

# Domestic Abuse Policy

## Governance Information

Applicable Legislation	Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 2018
Regulatory reference	Neighbourhood and Community Standard
Policy Owner	Director of Operations
Approved By	CMT
Date Approved	5 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
Review Date	March 2026
Stakeholders Consulted	n/a

## Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Change
	04/12/2023	Kim Ward, Head of Housing	Addition of Hackney Social Landlords Domestic Abuse Forum attendance and Protocol signatories.

## 1. Policy Statement

IDS uses the definition of domestic abuse as outlined in Section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021:

“Behaviour of a person towards another person where each are aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is ‘abusive’ if it consists of any of the following –

Physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological, emotional or other abuse. It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.”

This policy is clear that people who experience domestic abuse are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all IDS staff and contractors working on behalf of IDS who may encounter possible victims of domestic abuse. This applies to all residents of IDS, regardless of tenure.

This policy replaces the Domestic Abuse Policy 2020.

## 3. Introduction

Domestic abuse is a crime that can have far reaching impact on the health and wellbeing of the victim and their family, often making it difficult in their home and community.

This policy sets out the role of IDS in dealing with domestic abuse reports effectively in a victim centred approach. We will ensure victims experiencing domestic abuse can access appropriate services as early as possible and are given advice to make choices.

## 4. Promotion and awareness

IDS is committed to raising awareness around domestic abuse through its contact with residents in person and on the phone, our website and work directly within communities.

All IDS staff will have awareness of domestic abuse and resident facing staff will have more in depth training on a bi-annual basis. IDS will ensure staff have good local knowledge within the communities they work in of specialise support providers, including Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH).

IDS are part of the Hackney Social Landlords Domestic Abuse forum and have signed up to the Hackney Social Landlords Domestic Abuse Protocol.

## 5. Confidentiality and data protection

IDS recognises that cases of domestic abuse can be very sensitive. We will always seek the views and wishes of the resident concerned before involving any other agencies. The exception to this being where safeguarding concerns rise about adults with care and support needs, child protection concerns, or where IDS is required by law, for example, if being questioned as part of a criminal investigation by the Police.

IDS will meet statutory obligations in line with our existing adult and child safeguarding policies where there are these concerns. Children witnessing domestic abuse is considered a type of child abuse and the safeguarding children policy should be adhered to.

All staff must have regard to the relevant data protection principles and follow the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

## 6. Housing, Repairs and Anti-Social Behaviour

IDS will support customers who are experiencing domestic abuse around their housing options, including management transfers within our own stock or partner agencies.

Repairs resulting from any domestic incident will be treated in line with the Repairs and Maintenance Policy when prioritising repairs.

Domestic abuse is a form of Anti-Social Behaviour, and we will refer to the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and procedure when taking tenancy action around perpetrators of domestic abuse. This may include action around the tenancy to support the resident experiencing abuse to stay safely in their home, or injunctive relief to prevent the perpetrator from attending the address. In the case of joint tenancies this may be around guidance with changing the tenancy from a joint to a sole tenancy.

We will proactively seek and partner with agencies who have expertise in dealing with domestic abuse support services to signpost our customers to the best possible place for ongoing assistance. We will also align with all of our local authority partners cooperating with them in their duty to developing strategies for victims of domestic abuse and keeping children in safe accommodation.

## 7. Related policies and procedures

Safeguarding Children Policy

Safeguarding Adults Policy

Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Allocations and Lettings Policy

Repairs and Maintenance Policy

## 8. Roles & Responsibilities

Director of Operations	Responsible for formulating policy.
Head of Housing	Responsible for reviewing and monitoring implementation of procedures. Designated domestic abuse lead.
All other staff	Effective day to day implementation of the policy.

## 9. Policy Review & Update

This policy is due to be reviewed every two years, or if there are significant legislative or organisational changes which require a review. The next review date, subject to the above caveat, therefore, will be before February 2026.

## Equality Impact Assessment

Group	Impact	Notes
Protected characteristics – <a href="#">Equality Act (2010)</a>		
Disability		
Gender reassignment		
Marriage or civil partnership		
Pregnancy, maternity and parenthood		
Race		
Religion or belief		
Sexual Orientation		
Sex / Gender		
Age		
Other factors for consideration		
Socio-economic background		
Caring responsibility		

Final Decision	Delete as appropriate: - No barriers or impact identified
Date Completed	14/14/2023