



An Garda Síochána

Policy Document

Domestic Abuse Intervention

Effective Date	29/01/2025
Version No.	1.0
Approved by	Garda Executive
Introduced by	HQ Directive 004/2025
Policy Owner	Assistant Commissioner, Organised and Serious Crime

Purpose

The purpose of this Domestic Abuse Intervention policy is primarily to outline the required policing response to, and investigation of, allegations relating to domestic abuse, including those made by a third party. It incorporates an accompanying procedure document, which outlines the relevant legislation and provides guidance to Garda personnel responding to domestic abuse incidents and engaging with victims of domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is a complex and sensitive issue. Effectively investigating domestic abuse-related incidents, prosecuting offenders and supporting victims of domestic abuse are priorities for An Garda Síochána. It is imperative that all Garda personnel, regardless of their role or function, understand the prevalence of domestic abuse and be cognisant that each engagement may be an opportunity to support a victim of domestic abuse.

This policy and its associated procedure document outline the response that must be considered and delivered at every domestic abuse call for service and will aim to:

- Mitigate any further abuse to the victim and/ or children.
- Reduce recidivist behaviour.
- Encourage any future reporting of such incidents, and
- Support victims of domestic abuse.

This policy will also outline the practices that Garda personnel are required to carry out when dealing with such domestic abuse incidents.

Scope

This document and all associated documentation apply to all members of An Garda Síochána and Garda staff. It also applies to police officers from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) seconded to An Garda Síochána in accordance with Section 53, Garda Síochána Act 2005, as amended.

Policy Statement

Domestic abuse is not defined in Irish legislation. However, the Government of Ireland's Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence uses the following definition, as outlined in the Istanbul Convention:

All acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim.

Domestic abuse is not exclusive to one socio-economic group or to one type of victim/gender/profession. It can range from low-level and persistent to short and extreme. Investigating members and responding personnel should be aware that a victim may engage in coping strategies to try to prevent the abuse, de-escalate the situation and appease the abuser. Domestic abuse is about control and power.

The victim's readiness to call the Gardaí will be determined by their attitude and expectation of the service Garda personnel provide. All Garda personnel must consider that the standard and professionalism of their behaviours and the standard of service they provide could dictate whether a victim engages with the criminal justice process or whether they retreat, thus re-affirming the position of the abuser.

This policy and its associated procedure document have been developed with the aim of ensuring the following:

- That a consistent quality and professional service is delivered at the first contact of every domestic abuse call.

- That an empathetic, efficient, effective and ethical response to domestic abuse is adopted. This may reduce repeat incidents as well as minimise the effects on a victim.
- That all incidents of domestic abuse, including those reported by a third party, are fully investigated.
- That the 'Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act 2017' is adhered to and that special care and attention is provided to victims, whilst being cognisant of the vulnerable circumstances that may surround an injured party.
- That all calls for service regarding domestic abuse are correctly and accurately recorded on PULSE.
- That all orders issued under the Domestic Abuse Act 2018 (DVA orders) are, where required, served expeditiously and that breaches of DVA orders are responded to robustly, professionally and effectively.
- That a Domestic Abuse Liaison Inspector will be appointed in each division with responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Compliance

Compliance with this policy and the accompanying procedure document is mandatory for all members of An Garda Síochána and Garda staff. It also applies to police officers from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) seconded to An Garda Síochána in accordance with Section 53, Garda Síochána Act 2005, as amended.

Related Documents

- 1) [An Garda Síochána Policy on the Investigation of Sexual Crime, Crimes Against Children and Child Welfare HQ Directive 48/2013](#)
- 2) [Investigation Management System HQ Directive 60/2020](#)
- 3) [Garda Decision Making Model HQ Directive 37/2019](#)

Cancellations and replacement of existing policy and associated document(s) (if relevant/appropriate)

This policy and associated procedure replaces HQ Directive 23/2017 An Garda Síochána Policy on Domestic Abuse Intervention and HQ Directive 02/2020 Amendment to HQ Directive NO.23/2017: The Domestic Abuse Intervention Policy at section 12.6(c): conducting 'In-Person Call-Backs' to victims of Domestic Abuse.

Legal & Human Rights Screening

This policy has been legal and Human Rights screened in terms of the respective obligations placed on An Garda Síochána for the subject area concerned.

Ethical Standards & Commitments

Every person working in An Garda Síochána must observe and adhere to the standards and commitments set out in the [Code of Ethics](#) for An Garda Síochána and uphold and promote this Code throughout the organisation.

Policy & Procedure Review

This policy and associated documents will be reviewed 12 months from its date of effect and every three years thereafter.

Disclaimer

This document is not intended to, nor does it represent legal advice to be relied upon in respect of the subject matter contained herein. This document should not be used as a substitute for professional legal advice.