

COVID-19 & Domestic Abuse



Domestic abuse is a pattern of controlling, threatening and coercive behaviour (and 'gas lighting'), that can be physical, verbal, emotional, economic, psychological, and sexual. Abuse is a choice a perpetrator makes and isolation is already used by many perpetrators as a tool of control.

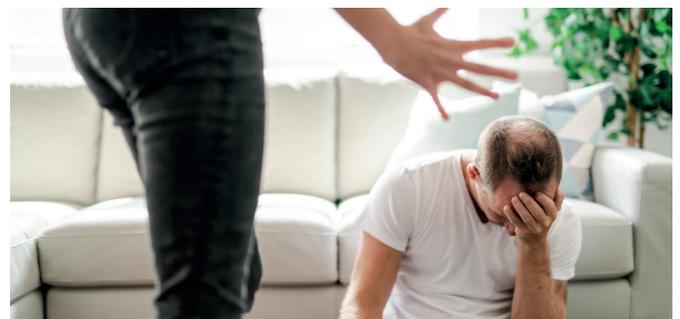
For many people, the lockdown regulations may mean they are forced to stay within a violent household. In this helpsheet, we will provide you with information on receiving support if you are a victim of domestic violence or worried about somebody else.

Domestic Abuse in Isolation

Many individuals and organisations have been worried that the isolation and lockdowns imposed by Government could lead to an increase in domestic violence. One of the largest national helplines for domestic violence has reported a 120% increase in calls since the lockdown in the UK began.

Victims of domestic abuse who are in self-isolation are facing several challenges. They may be unable to flee as planned or unsure of their options for leaving. Although a government awareness campaign gives the message that you can still leave, there remain further questions about how services are practically going to be able to support the number of victims seeking safety.

It has been reported that perpetrators are using COVID-19 as a tool for abuse. Survivors report that perpetrators are using COVID-19 as part of the abuse or have concerns perpetrators are failing to take necessary precautions to prevent the spread of virus.



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How can CiC help?

If you are concerned about your own safety, the safety of another or you are or worried you may become a perpetrator of domestic violence, please contact our AdviceLine and one of our counsellors will be on hand to help you.

- ▶ **Email:** assist@cicwellbeing.co.uk
- ▶ **Live Chat:** www.well-online.co.uk

In Case of Emergency

▶ Call 999

If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police - the police will continue to respond to emergency calls.

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, dial 999, listen to the questions from the operator and respond by coughing or tapping the handset if you can. Then follow the instructions, depending on whether you are calling from a mobile or a landline.

▶ If you call from a mobile

If prompted, press 55 to 'Make Yourself Heard' - this will transfer your call to the police.

Pressing 55 only works on mobiles and does not allow police to track your location.

You can read more about this system here, it may be wise to familiarise yourself with the information before a case of emergency: https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/research-learning/Silent_solution_guide.pdf

▶ If you call 999 from a landline

When 999 calls are made from landlines, information about your location should be automatically available to the call handlers to help provide a response. Remember to try to make some noise for the operator; cough, tap your phone, sneeze etc.



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Domestic Abuse Helplines

Below are some organisations who run helplines to support those effected by domestic abuse, many of these organisations also support perpetrators to change. We have provided links for live chats where possible in case it is not possible for you to make a phone call.

▶ National Domestic Abuse Helpline

24 hour helpline (run by Refuge UK): **0808 2000 247**

▶ Women's Aid

Domestic abuse live chat for women:
<https://chat.womensaid.org.uk/>

▶ Respect

Domestic abuse helpline for men: **0808 8010327**

Live Chat: **<https://mensadviceline.org.uk/contact-us/>**

▶ NSPCC (if you are worried about a child)

help@nspcc.org.uk

0808 800 5000 (Mon-Fri, 8am to 10pm and Sat-Sun, 9am-6pm)

▶ The Mix

Support provided for under 25s on a range of issues and can support domestic abuse cases:

<https://www.themix.org.uk/get-support>

▶ Brightsky

Information and support mobile app:
<https://www.hestia.org/brightsky>

If you would like any other helpline information or would like a helpline that caters to a certain demographic, please contact CiC (**assist@ciowellbeing.co.uk**) and we will get this information for you.

