

Appendix 2 – national context, guidance and legislation

National strategy

National Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy¹

In 2021, the Home Office published its cross-government strategy for tackling violence against women and girls (including domestic abuse), **Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls**. Following the enactment of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, this Strategy set out the Government's approach and ambitions to:

- **Increase support for victims and survivors**, through ensuring they have access to quality support appropriate to their needs (as measured through increased funded support services)
- **increase in the number of perpetrators brought to justice** (including for rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, and 'honour'-based abuse including female genital mutilation and forced marriage)
- **increase in reporting to the police** (as measured by Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime)
- **increase victim engagement** with the police and wider public service response
- **reduce the prevalence** of violence against women and girls

National Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan 2022²

In 2022, the Home Office published its Domestic Abuse Plan which seeks to build on the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and sets out how various aspects of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 will be delivered, through:

- A whole pillar dedicated to preventing domestic abuse from ever happening in the first place. This includes further actions to enhance the delivery of the new Relationship, Sex and Health Education curriculum so young people have greater awareness and understanding of abusive behaviours.
- More support for victims and survivors. This Plan will set out a multi-year funding package to deliver community-based support services, how the duty for accommodation-based support will be delivered, and a commitment to review whether the current statutory leave provision for employees does enough to support victims and survivors.
- Tougher, more robust actions which deal with domestic abusers. These include next steps in the delivery of DAPNs and DAPOs, a commitment to consider options for more robust management of domestic abusers, including the option of creating a register of domestic abusers, and provisions for electronic monitoring of the most harmful perpetrators.

The Plan also details how the Government will respond to the recommendations in Her

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-domestic-abuse-plan>

Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reports to improve the response to domestic abuse. There will also be more information on the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's role, including her oversight on Domestic Homicide Review recommendations and Family Courts and a new victim engagement mechanism.

Violence against Women and Girls National Statement of Expectations (March 2022)³

The National Statement of Expectations (NSE) sets out how local areas should commission effective services to ensure their whole system response to VAWG is as collaborative, robust and effective as it can be so that all victims and survivors, including children as victims in their own right, can get the help they need.

They expect to see local strategies and services that:

- Put the victim at the centre of the service.
- Have a clear focus on perpetrators in order to keep victims safe.
- Take a strategic, system-wide approach to commissioning, acknowledging the gendered nature of VAWG.
- Are locally led and safeguard individuals at every point.
- Raise local awareness of the issues and involve, engage and empower communities to seek, design and deliver solutions to prevent VAWG.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021⁴ (including Statutory Guidance Under Part 4)

The Domestic Abuse Bill passed both Houses of Parliament and was signed into law on 29 April 2021. The Domestic Abuse Act is set to provide further protections to the millions of people who experience domestic abuse, as well as strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators.

Part 4 of the Act places a statutory duty on tier one local authorities relating to the provision of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children residing within 'relevant' safe accommodation. The legislation requires local authorities to ensure that all victims of domestic abuse have access to the right support within safe accommodation, provides guidance as to what they should do to fulfil their statutory responsibilities and further clarity on how the new duty should be delivered on the ground.

The Government recognises that victims and their children may need to live in a variety of different forms of safe accommodation. 'Relevant accommodation' [also referred to as 'safe accommodation' throughout the guidance] is specified by the Secretary of State in regulations as:

- Refuge accommodation
- Specialist safe accommodation
- Dispersed Accommodation

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/violence-against-women-and-girls-national-statement-of-expectations>

⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

- Sanctuary Schemes
- Move-on and/or second stage accommodation
- Other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation (i.e., a safe accommodation place with support)

Providers must evidence that delivery of support in their safe accommodation meets the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities DA Quality Standards.

Additional accreditation by Women's Aid National Quality Standards, Safe Lives Leading Lights or other nationally recognised specialist domestic abuse organisation is also desirable although not essential.

National guidance, programmes and best practice

The following represent nationally recognised strategies, programmes and best practice that provide guidance and standards for the delivery of services:

- Violence Against Women and Girls Services Commissioning Toolkit 2022 [Violence against women and girls services: commissioning toolkit \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/violence-against-women-and-girls-services-commissioning-toolkit)
- HMIC inspection 2014 "Everyone's business: Improving the police response to domestic abuse" (Updates 2015, 2017, 2019 and Review of policing domestic abuse during the pandemic 2021) [improving-the-police-response-to-domestic-abuse.pdf](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/devon-and-cornwall-approach-to-tackling-domestic-abuse.pdf) ([justiceinspectorates.gov.uk](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)) and <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/devon-and-cornwall-approach-to-tackling-domestic-abuse.pdf>
- HM Government 2023 "Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children". [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-secure-the-best-outcomes-for-children)
- All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) 2015 "Conception to age 2: First 1001 days".
- HM Government 2022 "The right to choose – multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and multi-agency practice guidelines". <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2015-0133/CDP-2015-0133.pdf>
- National Security Strategy and response to Serious and Organised Crime Local Profiles <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-and-organised-crime-local-profiles>
- The Supporting Families Programme Guidance 2021-22 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-families-programme-guidance-2021-to-2022>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-families-2021-to-2022-and-beyond>
- The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (Updated April 2021). [MoJ Victims Code 2020 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime)

- The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention, May 2011). https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1076122/MS_3.2022_Council_of_Europe_Convention_on_Preventing_and_Combating_Violence_Against_Women_and_Domestic_Violence.pdf
- Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation (Updated July 2020). [HM Government - Multi-agency statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1076122/MS_3.2022_Council_of_Europe_Convention_on_Preventing_and_Combating_Violence_Against_Women_and_Domestic_Violence.pdf)
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services Statutory Guidance Oct 2021 – ANNEX B DLUHC Quality Standards <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services#annex-b-dluhc-quality-standards>
- NICE quality standards and referrals guidance <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs116/resources/domestic-violence-and-abuse-pdf-75545301469381>, <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph50>
- Sector Sustainability Shared Standards - [Shared Standards-Whole-Document-Final-30.11.2016.pdf \(womensaid.org.uk\)](https://www.womensaid.org.uk/resources/publications/sector-sustainability-shared-standards)
- Supported Housing: national statement of expectations <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-housing-national-statement-of-expectations/supported-housing-national-statement-of-expectations>

Where there are no national standards, the service provider will be required to work in line with best practice guidance.

National outcomes

NHS Outcomes Framework Domains and Indicators

In addition to criminal justice outcomes, domestic abuse and sexual violence services are commissioned to deliver services in relation to all domains.

Domain 1	Preventing people from dying prematurely
Domain 2	Enhancing quality of life for people with long-term conditions
Domain 3	Helping people to recover from episodes of ill-health or following injury
Domain 4	Ensuring people have a positive experience of care
Domain 5	Treating and caring for people in safe environment and protecting them from avoidable harm

Public Health Outcomes Framework

The Public Health Outcomes Framework⁵ focuses on the two high-level outcomes to achieve across the public health system and beyond. These two outcomes are:

Outcome 1: Increased healthy life expectancy. Taking account of the health quality as well as the length of life

Outcome 2: Reduced differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities. Through greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities.

Domestic abuse and sexual violence services form part of the set of supporting public health indicators that help focus our understanding of how well we are doing year by year nationally and locally on those things that matter most to public health, which we know will help improve the outcomes stated above.

The 2 overarching indicators that the service will be responsible for delivering against are:

1.11	Domestic abuse
1.12	Violent crime (including sexual violence)

The impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence is far reaching and contributes to 26 of the 70 indicators currently reported through the Public Health Outcomes Framework.

Domain 1: Improving the wider determinants of health	
1.01	Children in low income families
1.02	School readiness
1.03	Pupil absence
1.04	First time entrants to the youth justice system
1.05	16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training
1.07	Proportion of people in prison aged 18 or over who have a mental illness
1.08	Employment for those with long-term health conditions including adults with a learning disability or who are in contact with secondary mental health services
1.09	Sickness absence rate
1.11	Domestic abuse
1.12	Violent crime (including sexual violence)

⁵ [Public Health Outcomes Framework 2016-2019](#), Department of Health (August 2016)

1.13	Levels of offending and re-offending
1.15	Statutory homelessness
1.18	Social isolation
Domain 2: Health improvement	
2.01	Low birth weight of term babies
2.04	Under 18 conceptions
2.05	Child development at 2 – 21/2 years
2.07	Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in under 25s
2.08	Emotional well-being of looked after children
2.10	Self-harm
2.23	Self-reported well-being
Domain 4: Healthcare public health & preventing premature mortality	
4.01	Infant mortality
4.03	Mortality rate from causes considered preventable
4.09	Excess under 75 mortality rate in adults with serious mental illness
4.10	Suicide rate
4.11	Emergency readmissions within 30 days of discharge from hospital
4.13	Health-related quality of life for older people

Additional legislation influencing this service:

(All relevant updates and amendments to the following legislation to be considered and adhered to for the lifetime of the contract)

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Serious Violence Duty: Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS)– “Clare’s Law”
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 and the (AMENDMENT) Act 2012
- Children’s Act 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- National Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat 2014

- Mental Health Act 1983 Code of Practice, Department of Health, 2008 (Updated 2015)
- Department of Health, 2007 "The Mental Health Act as amended from the 1983 Act"
- Department of Health, 2005 "The Mental Capacity Act"
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997 (as amended)
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (Stalking)
- Forced Marriage Act 2007
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victim Act 2004
- Code of Practice for Victims of Crime November 2020
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 in accordance with GDPR
- Family Law Act 1996
- Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019
- Stalking Protection Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Housing Act 1996 Part VII (as amended by Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Gender Recognition Act 2004