# Domestic Abuse Template Policy

musiciansunion.org.uk

## How to use this policy

This is a template policy which you can use and adapt within your organisation. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Musicians’ Union (MU) guidance notes for employers and engagers for practical details on how to manage domestic abuse in the workplace.

The MU encourages you to review your other policies to ensure that they consider domestic abuse, including those on sickness and absence, performance, and paid and/or unpaid leave, as well as your disciplinary procedures.

## Who created this policy

This policy has been drafted with support from [Domestic Abuse Workplace Solutions](https://www.daworkplacesolutions.com/) and using *Sharon’s Policy* which was created by [EIDA](https://www.eida.org.uk/) Ambassador, Sharon Livermore MBE, in collaboration with EIDA, Domestic Abuse Alliance, The HR Dept Ltd., and Domestic Abuse Education.

## Template policy

1. **Introduction**

This policy covers the internal and external support available to musicians experiencing, or involved in, domestic abuse. Everyone has the right to live free from abuse in any form and the responsibility for abuse lies with the perpetrator. There is an increased awareness of the prevalence of domestic abuse in society and **[insert name of organisation]** understands that there may be colleagues who are experiencing domestic abuse, or who want to support friends, colleagues or family members who are going through it.

1. **About this policy**

This policy applies to all workers, including freelancers. Although women disproportionally experience domestic abuse, men and non-binary people also experience domestic abuse.

The aims of this policy are to:

* Raise awareness of the scope and prevalence of domestic abuse.
* Support all workers, including freelancers, experiencing domestic abuse and promote their health, safety, and well-being at work.
* Respond to individual survivors needs
* Recognise that a worker’s ability to work may be impacted directly by the perpetrator of domestic abuse, as well as indirectly owing to the physical and mental impacts of domestic abuse.
* Support Line Managers to help workers who are experiencing domestic abuse.
* Assist colleagues of workers who are experiencing domestic abuse.
* Reinforce **[insert name of organisation]** ‘zero tolerance for behaviour that is unsafe and/or harmful.
* Where appropriate, signpost survivors to specialist services and/or perpetrators who voluntarily wish to seek advice and support to address their behaviour.

1. **What is domestic abuse?**

Domestic abuse is legally defined as abusive behaviour by one person to another, where they are both 16 or over and they are personally connected. The abusive behaviour can be a single incident or a course of conduct.

Behaviour is considered abusive if it consists of any of the following:

* physical or sexual abuse
* violent or threatening behaviour
* controlling or coercive behaviour
* economic abuse; and
* psychological, emotional, or other abuse.

1. **Support**

It is **[insert name of organisation]** intention to deal constructively, compassionately, and sympathetically with cases of domestic abuse. **[insert name of organisation]** will support all those who experience and/or witness domestic abuse. If you are concerned about your own personal situation or that of a colleague, you are encouraged to seek support.

You can speak in confidence to **[insert person to contact]** who can provide initial support, signpost you to support services and help you with any disclosure conversations you would like to have with colleagues and work with you to:

* Discuss and agree ways to help you stay safe in the workplace.
* Signpost you to the appropriate domestic abuse resources; and
* Facilitating referrals.

Line Managers have a role to play in enabling workers experiencing domestic abuse to seek help and support. The role of the Line Manager is to:

* Identify workers who may be experiencing difficulties because of domestic abuse, for example, workers coming to work with unexplained injuries, who appear distressed, have unexplained periods of time off work, or show a deterioration in performance.
* Referring or seeking guidance from trained domestic abuse professionals if there is a disclosure of abuse.
* Provide initial help and support, including advice on the options available for the worker and referrals to appropriate sources of professional help, whilst supporting the worker to make their own decisions.
* Protect confidentiality as far as possible.
* Discuss measures to prioritise safety at work and ensure that the health and safety of all workers is protected.
* Enable the worker to remain productive, efficient and at work.
* Recognise that people who have experienced a traumatic event can experience long-term impacts.

**[Insert name of organisation]** will not discriminate against a survivor of domestic abuse for requesting support or for any other reason related to their status as a survivor of domestic abuse.

1. **Confidentiality**

Where a worker has discussions with their Line Manager, confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible in line with **[insert name of organisation]** procedures. There are, however, some circumstances in which confidentiality cannot be assured. These circumstances occur when there are concerns about children or vulnerable adults, where a high risk to safety has been identified, or where we need to act to protect the safety of members of the public, including other colleagues.

Where an individual or family members are in genuine danger this may be reported to the police. This will be subject to prior discussion with the worker wherever it is reasonably practicable to do so.

Personal data will be stored in accordance with **[insert name of organisation]** data protection policy.

1. **Safety at work**

We acknowledge our duty to protect the health, safety, and well-being of all workers at work, including those workers affected by domestic abuse. This includes situations where the person causing harm is harassing the worker at work, for example, turning up at the workplace unannounced, constantly telephoning/e-mailing/texting the worker during the working day or harassing the workers colleagues.

**[Insert name of organisation]** understands how challenging it can be for people experiencing domestic abuse to disclose. Weactively encourage all workers to disclose when they are experiencing domestic abuse so they can be provided with support. Other workers should also disclose to **[insert name of organisation]** if they are being harassed by a colleague’s current or former partner or family member.

1. **People causing harm**

**[Insert name of organisation]** will not tolerate or condone domestic abuse, regardless of the identity or seniority of the person causing harm. If **[insert name of organisation]** becomes aware that a worker is or may be causing harm, it will take appropriate action, which could include disciplinary action under the **[insert name of organisation]** disciplinary policy.

Any domestic abuse that endangers another worker or uses **[insert name of organisation]** equipment to inflict that abuse, such as mobile phones or laptops, may result in disciplinary action under **[insert name of organisation]** disciplinary policy up to and including dismissal for Gross Misconduct. Disciplinary action may be appropriate in some circumstances even where the person causing harms behaviour takes place outside work.

**[Insert name of organisation]** will signpost workers who disclose that they are causing harm and who genuinely want to change their behaviour to specialist services. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

1. **Reasonable adjustments**

Where a worker needs time off work or flexible working arrangements to access support, manage any legal issues or family requirements, **[insert name of organisation]** will provide a reasonable amount time off and/or agree to flexible working arrangements.

Workers who need time off work and/or flexible working arrangements should discuss this with their Line Manager to agree how much leave is required, how and when it will be taken and whether leave will be paid or unpaid.

1. **Guidance Notes**

Please refer to the MU guidance notes for employers and engagers for practical details on how to manage domestic abuse in the workplace.

1. **Support services**

**If you believe a musician are in immediate danger, call the police on 999.**

[National Domestic Abuse Helpline](https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/): Offer free and confidential advice, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

[Womens Aid](https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/): Offer support for all aspects of domestic abuse.

[Victim Support](https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/): Provide a free and 24-hour Support line on 0808 1689 111.

[Refuge:](https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/) Provide a 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline [0808 2000 247](tel:08082000247).

[Respect Phoneline](https://respectphoneline.org.uk/): Is an anonymous and confidential helpline for men and women who are abusing their partners and families.

[**Music Minds Matter**](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/lOp1Ck26Ds9YGQUyBAz6?domain=helpmusicians.org.uk)

If you work in music and are struggling to cope then call [Music Minds Matter](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/N9TGClR8DsxO4ZcDYEXV?domain=musicmindsmatter.org.uk), a free, 24/7 charity, which will listen, support and help. It doesn’t have to be a crisis, or even about music.

You will speak to an accredited counsellor who will offer emotional support, advice and information. Where appropriate they may also signpost you to other specialist services and offer debt or legal advice. **Call: 0808 802 8008**

[**Music Support**](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/uovLCmq7Gtz14ntENuGB?domain=musicsupport.org)

A confidential and non-judgmental listening ear from trained industry peers who all have personal experience of the music & live events industries and the issues that Music Support covers. **Call**[**0800 030 6789**](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/VDpxCnRG8svlBos1XsnN?domain=musicsupport.org)**Monday – Friday: 09:00 – 17:00 (except for bank holidays)**

This is not an exhaustive list and there are likely to be local charities and support groups in your area that offer help and advice to those experiencing domestic abuse. These can be found via the [BrightSky app](http://www.bright-sky.org.uk)

**Find a fuller list of** [**domestic abuse support services on the MU website**](https://musiciansunion.org.uk/health-safety-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing/domestic-abuse-support)**.**