



COMMUNITY
SPORTS
FOUNDATION

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DOMESTIC ABUSE

Date of Next Update: April 2024

Scope

This policy applies to all Norwich City Community Sports Foundation (“Foundation”) staff and affiliated entities to ensure a consistent standard across the Foundation and Norwich City Football Club (“Club”).

This policy supersedes any previous policies on this topic prior to its issue date.

Policy Statement

The Foundation is committed to developing a workplace culture that recognises that some staff members will be experiencing domestic abuse and that the workplace should be a place of safety.

Domestic abuse is a crime that impacts both women and men and it does not respect age, race, social factors, or other similar factors. The Foundation knows that everyone has a right to live free from abuse and violence and any such acts are the sole responsibility of the perpetrators. The Foundation recognises it has a responsibility for addressing such acts where a perpetrator is a member of staff.

The Foundation also acknowledges that under the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) that children and other dependents are deemed victims and we recognise our responsibility to safeguard and protect children and adults at risk of abuse (Children Act 1989 and 2004, and Care Act 2014).

Through this domestic abuse policy and working to reduce the risks related to domestic abuse, the Foundation aims to create a safer workplace and send out a strong message that domestic abuse is unacceptable.

Under the Domestic Abuse Act (2021), and other related legislation, the Foundation recognises its legal responsibilities in promoting the welfare and safety for all staff members.

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 may be relevant to this policy if the abuse impacts a person’s physical ability to work or they are working from home.

The Foundation undertakes not to discriminate against anyone who has been subjected to domestic abuse both in terms of current employment and future development.

Procedure

Definitions

As defined the Domestic Abuse Act (2021), domestic abuse is ‘behaviour that abusive by one person to another’. The persons must be ‘personally connected’ and both the perpetrator and victim/survivor must be aged 16 or over.

Behaviour is deemed to be abuse if it consists any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse

So called 'honour-based' abuses, such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) when the perpetrators and victim/survivor are 'personally connected' may also fall under the statutory definition of domestic abuse.

Economic abuse is when someone interferes with someone else's ability to get, use, and/or keep economic resources, such as money, transportation, or utilities.

Personally connected is when individuals are the following:

- Married or in a civil partnership, or engaged to be married / civilly partnered
- In an intimate personal relationship with each other
- Have children where they each have parental responsibilities
- Relatives

Controlling behaviour is when someone tries to make someone dependent and/or subordinate (under someone else's authority) to them by isolating them and removing their means of independence.

Coercive behaviour is when acts (either in isolation or a pattern) of assault, threats, humiliation, intimidation, or other behaviours are used to harm, punish, or frighten another person.

Identifying Domestic Abuse in the Workplace

While it is for the individual themselves to recognise they are a victim/survivor of domestic abuse, there are signs which may indicate a member of staff may be a victim/survivor.

These may include the following:

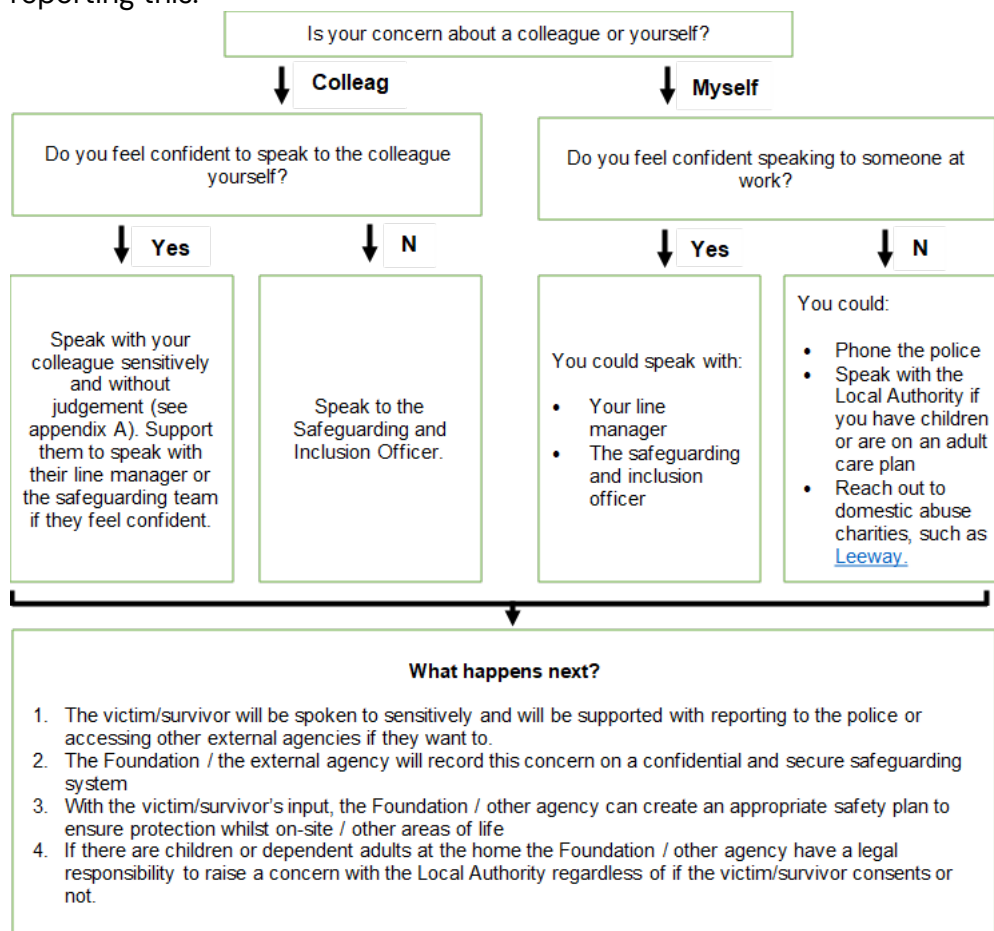
- The member of staff may confide in their colleagues/manager
- Staff may inform their manager that a colleague is suffering from domestic abuse
- There may be obvious effects of physical abuse (it is important not to make assumptions)
- It may come to light because of enquiries into a drop-in performance or a significant change in behaviour
- It may reveal itself as the background to poor attendance or presenteeism – where victims/survivors prefer to be at work rather than at home
- Colleagues noticing visible injuries.

It is essential to understand that any of the above may arise from a range of circumstances of which domestic abuse may just be one. Whilst the Foundation strongly encourages victims/survivors of domestic abuse to disclose domestic abuse for the safety of themselves and all those in the workplace, it does not force them to share this information if they do not want to.

Reporting and managing disclosures of abuse

It takes great courage to disclose if you are a victim/survivor of domestic abuse. All disclosures will be treated with sensitivity and confidentially (in so far as is possible, see further information below).

If you have a concern about yourself or a colleague, below is one way to help with reporting this:



Confidentiality and right to privacy

In general, staff members who disclose experiencing abuse can be assured that the information they provide will be treated confidentially.

There are, however, some circumstances in which confidentiality cannot be assured:

- Matters involving risk of harm to children, young people, and adults at risk
- Matters involving risk of harm to Foundation staff
- Matters which may harm the reputation of the Foundation

If the Foundation decides to proceed in breaching confidentiality it will discuss with the member of staff, why it is doing so, and it will seek the staff member's agreement where possible. The Foundation will be mindful of additional sensitivities such as when sexuality has not been disclosed and parties are in a same sex relationship.

A rationale for all decisions to breach confidentiality will be included on the MyConcern record.

Improper disclosure of information i.e., breaches of confidentiality, by any member of staff will be taken seriously and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Support for individuals experiencing domestic abuse

The Foundation recognises that developing a life free from abuse is a process rather than an event and the Foundation will provide ongoing support through a tailored safeguarding plan for staff members who disclose abuse.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Leave for relevant appointments, including with support agencies, solicitors, to rearrange housing or childcare, and for court appointments
- Temporary or permanent changes to working times and patterns
- Using other existing policies
- Access to counselling/support services
- Access to courses developed to support survivors of domestic abuse, for example The Freedom Programme or assertiveness training.

The Foundation recognises that staff may need some time to decide what to do and may try many different options during this process.

Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

The Foundation will take a zero-tolerance approach to domestic abuse perpetrated by staff. It will not be condoned under any circumstances, nor will it be treated as a purely private matter.

If a member of staff approaches the Foundation about their abusive behaviour, the Foundation will provide information about the services and support available to them and will encourage the perpetrator to seek support and help from an appropriate source.

In such cases, the Club's Head of Safeguarding must be informed to ensure that the threat of risk and harm is fully assessed.

The Foundation will treat any allegation, disclosure, or conviction of a domestic abuse related offence on a case-by-case basis with the aim of reducing risk and supporting change.

There are four potential strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- Disciplinary action by the Foundation
- Providing specialist, safety-focused counselling
- Identifying risk

A Foundation staff member cautioned or convicted of a criminal offence may be subject to the Foundation's Disciplinary policy and procedure through a breach of the Foundation's Safeguarding Codes of Conduct.

The Foundation also reserves the right to consider the use of this policy should staff activities outside of work (whether or not it leads to a criminal conviction) have an impact on their ability to perform the role for which they are employed and/or be considered to bring the Foundation into disrepute.

In some circumstances it may be deemed inappropriate for the individual to continue in their current role(s). In these circumstances the possibility of redeployment into an alternative role may be considered if appropriate.

The Foundation also views the use of violence and abusive behaviour by a member of staff, wherever this occurs, as a breach of the Foundation's Safeguarding Codes of Conduct for disciplinary purposes.

Where victim/survivor works within the same organisation

In cases where both the victim/survivor and the perpetrator of domestic abuse work within the Foundation will take appropriate action to ensure that all parties are kept safe and at reduced risk of harm.

In addition to considering disciplinary action against staff who are perpetrating domestic abuse, action may need to be taken to ensure that the victim/survivor and perpetrator do not come into contact in the workplace.

Action may be needed to minimise the potential for the perpetrator to use their position or work resources to find out details about the whereabouts of the victim/survivor.

This may include a change of duties for one or both staff members or withdrawing the perpetrator's access to certain IT systems or environments.

It is recognised that in certain circumstances, those experiencing and perpetrating domestic abuse in a relationship may choose to seek solutions jointly. In such situations appropriate support should be given however the ethos of this policy should guide the response.

Further support

Anyone using this policy to respond to a victim/survivor or perpetrator of domestic abuse should refer to the safeguarding team for additional information if required.

Responsibility and Key Contacts

Foundation's Senior Safeguarding Manager
Club's Head of Safeguarding

Associated Policies

Disciplinary Policy

Speak Up Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding – Code of Conduct

Safeguarding – Information Sharing

Policy Issue Date April 2022

Date of Next Update April 2024

This policy is next due for a general review on the above date. It may however be reviewed and updated earlier, in the event of a change in Foundation requirements, or relevant legislation.

