

## EDBF DUTY OF CARE: SAFEGUARDING DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

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| Approver                    | People and Safeguarding                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Owner(s)                    | Director – People and Safeguarding<br>Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| Related Documents           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| Scope                       | <p>This Policy applies to all EDBF and EDPS Ltd employees plus those individuals identified in paragraph 2. EDBF reserves the right to amend this policy at its discretion at any time. It does not form part of any employees' contract of employment with EDBF.</p> <p>Where EDBF is referred to in this policy, it is used as an umbrella term for both EDBF and EDPS Ltd.</p> |
| Extensions                  | <p>Individuals identified in Paragraph 2.</p> <p><i>Note in Paragraph 2.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Exclusions                  | None                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

# Domestic Abuse Policy

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## 1. Policy Statement

Foreword by the Bishop of Exeter and theological statement.

*Foreword to Diocesan Policy on Domestic Abuse*

*‘Binding up the broken-hearted and proclaiming freedom for captives’ is a fundamental message of the Gospel. According to Luke, when reading in the synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus adopted these words of the prophet Isaiah as his own manifesto. Interestingly, in the King James Bible, the verse is translated somewhat differently: ‘to set at liberty them that are bruised’. The old translation provides a helpfully wider context for understanding who the captives might be.*

*In recent years we have become acutely aware of the way in which many people today are held captive by circumstances beyond their control or find themselves trapped in abusive relationships where they may be bruised physically, emotionally or spiritually. Domestic abuse in all its forms is contrary to the will of God and is an affront to human dignity.*

*This diocesan policy on domestic abuse is modelled on that of the National Church. Drawing upon the experience of professionals, it sets out principles to prevent abuse, as well as the protocols that must be followed should a problem arise. It also lists information, resources and contact details if further help is needed. It expresses our commitment to understand the dimensions of abuse and, where possible, play our part in preventing and challenging it.*

*I commend this policy for your study and reflection.*

**The Right Reverend Robert Atwell**

**Bishop of Exeter**

In the event that this policy and the law conflict, the law shall take precedence. If employees are in any doubt as to what their rights are, they are to discuss matters with their manager. If this policy changes as a result of amendments in the law, the changes will be notified to the employee via their manager.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

## 2. Who is Covered by the Policy?

This policy is intended to apply to all employees of the Exeter Diocesan Board of Finance (hereafter referred to as EDBF) including full-time, part-time and fixed-term employees plus consultants, contractors, trainees and authorised volunteers who may be affected by domestic abuse during their period of employment or official activity with EDBF. This policy also applies to all employees of EDPS Ltd.



It is intended that casual and agency staff and volunteers when they are considered to be undertaking activities and duties authorised by EDBF or in a capacity viewed as officially representing EDBF also adhere to this policy. In such cases, the individuals will be made aware of this policy by their official supervisor.

*Note: All references in this document to 'the Diocese of Exeter' refer to the collective bodies under the headship of the Bishop of Exeter including, but not limited to, Exeter Diocesan Board of Finance (EDBF) Ltd, EDPS Ltd, and the Office of the Bishop of Exeter.*

### 3. What is Domestic Abuse?

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

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; or
- psychological, emotional or other abuse.

### 4. Our Commitment

All forms of domestic abuse are wrong, and we are committed to promoting and supporting safer environments which:

- Ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse.
- Work to protect those experiencing domestic abuse.
- Recognise equality amongst people and within relationships.
- Refuse to condone any form of abuse.
- Enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to openly and consistently.

We recognise that:

- All forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the survivor and express an imbalance of power in the relationship.
- All survivors (regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Domestic abuse can occur in all communities.
- Spiritual abuse can be a form of domestic abuse.



- Domestic abuse may be a single incident but is usually a systematic repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency.
- Domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour.
- Working in partnership with children, adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.

We will respond to domestic abuse:

- In all our activities, by valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse, whilst appreciating the need to ensure a distance is kept between the two and refusing to condone the perpetration or continuation of any form of abuse.
- In our publicity, by raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information in public and women-only areas of relevance to survivors, children and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- When concerns are raised, by ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help; working with the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.
- In our care by – ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse; identifying and outlining the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care responsibilities with both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

#### 4. Your Line Managers' Role

Line managers have a crucial role to play in enabling individuals experiencing domestic abuse to seek help. We provide training for all managers in handling sensitive issues (including domestic abuse), raising awareness of domestic abuse in teams, and operating the procedures for handling instances of domestic abuse.

The role of your line manager is to:

- identify individuals experiencing difficulties as a result of domestic abuse (for example, using regular performance appraisal, or by fostering an open management culture that enables team members to disclose sensitive issues);
- provide support in the first instance, including specific advice on the options available, but also recognise the limitations of their role (referring to professional counsellors or experts where necessary);
- protect confidentiality in all instances (excepting the requirements of child protection);



- refer individuals to the appropriate internal or external source of help and support, for example the organisation's confidential point of contact or external agency;
- ensure that the safety of all individuals in the team is protected; and
- enable the affected individual to remain productive and at work during a difficult period in their domestic life, for example by using the organisation's special leave policies and procedures.

## 5. Attendance

We recognise that those experiencing domestic abuse may need to be absent from work at times and will assist them by using our special leave policies.

Individual absences can be discussed and agreed between the individual and the line manager, with HR support where appropriate.

## 6. Security and safety

We will protect the safety and security of all staff at work, including those affected by domestic abuse and their colleagues.

Individuals need to tell us that they are at risk from domestic abuse to receive this protection and we will seek to enable them to make this disclose by fostering a supportive and open management culture.

## 7. Advice and Support

We are committed to reviewing our policy and procedures regularly.

***If there is an immediate risk of harm to an individual, you should dial 999 and report your concern to the police.***

The Diocese of Exeter Safeguarding Team will provide advice and support for Parishes and church bodies – contact details for the Safeguarding Team can be found at:

<https://exeter.anglican.org/resources/safeguarding/safeguarding-team/>

The Safeguarding Team will provide advice and support to anyone experiencing or concerned about domestic abuse.

All concerns reported to the Diocese of Exeter in respect of Church officers and domestic abuse will be monitored and recorded by the Diocese Safeguarding Team.

Support is available to all Parishes in implementing a Domestic Abuse Policy and related practice Guidance.

Whilst the Diocesan Safeguarding Team will provide independent unbiased sensitive and discrete advice and guidance, we support and encourage anyone who may be



experiencing or is concerned about domestic abuse, to seek advice and support completely independent to the Diocese of Exeter if they would prefer to speak with a specialist advisor outside of the Church.

Devon Domestic Abuse Service: 0345 155 1074

Plymouth Domestic Abuse Service: 01752 252033

Torbay Domestic Abuse Service: 01803 698869

Details of a wide range of local support services can also be found at [Devon & Cornwall's Victim Care website](#) which has a comprehensive directory of organisations and services that can provide advice and support.

Church of England and Diocese of Exeter safeguarding documents and resources can be found at: [Safeguarding Resources \(Domestic Abuse\) - Diocese of Exeter](#)

## 8. Training

Training is provided by the Diocese of Exeter for those in leadership, safeguarding and pastoral positions in the Diocese and its Parishes.

The Diocese of Exeter will work in partnership with specialist agencies including Police, Local Authorities, Community Safety Partnerships to support victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse.

Bishops Visitors are available to support the partners of clergy whose relationships are affected or broken down as a result of Domestic Abuse, Bishops Visitors can be contacted in confidence through the ministry Development team.