



COMMUNITY  
SPORTS  
FOUNDATION

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# DOMESTIC ABUSE

Date of Next Update: June 2025

## **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.

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.

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

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

And it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

'Economic abuse' means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on a person ability to:

- Acquire, use or maintain money or other propriety, or,
- Obtain goods or services.

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.

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.

### **Children as Victims of Domestic Abuse**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 highlights that those children (a person under 18) who sees or hears or experiences the effects of the abuse and is related to either person who are involved in domestic abuse situations, is also recognised as a victim of domestic abuse.

### **Identifying Domestic Abuse in the Workplace**

The foundation recognises that many victims/ survivors of Domestic Abuse do not always recognise the abuse they receive as they may be conditioned to think it is 'normal' behaviour. Many people dealing with such situations will never feel comfortable sharing their experience with their employer as they may not even be ready to admit it to themselves.

For those experiencing abuse, the workplace often offers a safe space and a respite away from their abuser. Colleagues and managers can often be the only other people outside of the home that survivors talk to each day and are therefore uniquely placed to help spot signs of abuse.

It is not always easy to recognise when an employee is experiencing domestic abuse but there are signs which may indicate a member of staff may be a victim/survivor:

- 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, colleagues noticing visible injuries (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
- Secretive about their home life or give reasons not to turn the camera on when meeting online.

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.

### **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 for the purpose of safeguarding and duty of care:

- 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.

In such cases the Safeguarding and Compliance Manager will assess the threat, risk and harm present and advise of the need for information sharing. This decision will be documented within a confidential People HR 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.

### **Reporting and managing disclosures of abuse**

It is possible that staff experiencing Domestic Abuse may choose to disclose or seek support from, a colleague, a line manager or a member of safeguarding staff.

All staff should respond sympathetically and confidentially to any colleague who discloses that they are suffering from domestic abuse. They should then seek further advice from their line manager or a member of safeguarding staff about their concern in confidence.

Any person subject to abuse will be provided with the contact details of a member of the safeguarding staff as a confidential advisory point of contact for staff.

### **Safety Planning**

The Foundation will prioritise the safety of staff if they make it known that they are experiencing domestic abuse. Line managers may have to consider incidents such as violent partners or ex-partners visiting the workplace, abusive phone calls, intimidation, or harassment of a member of staff by the alleged perpetrator, and these will need to be addressed in any safety planning.

When staff disclose Domestic Abuse, the Foundation will encourage the staff members to contact a specialist support agency (or suitably trained safeguarding staff) who can make appropriate referrals where necessary.

In most cases the Norfolk Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (NIDAS) will be referred as a domestic abuse service.

NIDAS contact details are available at: <https://nidasnorfolk.co.uk/>

The Foundation will work with the victim/ survivor alongside specialist agencies (with the victim/ survivors consent) to identify what actions can be taken to increase their personal safety as well as address any risks there may be to colleagues. The Foundation has a duty of care to all its staff.

### **Line Manager Responsibility.**

Line Managers should address the issue sensitively and sympathetically ensuring that the staff member is aware that support and assistance can be provided.

Line Managers should not counsel victims/ survivors, but offer information, workplace support, and signpost other organisation with support from safeguarding staff.

In dealing with a disclosure from staff, the Foundation will ensure that the person with concerns is made aware of this policy.

Where Domestic Abuse has been reported, line managers will treat unplanned absences or temporary poor timekeeping sensitively.

### **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. Staff also have access to support through the Employee Assistance Programme.

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.

### **Work Force Development**

Staff members will be made aware of the aims of this policy through a range of methods including staff communications, training and publications. The Foundation will actively promote awareness and tackling the issue of Domestic Abuse throughout the organisation.

The Foundation is committed to ensuring all staff are aware of Domestic Abuse and its implications in the workplace through its Safeguarding Training made available to staff.

Information, briefings and awareness raising sessions will ensure that all managers are able to:

- Identify if a staff member is experiencing difficulties because of Domestic Abuse.
- Respond to disclosures in a sensitive and non-judgmental manner.
- Provide initial support – be clear about available workplace support including in-house specialist staff where applicable.
- Discuss how the organisation can contribute to safety planning.
- Signpost to other organisation and sources of support.
- Understand that they are not counsellors.

### **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.

### **Regulatory Disclosures**

There may be circumstances where such behaviour by a DBS regulated professional might indicate a potential risk to others or bring the profession into disrepute or breach a professional code of conduct.

The Foundation has a duty to report to the appropriate regulator when it becomes aware of such breaches. This could include the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Football Authorities or the Disclosure and Barring Service.

A DBS regulated professional may also be subject to a mandatory obligation to self-refer if they receive any police caution or convictions, and for the police to report such action if they are aware an individual is regulated. Advice should be sought for the HR or Safeguarding Department if staff are uncertain of their obligations.

The alleged Perpetrator will be:

- Treated fairly and honestly.
- Helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved.
- Kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications of any discipline process.

### **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  
Safeguarding and Compliance Manager

Associated Policies  
Disciplinary Policy  
Speak Up Policy  
Safeguarding Policy  
Safeguarding – Code of Conduct



## Safeguarding – Information Sharing

Policy Issue Date June 2024

Date of Next Update June 2025

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.

