staff or Volunteer working for the Chief Constable of West Mercia Police or the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

West Mercia Police recognises that members of our workforce may also be a victim of vulnerability related crimes such as childhood sexual abuse, serious sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking and cultural crimes (forced marriage, female genital mutilation etc.), this can have a devastating impact on victims, their families, friends and colleagues.

Domestic Abuse and other vulnerability related crimes occur in all communities, regardless of gender, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity. West Mercia Police and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. It is therefore important to recognise that our workforce is diverse and that these differences between individuals may require differing approaches and resources.

2.0 POLICY INTENTION

Our priority is victim safety, together with compassion and understanding for those affected.

There is an acknowledgement that where the victim is a member of our workforce there will be additional safety considerations and increased sensitivities for the employee. It is acknowledged that victims of domestic abuse or vulnerability crimes within the police community may not wish to disclose to colleagues for a number of reasons. This is no different to victims in any walk of life, but in addition the fear that 'positive action' and 'recording' might stigmatise them in the workplace.

Domestic Abuse and vulnerability crime types are recognised as having barriers to reporting, require specialist support, are sensitive and complex in their nature and often have a long term psychological and emotional effect on the victims. The impact on the morale, health, wellbeing and self-confidence of our employees and their families who are affected by these crimes, can impact on every area of their lives, including their performance at work.

The intention of this policy is to recognise that risk and support members of our workforce, whether victims, supervisors or colleagues with guidance whether directly reported or identified through more informal routes. This policy further

acknowledges that there will be perpetrators of domestic abuse or vulnerability crime within the workforce and seeks to provide guidance on how this should be dealt with.

As an employee of West Mercia police there are certain expectations on you, your colleagues and the organisation. This policy is intended to inform victims, colleagues, supervisors, managers and perpetrators of these expectations and requirements.

This policy demonstrates West Mercia's commitment to ensuring that any employee who is a victim of such vulnerability related crime can raise the issue at work, without fear of stigma or victimisation, and will receive appropriate support and assistance and those who perpetrate such crimes will not be tolerated in the workplace.

West Mercia will take all reasonable steps to minimise the risks to the safety of its employees while at work where it is known that they have experienced domestic abuse or been the victim of such vulnerability related crime.

West Mercia will ensure that managers have access to appropriate information and feel able to encourage individuals to seek advice and support. If approached by an individual who has been the victim of a domestic abuse or other vulnerability related crime, managers will listen and be sensitive and non-judgemental in order that the most appropriate help can be offered.

Domestic abuse and other vulnerability related crimes perpetrated by officers or staff within West Mercia Police will not be condoned under any circumstances nor will it be treated as a purely private matter. Whilst recognising that you are a perpetrator is not an easy thing to do and is an important step in making a change in your own life and that of those around you and whilst West Mercia will support you in making these changes, there are expectations regarding Police Standards which will be upheld in line with the Code of Conduct and this policy does not in any way seek to remove the need for disciplinary procedures to be engaged.

To see the guidance document for this policy please follow the link:

[Internal DA Guidance](#)

3.0 DEFINITION

The West Mercia Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's definition of such crimes includes:-

Domestic abuse, serious sexual offences, childhood sexual abuse, stalking, harassment and cultural crimes (forced marriage, Female Genital mutilation and Honor based violence). These crime types are recognised as having barriers to reporting, require specialist support, are sensitive and complex in their nature and often have a long term psychological and emotional effect on the victims

Domestic Abuse is defined as *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 sexuality.*

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

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Emotional
- Financial

See Appendix 1 in Guidance for further detail.

4.0 CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Any information provided by an employee who discloses that they are a victim of a Domestic abuse or vulnerability related crimes is treated as confidential and will not be shared with other colleagues without consent. However information sharing will be required in certain circumstances where there is a legal basis for doing so; for example:

- Where there are concerns for children or vulnerable adults
- Where the force is required to protect the safety of other employees/public
- Where there are concerns for the victims safety
- If it is required by law
- If it will prevent a serious crime or risk to public health

All material recorded as part of the investigation or safeguarding is governed by GDPR and Management of Police Information. Cases involving West Mercia Police employees will normally attract an OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE marking due to the special category personal data involved.

5.0 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Policy complies with Police Regulations and Determinations and provisions set out in the Human Rights Act 1998, Children's Act 2004, GDPR and the Health and Safety at Work Act.

6.0 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The Equality Analysis (EA), Health and Safety Assessment (HAS) and Risk Assessment (RA) associated with this document are available on request.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- Federation
- Unison
- People and Organisational Development (Operational HR)
- Critical Friends Group and Stakeholders

<i>Business Lead/ Chief Officer Consulted</i>	<i>Date Consulted</i>
Head of P&OD/ T/Supt V&S/ ACC C&V	Sep 2022/ Nov 2022

8.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

The history and rationale for change to policy will be recorded using the chart below:

Date	Author / Reviewer	Amendment(s) & Rationale	Date of Approval / Adoption
Sept 2022	J Roberts	New Policy/ Guidance	JNCC Exec Board 08/11/2022
June 2022	B Kular-Pearce S Wallace-Rathmall L Wall		

9.0 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Is a DPIA required? – No confirmed by Audit Risk and Compliance on 12/07/2022

10.0 MONITORING / EVALUATION

The monitoring and review of this policy is the responsibility of the policy owner.