

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme					
Protective Marking:	Not Protectively Marked			Publication (Y/N):	Y
Title:	MPS Domestic Abuse policy				
Summary:	Establishes clear guidelines and accountability for the investigation of domestic abuse, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage and Harassment and Stalking				
Branch / OCU:	Territorial Policing – Capability and Business Support Public Protection Team				
Date created:	September 2014	Review date:	September 2018	Version:	3.0
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## **Application**

- **When?** This Policy applies with immediate effect.
- **Who?** All police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) or the Commissioner must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) policy and associated procedures.

This Policy applies in particular to officers and staff in the following roles:  
(This list is not intended to be exhaustive.)

- Police officers and police staff investigating domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, honour based violence and forced marriages
- Police officer and police staff supervisors
- Crime Management Units
- Intelligence Units
- Community Safety Unit
- Forensic Services
- Court Police Liaison Officers
- Criminal Justice Units
- Neighbourhood Policing Teams
- Borough Senior Leadership Teams

## **Policy Principles**

The MPS requires all officers and staff to follow the guidelines set in this policy toolkit when investigating cases of domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, honour based violence and/or forced marriages.

When dealing with such incidents, officers and staff must:

- Follow the guidance on dealing with victims and witnesses, including children;
- Ensure the protection and safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children by assessing all victims/ witnesses/ persons in line with the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF);
- Manage any risks to the safety of the victim;
- Where powers/grounds exist, ensure the suspect(s) are arrested;
- Ensure all relevant intelligence, including officer safety issues, are recorded.

### **Purpose and Benefits**

This policy establishes clear guidelines and accountability for the investigation of domestic abuse, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage and Harassment and Stalking.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Prevent and detect crimes of domestic abuse and by working in partnership with other agencies;
- Hold perpetrators of domestic abuse accountable for their actions; and stop the abuse,
- Ensure the safety of victims and their children experiencing Domestic Abuse, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage and Harassment and Stalking.

### **Associated Documents and Policies**

Toolkits for the investigation of:

- Domestic Abuse;
- Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage;
- Stalking and Harassment.

Other related toolkits:

- MPS toolkit for General Investigation.

### **Notices related to this policy**

Item 4, Notices 40/09

Item 1, Notices 30/14

Item 5, Notices 37/01

Item 3, Notices 40/04

Item 5, Notices 30/05

## **Section B: Equality Impact Assessment**

Policies are developed and reviewed using a consultative approach involving relevant internal and external stakeholders. Additionally, developers must consider what action needs to be taken to help overcome or minimise any disadvantages that people who share a protected characteristic will experience in compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Finally, the impact of the policy will be monitored to identify any emerging issues, learning and benefits post-delivery of the policy. The table below summarises the outcomes of these steps:

<b>Research and consultation</b>	
<b>Review of research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Scotland Domestic Abuse (DA) Toolkit - April 2013</li> <li>• Police Scotland Recency Frequency Gravity Guidance Document - May 2013</li> <li>• Review of Strathclyde Police Domestic Abuse Reduction Model paper for Chief Officer Group (COG) - July 2013</li> <li>• Strathclyde Policing Review (support paper for COG) July 2013</li> <li>• Operation Dauntless Activity Tracker (a continuous MPS improvement plan to ensure we provide a consistent high quality of service to victims DA, and improve offender management and capture emerging risks);</li> <li>• Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)/ Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Service Level Agreement</li> <li>• CPS/Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Evidence checklist</li> <li>• Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2013-17</li> <li>• Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)/ Organisational Learning recommendations spreadsheet</li> <li>• Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC - The Metropolitan Police Service's response to tackling DA</li> <li>• Home Office 2004 report Paying the Price (regarding the relationship between domestic abuse and prostitution)</li> <li>• 2012/13 Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW)</li> </ul>
<b>Internal consultation</b>	MPS Legal services; Safety and Health Risk Management Team; Finance Business Partner; Information Assurance Team; Police Officers and Police Staff; Staff associations; Critical Incident Advisory Team

<b>External Consultation</b>	Local Authority representatives; Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA); College of Policing; CPS; MOPAC VAWG panel; Southall Black Sisters; British Transport Police (BTP); City of London Police; Dorset Police; PALADIN (National Stalking Advocacy Service); Victim Support.
<b>Protected Characteristics (Equality Act 2010)</b>	
<b>Summary of Equality Impact Assessment</b>	This policy toolkit ensures the MPS will not discriminate or treat victims, witnesses and/or suspects of a domestic abuse event unfairly based on their Protected Characteristics, as covered in the Equality Act 2010.
<b>Age</b>	The changes to the definition of Domestic Abuse raises awareness that young people in the 16 to 17 age group can also be victims of domestic violence and abuse. As age may be a precursor to vulnerability; children, young people and older people that come to police notice will be assessed for vulnerability, using the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF), and if appropriate referred to relevant agency for protective safeguarding. Policy users are directed to other toolkits such as safeguarding children and safeguarding adults to ensure correct appropriate action is taken.
<b>Deaf/ disability</b>	Disability can be a factor in domestic abuse cases. Officers and staff are told to assess a victim's vulnerability and risk levels, which captures disability, and they are reminded that communication issues may arise for example when communicating with a Deaf or hard of hearing person. MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristic/s of the victim/witness/suspects (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs and to avoid making assumptions or stereotyping.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	The policy recognises the issues sometimes faced by those wishing to undergo gender reassignment surgery i.e. that they may be subject to domestic abuse or coerced into forced marriage to deny their gender reassignment. MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristic/s of the victim/witness/suspects (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs and to avoid making assumptions or stereotyping.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	It is recognized that pregnancy may be a trigger in domestic abuse and this is reflected within the DASH risk assessment. Officers and staff are told to assess a victim's vulnerability and risk levels. The policy tells MPS personnel to remove the victim from the premises if there is a risk to their safety and they are diverted to the Safeguarding

	Children and the Safeguarding Adult polices to ensure correct appropriate action is taken.
<b>Race</b>	Officers are instructed to use language line or another officer fluent in the language spoken. They are also told to never use children, family members, witnesses, religious or community leaders as interpreters. They must ensure interpreters are not left alone with victims to take statements and/or do not pressure victims to withdraw statements or make them feel uncomfortable about engaging with police. MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristic/s of the victim/witness/suspects (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs and to avoid making assumptions or stereotyping.
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Officers and staff should be respectful of any cultural or religious beliefs when dealing with the victim and/or the suspect, e.g. having female officers and staff to assist with female victims if available. Some victims are coerced in to forced marriages due to their family's cultural or religious beliefs. Some victims of certain religious beliefs may not wish to report Domestic Abuse, honour based violence to the police out of fear that this will bring further 'dishonour' on the family. MPS personnel are specifically instructed: do not attempt mediation, reconciliation, counselling or the use of religious arbitration. MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristic/s of the victim/witness/suspects (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs and to avoid making assumptions or stereotyping.
<b>Sex</b>	The policy raises awareness and removes any myths relating to domestic abuse and the gender of the victim, witness or suspect. 7.1% of women and 4.4% of men were estimated to have experienced any domestic abuse in the last year (2012/13) Equivalent to an estimated 1.2 million female and 700,000 male victims. Officers and staff are reminded that while most victims of forced marriages and honour-based violence tend to be young women and girls, young men can also be victims; also, both men and women may be the perpetrators of honour-based violence.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	The policy recognises there may be issues for lesbians, gays, bisexuals or trans (LGBT) people when reporting domestic abuse to the police, and that domestic abuse <u>does</u> exist within same-sex relationships. MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristic/s of the victim/witness/suspects (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs and to avoid making assumptions or stereotyping.

<p><b>Other issues</b> for example: Low income groups, single parents, rough sleepers</p>	<p>Financial abuse is another form of domestic abuse in which the perpetrator controls the victims income and finances The policy raises awareness of the role income and financial abuse can play within domestic abuse cases.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring</b></p>	
<p><b>12 month implementation plan</b></p>	<p>This policy will be monitored for 12 months with a series of exercises to ensure compliance and capturing any issues or lessons identified. Some example activities include a Territorial Policing Central Domestic Abuse Working Group to monitor compliance; an annual monitoring report which will identify any emerging equality and diversity issues; review of MPS data on the MPS response to domestic abuse.</p>