



Home Office

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) Statutory Guidance

April 2023

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. What is the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme?	5
3. The process	9
“Right to Ask” entry route	9
Step 1 – Initial Contact with Police	9
Step 2 – Face-to-Face meeting/ contact with applicant	14
Ongoing Safety Planning and Risk Assessment	17
“Right to Know” entry route	19
Categorising as a ‘concern’ or ‘no concern’ (for both entry routes)	21
Principles for the police to consider when making a decision whether to disclose	23
Decision made to disclose information	25
Disclosures when the applicant is not the recipient	27
Decision made not to disclose information	27
Managing the perpetrator	28
Maintaining a record of the Disclosure Scheme	29
Annex A – Definitions	31
Annex B – Non-exhaustive list of offences where convictions and/or allegations may be disclosed under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme	33
Annex C – Template of Minimum Standard of Information to be Obtained and Checks to be Completed at the Initial Contact Stage (either through an online application or face-to-face)	38
Annex D – Template for Initial Checks/Risk Assessment	41
Annex E – Template for Face-to-Face contact meeting	43
Annex F – Information-sharing principles	46
Annex G – Template checklist on disclosure decision-making process	48
Annex H – Template containing minimum information to be disclosed (including form of words)	51
Annex I – Template form of words for non-disclosure	55
Annex J – Support Available for Victims	57

1. Introduction

1. Domestic abuse causes untold harm which can have devastating impacts on victims and their families. Tackling it in all its forms is a priority for the Government.
2. Our landmark Domestic Abuse Act 2021 ('the DA Act') provides further protection to the millions of people who experience domestic abuse, and strengthens measures to bring perpetrators to justice. The DA Act created a statutory definition of domestic abuse, which makes clear that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling or coercive behaviour, and economic abuse. As part of this definition, children are explicitly recognised as victims if they see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of abuse. This is supported by statutory guidance which provides clear information on what domestic abuse is. Further information on this can be found in the Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance¹.
3. The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (the "DVDS") – often referred to as "Clare's Law" after the tragic case of Clare Wood, who was murdered by her former partner in Greater Manchester in 2009 – was rolled out across all 43 police forces in England and Wales in March 2014. The DVDS was introduced to set out procedures that could be used by the police to disclose information about previous violent or abusive offending, including emotional abuse, controlling or coercive behaviour, or economic abuse by an individual, where this may help protect their partner or ex-partner, and any relevant children, from violent or abusive offending. A review of the DVDS was conducted in 2015².
4. The DVDS did not introduce any new legislation. It relies on the police's common law power to disclose information where it is necessary to prevent crime and provides structures and processes in order to exercise those powers. **It does not in itself provide or create new legal powers to disclose information, but provides a framework for disclosure in these particular circumstances. It does not have any impact on other lawful disclosures by police in circumstances that fall outside the scope of the DVDS.**
5. Section 77 of the DA Act places the guidance for the DVDS on a statutory footing by imposing a duty on the Home Secretary to issue guidance on the DVDS to chief officers of police³. The DA Act does not change the legal basis under which the police can make a disclosure of information, but it does impose a duty on the police to have regard to the guidance when using the DVDS. This in effect means that any police force seeking to deviate from the guidance would need to justify that course of action with good reason –

¹ [Domestic Abuse: statutory guidance \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/544211/Domestic_Abuse_statutory_guidance_accessible_version.pdf)

² [2016-03-08 DVDS report final .pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/544211/2016-03-08_DVDS_report_final.pdf)

³ [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/1/section/77)

and, in the event of challenge, would need to be able to show they had regard to the duty, but had robust reasons for failing to adhere.

6. The purpose of this guidance is to support the delivery of DVDS and assist front-line officers and those who work in the area of public protection with its practical application. It builds on the original guidance that was published in 2012, and the policy considerations identified in the 2015 review that widened the scope of the scheme to cover ex-partners. This document provides guidance as to what constitutes being in an “intimate personal” relationship for the purposes of being “personally connected” under the DA Act and section 2.1 of the Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance⁴. Police should consider each case, and whether the information in question should be disclosed, on its own merits and should consider seeking legal advice on interpretation where individual cases raise particularly complex or unusual issues. The timelines to disclosure have been reduced in this guidance from 35 days to 28 days in order to ensure individuals have quicker access to the information they may need to protect themselves. This guidance has also been updated to incorporate how alternative methods of communication can be used, including through technology and social media to enable disclosures to victims or potential victims.

7. Any disclosure of information by the police must comply with the common law principles established in case law and be made in accordance with relevant overarching legislation, such as the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (the “ROA 1974”), the Human Rights Act 1998 (the “HRA 1998”) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (the “DPA 2018”).

8. Data on the use of DVDS is collected by His Majesty’s Inspectorate Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). Police forces are to provide this information to help build an accurate picture of how the scheme is being used nationally.

9. It is important to remember that the purpose of the DVDS is to facilitate disclosure where necessary in order to protect a potential victim, and any relevant children⁵ from harm. **Each request for information under the DVDS should be considered on its own merits and the police should seek legal advice when necessary before exercising their common law powers of disclosure.** There may be occasions when information would not be disclosed in accordance with the DVDS, but disclosure by the police is still possible and consistent with the police’s powers to share information and wider legal obligations. In such circumstances, it is likely that legal advice should be sought.

10. Definitions of terms used in this guidance are at Annex A.

⁴ [Domestic Abuse: statutory guidance \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442442/Domestic_Abuse_-_statutory_guidance_accessible_version.pdf)

⁵ Defined in the [Family Law Act 1996](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/26/section/1)

2. What is the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme?

11. The police have common law powers to disclose information, broadly where there is a pressing need to protect people. In this context, these powers form the basis of disclosures under the DVDS, meaning in practice that information can be shared about a person's known history of violence or abuse, normally relating to previous convictions or charges, to members of the public where there is a pressing need for disclosure of the information in order to prevent further crime. The principal aim of the DVDS is to introduce recognised and consistent procedures for the exercise of this power in this context, to enable the police to make a disclosure of information where it would protect a member of the public who may be at risk of harm from domestic abuse. Critical to the success of the scheme is the need for ongoing safety planning throughout the process and the need for a formal risk assessment to be reviewed at every stage in the disclosure process, as this will inform the practical actions necessary to safeguard the potential victim(s), and, any relevant children.

12. The DVDS recognises two procedures for disclosing information:

“Right to ask” is triggered by a member of the public applying to the police for a disclosure.

“Right to know” is triggered by the police making a proactive decision to disclose information to protect a potential victim(s).

For the purpose of this guidance:

- Individual **A**: the person potentially at risk, which includes intimate partners and previous intimate partners. The person potentially at risk might also be the applicant.
- Individual **B**: the person about whom a request is being made.
- Individual **C**: a person who may request information about **B** on behalf of or out of concern for **A**, such as a friend or relative, or a professional such as an IDVA. Any disclosure should be made to the person best placed to safeguard **A**, which may or may not be **C**.
- Third Party: a person to whom a disclosure can be made if deemed by safety planning as the person best placed to safeguard **A** (e.g. parent, third-sector worker, healthcare professional) and in some instances could be **C**.

13. The DVDS provides the following benefits:

- a. introduces recognised and consistent procedures for disclosing information that enables an individual (**A**) who is or was in an intimate personal relationship with an individual who has previously been violent or abusive (**B**) to make informed choices about that relationship or about their personal safety;
- b. under “right to ask”, individual members of the public, whether **A** or **C**, can proactively seek information, with an expectation that the agencies responsible for safeguarding victims of domestic abuse will check to see whether relevant information exists and if it does, that consideration using the three-stage disclosure test will be given to its disclosure, where necessary to protect **A**;
- c. under “right to know”, where the police come into the possession of information about the previous violent and abusive behaviour of **B** that may cause harm to **A**, members of the public can expect the police to consider using the three-stage disclosure test whether any disclosure should be made and to disclose information if it is lawful, i.e. if it is necessary and proportionate to protect the potential victim from crime;
- d. encourages the police and allows members of the public to take responsibility for the safety of the potential victim and their family.

14. The DVDS is focused on disclosure, safety planning and risk management where **B** is identified as having a conviction, caution, reprimand, or final warning for domestic abuse or related offences; and/or information held about **B**'s behaviour which may not include domestic abuse-related matters but reasonably leads the police and other safeguarding agencies if involved to believe that **B** poses a risk of harm to **A**. There is a non-exhaustive list of the relevant offences at Annex B.

15. What constitutes an intimate personal relationship will differ from case to case. A relationship could be intimate even if it were not a physical, sexual relationship, but was based only on emotional intimacy, or vice versa. While it might depend, in part, on whether those in the relationship considered it to be intimate, it might be intimate even if it were not considered by the parties to be a formal relationship. An intimate personal relationship relates to both those who are current intimate partners and also ex-intimate partners. Ultimately, it would be for a Court to decide what constituted an intimate personal relationship if relevant to a case before it.

16. It is important to all involved in delivering this scheme that potential or actual victims of domestic abuse, and any relevant children are protected from harm and whilst we know women are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse⁶, this scheme is also applicable to men as the potential person at risk. The Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance sets out the

⁶ The [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#) estimated 2.4 million adults aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022 (1.7 million women and 699,000 men)

additional risks and barriers faced by people with certain protected characteristics in making disclosures and accessing support.

17. By making a request for disclosure, a person will often also be registering their concerns about possible risks to their own safety or that of another individual. Ongoing safety planning is crucial and **cases which meet the high-risk threshold should be shared with Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)** to ensure that any possible risks of harm to **A** are fully assessed and managed. For further information on MARACs, please refer to chapter 7 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Statutory Guidance. Police forces should also work closely with partners through the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) where needed and have consideration of other safeguarding issues to ensure that any possible risk of harm.

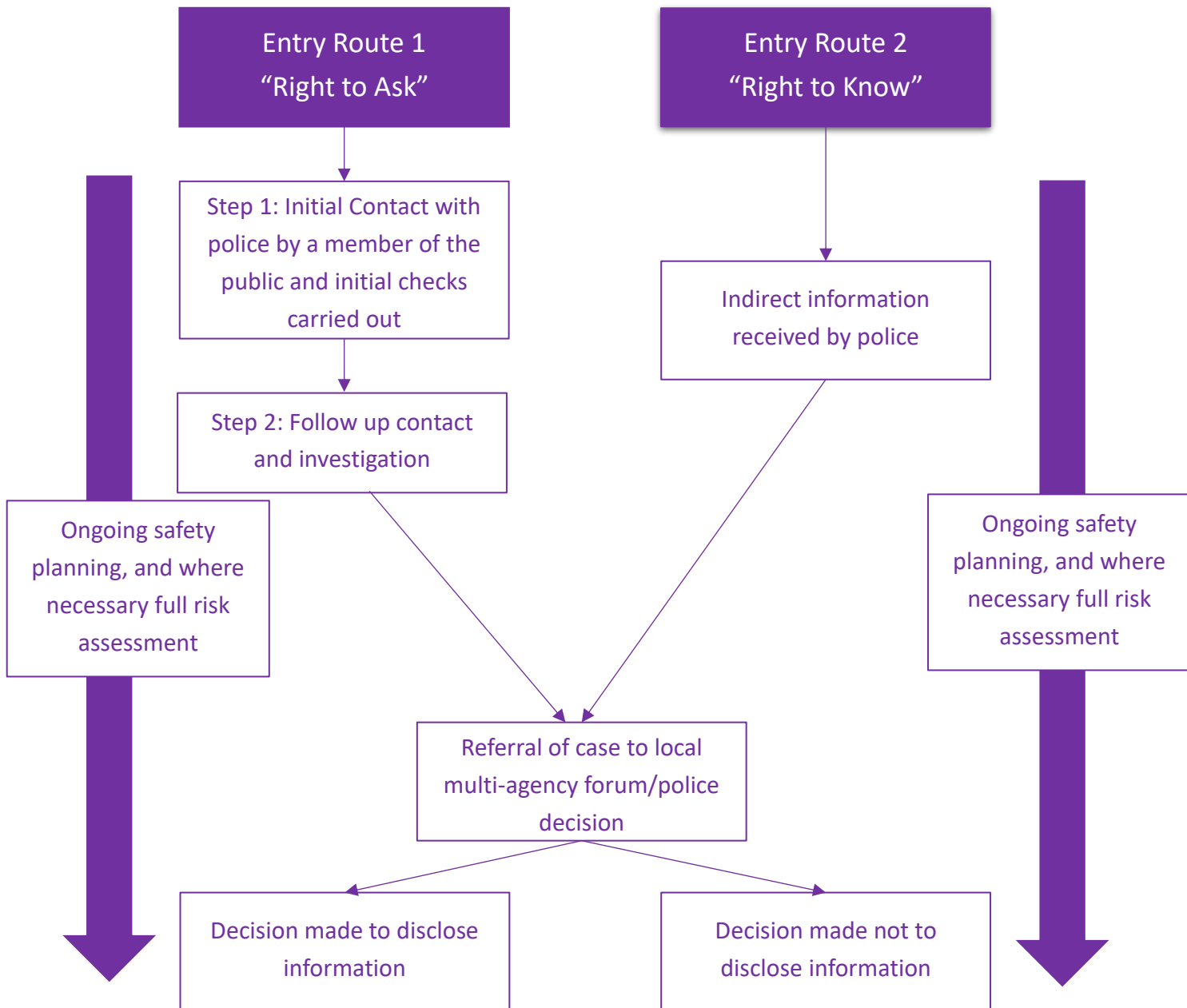
18. Police forces are encouraged to work closely with suitable local safeguarding forums or relevant partners (i.e. health, education and social services, including services for children where relevant) and consider the use of additional tools that may be available to manage the risk of harm to ensure that all safeguarding issues that have been identified are addressed. It should be noted that risk is not static, and assessment should be ongoing throughout the process.

19. Police forces should have regard to the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice for [Partnership working and multi-agency responses \(college.police.uk\)](https://college.police.uk/partnership-working-and-multi-agency-responses), [Victim safety and support \(college.police.uk\)](https://college.police.uk/victim-safety-and-support), and [Risk and vulnerability \(college.police.uk\)](https://college.police.uk/risk-and-vulnerability) in regards to information sharing and when considering risk.

20. The DVDS does not replace arrangements for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, the “right of access” by individuals to their personal data (which used to be known as Subject Access Request) or Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. If it is identified at the initial contact that the request is one of these other types of enquiry, then the request should be re-directed to the appropriate type of request. Police legal advice should be sought where necessary.

21. The DVDS may overlap with and complement other disclosure processes, such as the Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme (CSODS, also known as “Sarah’s Law”). Consideration should be given to which process is the most appropriate in each case. Forces should aim to make the process of applying to both schemes as easy as possible, and applicants should not be asked to provide their information separately for each scheme. Forces should ensure that, where an application is made for a single scheme (either DVDS or CSODS), they consider a disclosure of information under “Right to Know” for the other scheme without the need for the applicant to make a separate application.

Figure 1: Overview of Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme entry routes



3. The process

“Right to Ask” entry route

Step 1 – Initial Contact with Police

22. For the purposes of the “right to ask” entry route, the trigger that may lead to a disclosure under this scheme is where a member of the public (**A** or **C**) makes a direct application to the police for information about the previous violent or abusive behaviour of **B**. However, if the applicant is **C**, they may not necessarily be the one to receive the disclosure – the more appropriate person to receive the disclosure may be **A** or a third-party who may be the person best placed to safeguard **A** (e.g. a parent or third sector worker).
23. An application will be deemed to have been made when either **A** or **C** makes contact with the police either in person at a police station, over the telephone or via an online application form and asks for specific information about **B**'s previous violent or abusive offending.
24. If at any stage during the initial contact the police believe that **A** or **C** is alleging a crime (e.g. a specific incidence of a violent or abusive act) rather than asking for information about the previous violent or abusive offending of **B**, then the police must pursue the crime report under normal criminal investigation procedures, including the completion of a formal risk assessment (Domestic Abuse Stalking and ‘Honour’ Based Violence (DASH) assessment or the Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA)). However, it is possible for the procedures leading to a disclosure under this DVDS to run concurrently with a criminal investigation triggered by the allegation of the crime. The police should continue a disclosure application where criminal investigations are in progress.
25. If **A** or **C** makes an enquiry to a partner agency rather than the police, then normal procedures are to be adopted by the partner agency for handling this type of request . Disclosure of information is not a safeguarding tool available only to the police; other agencies may have disclosure powers and should act according to their own safeguarding frameworks. However, if **A** or **C** makes it known that they are making an enquiry under the DVDS, then **A** or **C** should be referred to the police. A partner agency may facilitate contact with the police if it is appropriate.
26. However, if the DVDS applicant has already received disclosure via an alternative mechanism (for example via a MAPPA level 2 or 3 meeting) but is requesting further information or clarification about that original disclosure, the applicant should be redirected to the agency or team that was responsible for that original disclosure decision rather than creating a separate enquiry under DVDS. This avoids duplication of processes and ensures a continuity of oversight for the case.

In Person Applications

27. If **A** or **C** visits a police station in person, then they must be allowed the opportunity to make their referral in private, as they may feel uncomfortable doing so in hearing of other members of the public. The applicant should ideally be given the choice of a male or female officer to make their application to and police should ensure that applicants communication needs are met during initial contact and any communication barriers removed. Police should be aware of their legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the accessibility requirements of **A** or **C**. All efforts should be made to ensure that **A** or **C** are able to fully engage in the process. The officer/police staff designated to assist the applicant must have a comprehensive understanding of domestic abuse and the DVDS. In particular, they must have the knowledge and experience to provide the applicant (**A** or **C**) domestic abuse safety advice, where necessary.

28. After the meeting, if appropriate, the police should give **A** or **C** an information pack on DVDS which should give them information on what they can do in the interim to better safeguard themselves (or **A** if **C** is the one applying) pending the outcome of the application. The information pack should cater to the applicant **A** or **C**'s language requirements and should be supplemented with a verbal briefing to explain the contents and next steps. The contents of the information pack are at the discretion of the police, but should as a minimum contain:

- a. a leaflet to explain the DVDS
- b. local leaflets/information that provide signposts to local and national support services, including 'by and for' services where available (Annex J)
- c. contact information for the force

29. It may not be appropriate to provide an information pack to **A** or **C** where there is a risk as it could put them or others in danger (for example, possession of the information pack alerting **B** that **A** or **C** have approached the police). If an information pack is not provided, a verbal briefing on the scheme and next steps is still required.

Online Applications

30. If **A** or **C** use an online portal to complete their initial application, the portal must accommodate the accessibility requirements of **A** or **C**. As a minimum, the portal should offer a multi-language functionality to enable those with limited comprehension of English to complete the application. The portal must allow **A** or **C** to provide information on how and when they are able to be contacted.

31. Safeguarding information should also be available:

- a. For forces that host applications on their website. They should ensure the portal contains links to both national and local domestic abuse services.

- b. When there is a risk that a perpetrator may be monitoring the applicant's computer use. Online portals should make available information related to safe computer use that can instruct applicants on how to delete internet history or use private browsing. Online portals should also provide a 'quick escape' button that when clicked takes the user to an alternative site without rousing suspicion⁷⁸.

Information to be obtained and communicated during the initial contact

32. If initial contact is made in person by **A** or **C**, it is likely to be received and managed by police control room staff. Where front-line police officers and police community support officers receive a verbal application during the course of their normal policing duties, they should record basic details of **A** or **C** and then make a referral to the control room staff to complete the initial contact.
33. After receiving the initial contact, the details listed at Annex C should be taken from **A** or **C**.
34. Online portals should, as a minimum, capture the details listed in Annex C.

Note: it is vital that, during this initial contact, a safe means of communication is agreed with A or C where the place, means and timing is determined by A or C. This is critical to safeguarding A.

35. During the initial contact stage, either the police member of staff or online portal should also inform **A** or **C** of the following:
 - a. the DVDS does not replace procedures that are currently in place for Subject Access or Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
 - b. a disclosure will only be made to the person who is in the best position to safeguard **A** from harm. This will normally be **A**, unless there is a compelling reason not to disclose to **A**;
 - c. initial checks will be completed as soon as possible and, in any case, within 24 hours⁹ to assess whether:
 - there is an immediate or imminent risk of harm to **A** from **B**; and
 - the disclosure application should be progressed

⁷ [Information and support on tech abuse | Refuge Tech Safety](#)

⁸ [Digital and online safety | Safelives](#)

⁹ Note that timescales provided are intended as a guide. Police should use their discretion, based on assessment of risk, to determine appropriate timescales for action.

- d. should a decision be made to progress the disclosure application further:
 - i. the disclosure application will be referred to the police force's Public Protection Unit, or other appropriately trained staff;
 - ii. A or C will be required to attend a face-to-face meeting within the next 10 days. In some circumstances, the police may decide to conduct the follow up contact by telephone or by alternative means;
- e. at the face-to-face meeting, **A** or **C** will be required to provide proof of their identity and, if the applicant is **C**, proof of their relationship to **A**. The police will aim to complete the enquiry within 28 days but there may be extenuating circumstances, such as if it is decided that the case needs to be discussed at a MARAC ahead of disclosure, that increase this timescale. **A** or **C** will be informed if this is the case; andx
- f. if any immediate risks to **A** are identified at any stage, then immediate safeguarding action will be taken, and this will include a robust safety plan delivered by the police and partners. Should a decision be made to disclose information to **A**, then this will also be accompanied with a robust safety plan tailored to the needs of **A**, and any relevant children.

36. Once the initial contact form has been completed by the receiving officer / police staff member, the form must be submitted to the appropriate police team to conduct research on the named party.

Cross border applications

37. There is a possibility that there will be applications that require the involvement of more than one police force. In these scenarios, it is imperative that there are clear lines of communication between each force to ensure all enquiries are completed.
38. **Coordinating Force** – The police force area where **A** resides will be the force that will be responsible for recording the application, conducting the risk assessment, and coordinating the relevant enquiries. This force will be required to complete the follow up contact.
39. **Responding Force** – The force area in which any party other than **A** lives. These forces will take responsibility for actions in relation to these parties. It will be necessary for the Responding Force to report back to the Coordinating Force with their findings and within agreed timescales.
40. All police forces and agencies should work in close consultation to consider and address the risk posed in each case. Every effort should be made to reach an agreement between all force areas and agencies involved. In most circumstances, the Coordinating Force will determine whether a disclosure under DVDS is required as they will own the investigation.

41. Enquiries and referrals (as required) must be made with the agencies in all relevant areas.

Intelligence checks following initial contact

42. Following the initial contact, intelligence checks should be undertaken in line with local police procedures¹⁰ to build an initial picture on **A**, **B**, and where applicable **C**, and be focused on risk. The minimum standard of checks at this stage are:

- a. Police National Computer (PNC);
- b. Police National Database (PND);
- c. ViSOR – the dangerous persons database¹¹ (if the subject has a ViSOR marker on the Police National Computer); and
- d. local intelligence systems.

43. These checks must not be made in the presence of **A** or **C**, to avoid any inappropriate or accidental disclosure to the person at this stage. No disclosure to **A** or **C** should be given by the staff member taking the initial contact details at this stage.

Decision on whether to progress Disclosure Application

44. The information gathered via the initial contact and intelligence checks (either face-to-face or via the online portal) inform both the initial assessment of risk and basis for safety planning for **A** and the basis of a decision on whether to progress the disclosure application. A form is at Annex D to assist this decision-making process.

45. In accordance with local police procedures, it will be for the police member of staff to:

- a. make the decision on whether or not to progress the disclosure application following assessment of risk; and
- b. determine how **A** or **C** will be contacted to progress the disclosure application, consistent with the preferred method agreed at the initial contact.

46. The case must be reviewed and supervised by an officer of at least the rank of Sergeant or Police Staff equivalent, who has knowledge of the scheme and is experienced in dealing with safeguarding and the risk management of offenders.

¹⁰ The checks may be undertaken by staff from the Public Protection Unit, or other appropriately trained staff on domestic abuse, as local police procedures determine.

¹¹ The Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) is a database of records of those required to register with the police under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, those in custody for more than 12 months for violent offences, and those thought to be at risk of offending.

47. At this stage, a formal report needs to be created on the force case/crime management system (creating a reference number) to ensure there is an auditable record of the application being made.

From the steps outlined above, if it is identified there is an immediate/imminent risk of harm to A, then ACTION MUST BE TAKEN IMMEDIATELY to safeguard those at risk, which includes any relevant children.

Step 2 – Face-to-Face meeting/ contact with applicant

48. If following the initial checks conducted under step 1, the police decide that the disclosure application should continue, the person who made the application (either **A** or **C**) must, where possible, be seen either in person or using technology that enables a face-to-face meeting to take place at a time that is safe for them to do so. This is to ensure that the request is:

- a. genuine and not malicious;
- b. to establish further details about the application in order to further assess risk and to inform a decision around disclosure; and
- c. to provide safety information and advice to safeguard **A**. The meeting should take place as soon as is practicable and, in any event, no later than 10 days after the initial contact.

49. Whilst it is best practice that the applicant be seen face-to-face either in person or using technology that enables this, in the event this is not possible (for example, for accessibility reasons) a telephone meeting may be used. The most appropriate method for meeting with the applicant determined may be determined on a case-by-case basis. Appropriate safeguarding measures should be put in place regardless of the approach used, including ensuring identity is verified.

50. Police officers or members of police staff with appropriate expertise, such as a Public Protection Unit, should complete this stage of the process, as they will have experience and knowledge of managing domestic abuse offenders and investigation into domestic abuse incidents. This requisite knowledge and experience in this high-risk area of public protection will inform the relevant questioning and assist in assessing risk.

51. **If at any stage during the initial contact, face-to-face meeting or telephone call the police believe that A or C is alleging a crime (e.g. a specific incidence of a violent or abusive act), then the police must investigate the crime report, complete a formal risk assessment (e.g. DASH or DARA) and follow local procedures.** However, it is possible for the procedures leading to a disclosure under

this DVDS to run concurrently with the criminal investigation. In these circumstances, police should also provide details of support services to **A** or **C**.

Preliminaries

52. Before progressing enquiries on the application, the police must:

- a. warn **A** or **C** that if they wilfully or maliciously provide false information to the police in order to try and obtain a disclosure they are not entitled to, they may risk prosecution, e.g. if they have provided false details in an attempt to make a malicious application, they may be prosecuted under Section 5(2)¹² of the Criminal Law Act 1967.
- b. warn **A** or **C** that if they disclose evidence of an offence whilst registering a concern, it may not be possible to maintain their confidentiality;
- c. warn **A** or **C** that information disclosed by the police must only be used for the purpose for which it has been shared i.e. in order to safeguard **A**, and any relevant children;
- d. assure **A** or **C** that the application will be dealt with confidentially. There should however be a caveat placed on this - that confidentiality can only be guaranteed pending the outcome of the process. It should be explained that in the event of a concern arising about **B**, the police must consider whether representations should be sought from **B**. Moreover, if a resultant disclosure is to be made to **A** or **C**, the police must consider whether **B** should be informed that a disclosure has been made to **A** or **C**. This should not be done, however, without first assessing the full risk to **A**, and any relevant children, if **B** were to be contacted, informing **A** or **C** of the need to involve **B** and giving them the opportunity to withdraw the application before **B** is informed.
- e. ask **A** or **C** for proof of identity. Acceptable forms of ID may include:
 - i. passport;
 - ii. driving licence;
 - iii. other trusted form of photo identification;
 - iv. birth certificate;

¹² Where a person causes any wasteful employment of the police by knowingly making to any person a false report tending to show that an offence has been committed, or to give rise to apprehension for the safety of any persons or property, or tending to show that he has information material to any police inquiry, he shall be liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for not more than six months or to a fine of not more [level 4 on the standard scale] or to both.

v. household utility bill (electricity, gas, council tax, water);

vi. bank statement.

53. Recommended practice is that photo identification with confirmation of date of birth and address is required to confirm identity, as per paragraph 35e above. However, it is accepted that some of the vulnerable individuals who may make applications may not have the above forms of identification. In these cases, it may be possible to refer to another statutory agency to confirm the individual's identity (e.g. social worker, health visitor, specialist domestic abuse support worker, teacher).
54. If initial searches have not resulted in any pertinent information relating to the subject, the police would ask the applicant to provide additional information that will enable the correct identification of the subject. This may include a photo, or a description of identifying features such as tattoos and birthmarks, as well as details of previous addresses and places of work.
55. **A disclosure must not be made to A or C without verification of their identity.** However, if this eventuality arises, checks should still be made on the information given about **B** and, if concerns are identified, then the application should be treated as an intelligence submission which may be used to inform safeguarding measures for **A**.

Information to be obtained during the meeting

56. The face-to-face meeting should be approached with an investigative mind-set, not simply to resolve the issue of potential disclosure but to fully consider the wider safeguarding situation of involved parties.
57. If initial searches have not uncovered any pertinent information relating to **B**, the applicant should be asked to provide additional information that will enable the correct identification of **B**. This may include a photo or a description of identifying features such as tattoos and birthmarks, as well as details of previous addresses and places of work.
58. **A** or **C** should be told that the person to whom the disclosure is made will be asked to sign an undertaking that they agree that the information is confidential, and they will not disclose this information further. A warning must be given that legal proceedings could result if this confidentiality is breached and that it is a breach under section 170 of the Data Protection Act 2018 for a person to knowingly or recklessly obtain or disclose personal data without the consent of the data controller (i.e. the agency holding the information that will be disclosed, which in most cases will be the police). This should be explained to the person and their signature obtained on this undertaking. If the person is not willing to sign the undertaking the police will need to consider if disclosure should still take place. The outcome should be recorded and considered in the ongoing safety plan and decision-making process.
59. After the meeting, the police officer/staff should again provide information as set out in 28 and 29 to **A** or **C** on what they can do in the interim to better safeguard **A** pending

the outcome of the application. **A** or **C** should be made aware of the estimated length of time for completion of the process.

60. For consistency, **A** or **C** should be provided with a single point of contact with relevant domestic abuse knowledge and experience, who has an awareness of the applicant's case and is able to provide updates on progress as requested.
61. **A** or **C** should be proactively engaged throughout the process.
62. **From the application process through to when a decision whether to disclose or not has been made - victims should be signposted to relevant support services, such as specialist domestic abuse services throughout. Continued support must be provided on an ongoing basis throughout the process.**
63. A template form containing the list of information that is required during this meeting, plus the warnings articulated in paragraph 35, is provided at Annex E.

Ongoing Safety Planning and Risk Assessment

64. Ongoing safety planning should occur regardless of whether the original applicant is **A** or **C**, which may include a formal risk assessment. An officer with appropriate domestic abuse expertise should devise this safety plan. However, in circumstances where those with lesser knowledge of domestic abuse are handling a case, the questions in the DASH assessment or DARA forms should be used as a prompt to garner relevant information and establish any risk **A** and any relevant children may be in, in order for an appropriate safety plan to be devised. Safety plans should be devised in conjunction with an IDVA, and other safeguarding agencies, where appropriate.
65. If the applicant appears to be disclosing a domestic abuse incident, the police must conduct a full risk assessment and in cases where children are involved, officers should also consider their force's Operation Encompass¹³ procedures, notifying the child's school to ensure teachers and designated safeguarding leads can provide appropriate support where necessary.
66. A DARA form, or equivalent evidence-based risk assessment, should be fully completed if it appears that **A** or **C** are disclosing an incident of domestic abuse and reference should be made to national police guidance on domestic abuse. Completion of the DARA or equivalent form is vital to establish an appropriate safety plan for **A** and any relevant children, as per the Family Law Act 1996.

¹³ [Home : Operation Encompass](#) - Operation Encompass is a police and education early information safeguarding partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support to children experiencing domestic abuse.

67. Ongoing safety planning, and DARA or equivalent forms where necessary, should include revisiting the information obtained:
- a. during the initial contact;
 - b. at the subsequent face-to-face (in-person/virtual) or telephone follow-up meeting;
 - c. from the Police National Computer (PNC);
 - d. from the Police National Database (PND);
 - e. data from ViSOR; and
 - f. from local intelligence systems.
68. The research and checks should aim to fill any gaps in information and this stage should ensure all available information known to police on the individuals concerned (including on children) with the enquiry has been established.
69. Checks will also be completed with other agencies where appropriate. This can include:
- a. the local authority, including adult and children's social care (where the applicant has given consent or where the circumstances of the enquiry dictate this is necessary without consent);
 - b. probation services;
 - c. local domestic abuse services;
 - d. any other agency that can provide information to inform the risk assessment, such as healthcare services and employers.
70. As part of the ongoing safety planning, the need for a formal risk assessment should be revisited throughout each stage of the DVDS process to ensure **A** is appropriately safeguarded.

“Right to Know” entry route

Indirect information received by the police

71. For the purposes of the “right to know” entry route, the trigger which may lead to a disclosure under this scheme is where the police receive indirect information that may impact the safety of **A** and which has not been conveyed to the police via the “right to ask” process.
72. Indirect information is likely to be information received by the police from intelligence-gathering arising from the following activities:
- a. an investigation into a criminal act where, as part of that investigation, the police have reason to believe that **A** may be at risk of harm from **B**;
 - b. information on alleged violent and abusive offending by **B** that is received from:
 - i. partner agencies (statutory and/or third sector) as part of routine information sharing at local safeguarding meetings;
 - ii. intelligence sources;
 - iii. either **A** or **B** coming into contact with the police as part of their routine operational duties.
73. Following receipt of the indirect information, intelligence checks should be undertaken by the police to build an initial picture on **A** and **B**. The minimum standard of checks at this stage are:
- a. Police National Computer (PNC);
 - b. Police National Database (PND);
 - c. ViSOR (if **A** and/or **B** has a ViSOR marker on the Police National Computer); and
 - d. local intelligence systems.
74. Processes under the National Intelligence Model¹⁴ should also be used to determine, as far as possible, the veracity of the indirect information received.
75. To ensure that the safeguarding response is proportionate, consideration should be given to any risks identified and whether **A** is associated with a serial perpetrator of domestic abuse, defined by the College of Policing as ‘someone who has been reported to the police as having committed or threatened domestic abuse against two

¹⁴ [Intelligence management | College of Policing](#)

or more victims. This includes current or former intimate partners and family members¹⁵. The College of Policing have issued principles to assist forces in the identification, assessment and management of serial or potentially dangerous domestic abuse and stalking perpetrators¹⁶.

76. The police may make the decision not to progress the disclosure following the completion of intelligence checks. This decision and rationale should be recorded appropriately.

¹⁵ [Context and dynamics of domestic abuse | College of Policing](#)

¹⁶ [Identification, assessment and management of serial or potentially dangerous domestic abuse and stalking perpetrators: Eight principles to assist forces \(college.police.uk\)](#)

Categorising as a ‘concern’ or ‘no concern’ (for both entry routes)

77. At this point in the Disclosure Scheme process it is envisaged that, from either the “right to ask” or “right to know” entry routes, sufficient information will have been gathered and checked to determine whether a credible risk of harm to **A**, and any relevant children, in the form of violent or abusive behaviour from **B** exists. The police should categorise either the disclosure application (under “right to ask”) or the indirect information received (under “right to know”) as either a “concern” or “no concern” before making the final decision for disclosure.
78. A “concern” occurs if **A**, and any relevant children, are at risk of harm from **B**, based on a balanced profile of **B** that takes into account the following factors:
- a. **B** has convictions for an offence related to domestic abuse (see Annex B for list of offences); and/or
 - b. **B** is a serial perpetrator of domestic abuse; and/or
 - c. there is intelligence known about the previous violent and abusive offending of **B** which may include:
 - i. cases not proceeded with; and/or
 - ii. intelligence concerning violent or abusive offences, which do not necessarily need to be related to domestic abuse; and/or
 - iii. previous concerning behaviour towards previous partners. This may include a pattern of behaviours that indicate that **B** has stalked or exercised controlling or coercive behaviour over previous partners, including after the end of a relationship; and/or
 - d. there is concerning behaviour by **B** demonstrated towards **A**. This may include a pattern of behaviours that indicate that **B** is stalking or exercising controlling or coercive behaviour over **A**.
79. The ROA 1974 provides that, in most circumstances, convictions become ‘spent’ after a number of years and do not need to be disclosed. However, **the ROA 1974 does not prohibit the disclosure of spent convictions**. Police officers retain discretion in the course of their duties as to whether or not to disclose spent convictions under the DVDS. Officers should take into account the age of the conviction during the decision-making process. Where the disclosure of a conviction is in the course of their duties,

the police will not be liable to prosecution under the ROA 1974. Any disclosure made by the police under the DVDS also needs to be necessary, reasonable and proportionate, and in accordance with other relevant over-arching primary legislation; for example, the HRA 1998 and the DPA 2018. Police should consider seeking legal advice where they are considering disclosure.

80. If a “concern” occurs, the police must consider if representations should be sought from **B** to ensure that the police have all the necessary information to make a decision in relation to disclosure. **As part of this consideration, the police must consider whether there are good reasons not to seek a representation, such as if seeking the representation might put A at risk or the need to disclose information in an emergency. If it is determined that representations from B need to be sought, the police must inform A or C of the need to involve B, giving them the opportunity to withdraw the application.**
81. A “no concern” applies where **B** has:
- a. no convictions for an offence related to domestic abuse, including spent convictions; and/or
 - b. there is no other intelligence or information that shows that **B**’s behaviour may cause harm to **A**; and/or
 - c. there is insufficient intelligence or information to register a concern.
82. This stage of the process should be reached no later than 10 days from the face-to-face meeting (under “right to ask”) or from receipt of the indirect information (under “right to know”).
83. A decision to categorise a case as a “concern” or “no concern” must be reviewed and supervised by an officer of at least the rank of Sergeant or Police Staff equivalent, who has knowledge of the scheme and is experienced in dealing with safeguarding and the risk management of offenders.
84. Once the police have determined whether the initial trigger can be categorised as a “concern” or “no concern”, best practice is that cases should be referred to a multi-agency panel for any additional input or considerations about whether information should be disclosed and next steps for safeguarding **A** and any relevant children. **If a multi-agency panel is used to help inform next steps, the final decision on whether disclosure should remain with the police.**

If it is identified there is an immediate/imminent risk of harm to A, then ACTION MUST TAKEN IMMEDIATELY BY THE POLICE to safeguard those at risk.

Multi-Agency Panels

85. The multi-agency panels, where used to help inform disclosure or plan next steps for safeguarding, may consist of some or all of the following agencies:

- a) Police
- b) Probation Service
- c) Prison Service
- d) Health
- e) Education
- f) Local authority, including adult and children's social care, housing, etc
- g) A representative from a domestic abuse victim support specialist service (including male specific services if relevant)
- h) Perpetrator interventions

86. The minimum number of bodies constituting the multi-agency panel should ideally be no less than three, and consist of the police, probation service and a representative from a domestic abuse service.

87. Applications which are considered high risk cases should be referred to a MARAC for information sharing and safeguarding.

Principles for the police to consider when making a decision whether to disclose

88. There are three principles that the police should take into account on the decision to disclose information that protects **A**. Information shared at multi-agency panels where used may inform considerations around disclosure where relevant, **but the final decision on whether or not a disclosure will be made rests with the police.**

Principle 1: Three-stage disclosure test

89. The police have the common law power to disclose information about an individual where it is necessary to do so to protect another individual from harm. The following three-stage test should be satisfied before a decision to disclose is made:

- a. it is reasonable to conclude that such disclosure is necessary to protect **A**, and any relevant children, from being the victim of a crime;
- b. there is a need for such disclosure, which considers that there is a:

- i) reasonable cause to suspect a person would be likely to suffer harm and;
- ii) grounds to conclude a disclosure is required to safeguard their welfare.

c. interfering with the rights of **B**, including **B**'s rights under Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights to have information about their previous convictions kept confidential, is **necessary and proportionate** for the prevention of crime. This involves balancing the consequences for **B** if their details are disclosed against the nature and extent of the risks that **B** poses to **A**. This stage of the test involves considering:

- i. whether **B** should be asked if they wish to make representations, so as to ensure that the police have all the necessary information at their disposal to conduct the balancing exercise, **however, such a decision must be based on an assessment of risk of harm to A if B were to be informed, and should not be done if there is any risk of harm to A. A should also be informed of the need to involved B and given the option to withdraw their application on this basis.**
- ii. the extent of the information which needs to be disclosed - e.g. it may not be necessary to tell the applicant the precise details of the offence for the applicant to take steps to protect **A**.

90. There may be concerns that relate to **B**'s current behaviour towards **A** within the disclosure application e.g. abusive or threatening behaviour. In this case, even though there is no recorded information held by the police or other agencies to disclose to the applicant, the applicant may still be contacted to talk about concerns over **B**'s current behaviour. This discussion should cover steps the applicant should take in relation to these concerns to safeguard **A** from the risk of harm posed by **B**. The police, with input from domestic abuse specialist organisations or an IDVA, or the multi-agency panel if used, will consider what safeguarding measures could be introduced to support **A** in the short, medium and long term, and determine the roles and responsibility of each agency to ensure that the safety plan remains victim-centred. This could include the application of a protection order, for example a Stalking Protection Order or a Domestic Violence Protection Order, or referral to a MARAC.

Principle 2: Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

91. Information considered for disclosure may include sensitive, personal data (such as information about an individual's previous convictions) and therefore the police must be satisfied that disclosure is in accordance with Data Protection Act 2018 which sets out the framework for data protection law in the UK.¹⁷

¹⁷ It updates and replaces the Data Protection Act 1998 and came into effect on 25 May 2018. It was amended on 1 January 2021 by regulations under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, to reflect the UK's status outside the EU.

92. It sits alongside and supplements the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) - for example by providing exemptions. It also sets out separate data protection rules for law enforcement authorities, extends data protection to some other areas such as national security and defence, and sets out the Information Commissioner's functions and powers.
93. Information and guidance on applying the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR can be found at the Information Commissioner's Office website at <https://ico.org.uk>.

Principle 3: Informing B of the disclosure

94. Consideration must also be given to whether **B** should be told that information about him/her may be disclosed to the applicant. Such a decision must be based on an assessment of risk of harm to **A**, if **B** were to be informed. **Due consideration must be given on whether seeking representations from B would have potential to escalate the risk of harm to A. If this were to be the case, no representations must be sought from B.** **A** should also be given the opportunity to withdraw their application before **B** is informed of anything.
95. In the event that **B** is to be informed that a disclosure is to be made to the applicant, then **B** should be informed in person and given information about the DVDS and the implications for **B**. This also provides agencies with an opportunity to sign-post **B** to relevant support services to allow **B** to address their offending behaviour.
96. Annex H contains a template checklist for the police to refer to, which summarises the three principles articulated in this section of the guidance.
97. A decision to categorise a disclose or not to disclose must be reviewed and supervised by an officer of at least the rank of Sergeant or Police Staff equivalent, who has knowledge of the scheme and is experienced in dealing with safeguarding and the risk management of offenders.

Decision made to disclose information

98. If the decision is made to disclose information because it is judged that there is a risk of harm to **A** that warrants a disclosure, then the following should be considered:
- a. what will be disclosed?

The police will need to consider the specific wording of a disclosure that contains sufficient information to allow **A** to make an informed choice with regard to their relationship or contact with **B**. Sufficient information can include the circumstances in which a previous offence was committed. The disclosure must be accompanied by a robust safety plan tailored to the needs of **A** and any relevant children and based on all relevant information, which identifies the service provision and the relevant partners or agencies who will deliver on-going support to **A**.

b. who should the disclosure be made to?

The disclosure should be provided to the person(s) best placed to safeguard **A**. Whilst it is envisaged that the majority of disclosures will be made to **A**, it may not be appropriate to do so in all instances, for example where there are concerns about **A**'s mental capacity to understand the information being disclosed. The judgement of who to disclose to will be determined based on the information gathered as part of the DVDS process and subsequent risk assessments.

c. how should the disclosure be made?

The disclosure will be delivered by the police, however they should consider whether there are other agencies that should also be involved in the delivery or be present (e.g. IDVA). It is recommended that the disclosure should be made in person.

The use of technology that enables a face-to-face meetings or telephone disclosures can be utilised under the "right to ask" applications if determined to be the best approach for a case (e.g. where there are issues with accessibility) and only where identity can be confirmed. The risk of technology facilitated abuse should be considered when deciding how to make a disclosure.

For the "right to know" route it is strongly recommended that a face-to-face approach to disclosure is followed, as this information may be unexpected to **A**.

In line with safeguarding procedures, it is essential that the disclosure takes place at a safe time and location to meet the specific needs of **A**.

99. If a disclosure is made, then the person receiving the disclosure must receive the following information:

a. the disclosure must only be used for the purpose for which it has been shared, i.e. in order to safeguard **A**, and any relevant children;

b. the person to whom the disclosure is made will be asked to sign an undertaking or provide verbal confirmation that they agree that the information is confidential, and they will not disclose this information further. It is the exception, however, that in circumstances where the disclosure is being made to a third party who may also be person **C**, such as a domestic abuse specialist who is supporting person **A**, the information can be passed to person **A** if and when it is deemed appropriate;

c. a warning should be given that legal proceedings could result if this confidentiality is breached.

100. If the person is not willing or unable to sign the undertaking or provide verbal confirmation, the police will need to consider if disclosure should still take place and

legal advice should be sought where necessary. The outcome should be recorded and considered as part of assessments of risk, decision-making process and safety planning.

101. **At no time will written correspondence concerning the specifics of the disclosure consideration be sent out or left with the applicant in relation to the disclosure of information.** There would be a potential risk to intelligence sources, victims and perpetrators should such written information get into the wrong hands. Annex H provides a template form which may be used to convey a disclosure. What the applicant is told should be recorded verbatim on this form, signed, and then retained by the police. It must not, under any circumstances, be given to the applicant.
102. The person to whom the disclosure is made should, if appropriate, be given information to empower them to safeguard **A** and any relevant children in the future.

Disclosures when the applicant is not the recipient

103. In some situations, the applicant to the scheme may not be the person who is best placed to safeguard **A**. In such situations, the applicant would not receive the disclosure or be informed if a disclosure has been or will be made. The applicant should be informed that there is no information to disclose to them and be provided with guidance to stay vigilant and report any future concerns.
104. Consideration should be given to the privacy of applicants who are not the recipient of the disclosure. Where the recipient of the disclosure is not the person who applied to the scheme, the recipient should not routinely be informed who made the application or what information the applicant provided regarding the subject.

Decision made not to disclose information

105. If a decision is made not to disclose information because it is judged that there is a no significant risk of harm to **A** that warrants a disclosure, then these actions should be followed:
- a. if the decision not to disclose has been made following the “right to know” entry point, then the decision not to disclose plus the rationale should be recorded. Recording the decision in this way may inform future disclosure considerations made on **B**.
 - b. if the decision not to disclose has been made following the “right to ask” entry point, then the following steps should be taken:
 - i. it is highly recommended that the applicant should be told in person or, via a safe method of communication if appropriate, as any written correspondence or a home visit has the potential to put **A** at risk. The applicant should be told that there is no information to disclose given

- the information/details provided by the applicant and the result of checks made on these details.
- ii. However, it is important that the applicant is made aware of the limitations of intelligence gathering. They should be informed that the absence or lack of information does not mean that there is nothing to disclose or any concerns are unfounded. The applicant should be told that the absence or lack of information to disclose does not mean that there is no risk of harm to **A**, and the applicant should remain vigilant and report any future concerns.
 - iii. Annex I provides a template form which may be used to convey suitable wording.
 - iv. The applicant should be given an information pack to help safeguard **A** in the future, but at no time should the information pack contain written correspondence concerning the specifics of the disclosure consideration. There could be a potential risk of harm to **A** should such written information be obtained by a third party and/or **B**.
 - v. The applicant should also be made aware of available specialist domestic abuse services, including “by and for” services where applicable, and should be provided with the opportunity to be referred to these services.
 - vi. **B** will not be notified where no disclosure is made to the applicant.

Managing the perpetrator

106. Regardless of whether a decision is made to disclose information to safeguard **A**, the police or local multi-agency forum should also consider whether **B** should be referred to an appropriate local framework for managing perpetrators. Such a decision will be made based on the risk of harm posed by **B**'s offending behaviour to the local community, and options may include referral either to the local:

- a. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA);
- b. Integrated Offender Management (IOM) scheme; or
- c. A domestic abuse perpetrator intervention (e.g. behaviour change programme), if appropriate.

107. The local multi-agency forum should use the risk-assessment criteria in force by local MAPPA and IOM schemes to determine the appropriate scheme to which **B** might be referred.

Maintaining a record of the Disclosure Scheme

108. At the closure of every case (whatever the outcome and at any stage in the process), a final report must be submitted onto police and local agency intelligence systems to record the request/information received, outcomes and details of all parties involved. Records should also be kept of protected characteristics such as sex, ethnicity and disability, and whether or not the requester is a third party, for data collection purposes.
109. This should serve as a piece of valuable intelligence, which will be retrievable to all police forces via the PND system. It would allow any patterns where **B** has many disclosure requests made against them to be identified to help safeguard **A**.
110. Any decisions made as a result of the DVDS must be recorded fully and in a format that would stand scrutiny of any formal review including judicial review or claims of negligence.
111. It is also crucial that any relevant information coming to light as part of this process is shared as appropriate with all relevant agencies, in accordance with the principles of information sharing and disclosure as articulated in this guidance document.

Table 1 – Suggested Maximum Timescales

The maximum timescale for a DVDS investigation to be completed is 28 days from start to finish, unless extenuating circumstances exist which mean an extension is required and justified.

Right to ask		Right to know	Both Routes
<i>Stage</i>	<i>Timescales for Right to Ask</i>	<i>Timescales for Right to Know</i>	<i>Throughout the disclosure process</i>
Contact made	Direct information received	Indirect information received and intelligence checks made – completed within 10 days from indirect information received	Ongoing safety planning, and where necessary, full risk assessment
Step 1 – Initial Contact checks	Completed within 24 hours from initial contact made		
Step 2 – face-to-face meeting	Completed within 10 days from Initial Contact checks		
Categorising as a “concern” or “no concern”	Completed within 10 days from face-to-face meeting	Completed within 10 days from intelligence checks	
Disclosure of information	By day 28	By day 28	

Annex A – Definitions

The following definitions are used for the purposes of this guidance document:

applicant – means the person making the application under “right to ask”.

application – means those enquiries under “right to ask” that go on to be processed as formal domestic abuse disclosure applications, excluding applications that are not ‘true’ disclosure scheme applications i.e. vetting and barring, intelligence-giving opportunities.

children/ any relevant children – as defined by the [Family Law Act 1996](#)

domestic abuse – defined under [Section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) as any incident or pattern of incidents of abuse between persons aged 16 years or over who are “personally connected” to each other. This goes well beyond intimate partner violence (IPV) in the home. Domestic abuse can be any of the following behaviours, and they can take place in any setting: psychological or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; psychological, emotional, or other abuse. This definition also recognises children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right when they see, hear, or experience the effects of it.

disclosure – means the act of disclosing specific information to **A** or **C** about **B**’s convictions for violent and relevant non-violent offences and any other relevant information deemed necessary and proportionate to protect **A** from harm.

harm – includes any hurt calculated to interfere with the health or comfort of the victim; such hurt need not be permanent but must be more than transient and trifling.

indirect information – means that, under “right to know”, the police come into possession of information that may impact the safety of **A** and which has not been conveyed to the police via the “right to ask” process.

Individual **A**: the person potentially at risk. This might also be the requestor.

Individual **B**: the potential perpetrator.

Individual **C**: a person who may request information about ‘**B**’ on behalf of or out of concern for ‘**A**’, such a friend or relative, or a professional such as an IDVA. They may not, however, be the person who then receives the disclosure.

information-sharing – sharing of information between relevant agencies (both statutory and non-statutory).

intimate personal relationship – means a relationship between two people, regardless of gender, which may be reasonably characterised as being physically and/or emotionally

intimate. The police should consider this on a case-by-case basis and should consider seeking legal advice when considering disclosure on whether the requirement for an intimate personal relationship has been met.

multi-agency forum – means a forum consisting of safeguarding agencies, police, probation and third sector that is constituted to advise whether disclosure would be appropriate in a particular case. Ideally, this should be the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) or, where this is not possible, another appropriate forum that local needs determine, and which can deliver the intended outcomes of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme. Ultimately, it will be the police, as owners of the information, who will make the final decision as to whether to disclose the information.

MAPPA – Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements are in place to ensure the successful management of violent and sexual offenders.

personally connected – section 2 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines as two people who are or have been married, are in civil partners or have been, have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated); have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated); are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other or if they are relatives.

relevant non-violent offence – means an offence that does not involve the use of any force or injury to another person but that may cause fear or distress or still put the victim at risk, for example through threat of harm, controlling or coercive behaviour or stalking.

serial perpetrator – for the purposes of this disclosure scheme, the definition articulated by the Crown Prosecution Service is used:

where a suspect has committed an act of domestic violence against two or more different victims or complainants they should be considered a 'serial perpetrator'.

third party: a person whom a disclosure can be made to if deemed by the risk assessment as the person best placed to safeguard 'A' (e.g., parent, third-sector worker) and in some instances could be 'C'.

violent offence – means an offence which leads to, or is intended or likely to lead to, a person's death or physical injury to a person.

Annex B of this guidance document gives a non-exhaustive list of offences that may be disclosed under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme.

Annex B – Non-exhaustive list of offences where convictions and/or allegations may be disclosed under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme

The following list sets out the offences where a conviction or allegation may be disclosed under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme. **The list is non-exhaustive and is intended to act as a guide to the types of offences that may be disclosed.**

- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Battery
- Common assault
- Murder
- Manslaughter
- Kidnapping
- False imprisonment

Under the Offences against the Person Act 1861:

- section 4 (soliciting murder)
- section 16 (threats to kill)
- section 18 (wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm)
- section 20 (malicious wounding)
- section 21 (attempting to choke, suffocate or strangle in order to commit or assist in committing an indictable offence)
- section 23 (maliciously administering poison etc. so as to endanger life or inflict grievous bodily harm)
- section 28 (causing bodily injury by explosives)
- section 29 (using explosives etc. with intent to do grievous bodily harm)

- section 30 (placing explosives with intent to do bodily injury)
- section 31 (setting spring guns etc. with intent to do grievous bodily harm)
- section 35 (injuring persons by furious driving)
- section 38 (assault with intent to resist arrest)
- section 47 (assault occasioning actual bodily harm)

Under the Public Order Act 1986

- section 1 (riot)
- section 2 (violent disorder)
- section 3 (affray)
- section 4 (fear or provocation of violence)
- section 4A (intentional harassment, alarm or distress)
- section 5 (harassment, alarm or distress)

Under the Explosive Substances Act 1883:

- section 2 (causing explosion likely to endanger life or property)
- section 3 (attempt to cause explosion, or making or keeping explosive with intent to endanger life or property)

Under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933

- section 1 (cruelty to children)

Under the Firearms Act 1968

- section 16 (possession of firearm with intent to endanger life)
- section 16A (possession of firearm with intent to cause fear of violence)

Under the Theft Act 1968:

- section 7 (theft)
- section 8 (robbery or assault with intent to rob)
- section 9 (burglary with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm)
- section 10 (aggravated burglary)
- section 21 (blackmail)

Under the Criminal Damage Act 1971

- section 1 (criminal damage including arson)

Under the Criminal Law Act 1977

- section 6 (violence for securing entry)

Under the Criminal Attempts Act 1981

- section 1 (attempting to commit an offence)

Under the Child Abduction Act 1984

- section 1 (offence of abduction of child by parent etc.)
- section 2 (offence of abduction of child by other persons)

Under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

- section 51 (intimidation, etc., of witnesses, jurors and others)

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

- section 29 (racially or religiously aggravated assaults)
- section 30 (racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage)
- section 31 (racially or religiously aggravated public order offences)

- section 31 (racially or religiously aggravated harassment)

Under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004

- section 5 (causing or allowing the death of a child or vulnerable adult)

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- section 1 (rape)
- section 2 (assault by penetration)
- section 3 (sexual assault)
- section 4 (causing a person to engage in sexual activity without consent)
- section 5 (rape of a child under 13)
- section 6 (assault of a child under 13 by penetration)
- section 7 (sexual assault of a child under 13)
- section 8 (causing or inciting a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity)
- section 9 (sexual activity with a child)
- section 10 (causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity)
- section 11 (engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child)

Under the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc.) Act 2004

- section 4 (trafficking people for exploitation)

Under the Modern Slavery Act 2015

- section 1 (slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour)

Under the Serious Crime Act

- section 76 (controlling or coercive behaviour)

Protection from Harassment Act 1997

- section 2 (offence of harassment)
- section 2A (offence of stalking)
- section 4 (putting people in fear of violence)
- section 4A (stalking involving fear of violence or serious alarm or distress)

Annex C – Template of Minimum Standard of Information to be Obtained and Checks to be Completed at the Initial Contact Stage (either through an online application or face-to-face)

(Unique reference number to be allocated to each enquiry and made reference to throughout the process)

Officer recording:

Date:

Means of contact:

Details of Applicant:

Name (including any other names used, i.e. maiden):

DOB:

Place of birth:

Address:

Ethnic origin:

Gender:

Preferred language:

Third party applicant (yes/no):

Preferred Method of Contact (Safety):

Time:

Day:

Method:

Details of Subject:

Name (including any other names used):

DOB:

Place of birth:

Gender:

Ethnic origin:

Address including previous address(es):

Place of work/employment:

Any additional information (including on disability or any known additional or complex needs):

Details of Person at Risk (if not applicant):

Name (including any other names used):

DOB:

Place of birth:

Gender:

Ethnic origin:

Address including previous address(es):

Place of work/employment:

Any additional information (including on disability or any known or complex needs):

Details of Children:

Name (including any other names used):

Address:

Ages (approximate if necessary):

Any additional information:

Relationship to subject and person at risk:

Relationship:

Nature of relationship between subject and person at risk:

How would you describe the relationship:

Length of relationship:

Concerns:

What concerns have they in regard to the person at risk?:

Elements of Risk:

Does the subject know that the enquiry has been made?:

Concerns about subject knowing that you are making this application:

Information to be Read to Applicant:

Does not replace existing procedures

Disclosure will only be given to person at risk and/or person who is in a position to safeguard

24-hour timescale for checks to eliminate immediate risk

Face-to-face meeting follows within 10 days

Proof of ID required

Enquiry will be completed within 28 days

Do you consider yourself to be at risk from the subject?

Caveat: The person completing the forms has responsibility to complete all relevant checks, no disclosure at this stage (to be completed within 24 hours)

If a crime is reported there is a duty to respond and conduct an investigation in line with normal operating procedures

(the Disclosure process will run alongside any investigation that is on-going)

Annex D – Template for Initial Checks/Risk Assessment

This is the minimum standard of checks that are required at this initial contact stage. Any further checks that Forces feel are necessary are at their discretion. How these checks are to be recorded is to be decided by individual Forces.

Checks Completed on Subject:

Officer recording:

Date:

PNC:

PND:

Intelligence check:

Risk assessment tool:

Checks Completed on Applicant (if not Person at Risk):

PNC:

Intelligence:

Checks Completed on Person at Risk:

PNC:

Intelligence:

DARA/ DASH:

If a crime is reported there is a duty to respond and conduct an investigation in line with normal operating procedures

(the Disclosure process will run alongside any investigation that is on-going)

Risk Assessment:

Is there an Immediate or Imminent Risk of Harm Identified at this Stage?:

Yes (immediate action to be taken to safeguard those at risk in line with standard procedures and record action below):

OR

No (any relevant details to be recorded in making this decision):

Officer/Staff completing:

Date:

Additional Information:

Brief summary of information known at this stage, outcome of checks done and comments by Supervisors in support of decision made:

Annex E – Template for Face-to-Face contact meeting

Minimum standard of information to be obtained and checks to be completed at the Face-to-Face stage

(Unique reference number to be allocated to each enquiry and reference to be made throughout the process)

Officer recording:

Date:

Location:

Persons' present:

Details of Applicant:

Name:

DOB:

Place of birth:

Address:

Ethnic origin:

Verification of Identity (photographic identification required):

Passport number:

Driving licence number:

Birth certificate:

Other:

Further Details:

Reason for contact and application?:

Describe history of relationship:

Consent:

Warning about providing false information

Warning of further disclosing information received

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Officer recording:

Date:

Caveat: It is the responsibility of the person completing the form to conduct all relevant checks, no disclosure at this stage (although it seems unnecessary to repeat person's details and checks, it might be good practice to facilitate a tick box or guidance prompt to ensure none of the persons have come to notice since the initial contact check. At the discretion of Forces, further checks in regard to international enquiries could be warranted, CETS, etc).

Additional PND checks to be completed at this stage and consideration to the following:

Checks Completed on Subject:

Officer recording:

Date:

PNC:

PND:

Intelligence check:

DASH:

Checks Completed on Applicant (if not Person at Risk):

PNC:

Intelligence:

Checks Completed on Person at Risk:

PNC:

Intelligence:

DARA/DASH:

Are any immediate or imminent risk of harm factors identified at this stage? (Action to safeguard to be taken at this stage as necessary)

Annex F – Information-sharing principles

The successful implementation of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme is dependent on appropriate information-sharing between agencies and disclosure to a third party for the purpose of protecting the public. For the sake of clarity, information-sharing is the sharing of information between relevant agencies (both statutory and non-statutory).

Agencies responsible for sharing and disclosing information under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme should familiarise themselves with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Data Sharing Code of Practice and ICO code on the DPA exemption in section 29 of the DPA re crime prevention, both available from the ICO website at <https://ico.org.uk>. For those forces operating in Wales, the Wales Accord for the Sharing of Personal Information (WASP), found at <http://www.waspi.org/home>, can also be referred to.

The purpose of sharing information in this context is to enable the relevant agencies (both statutory and non-statutory) to work more effectively together in assessing risks and considering how to manage them. This points towards sharing all of the available information that is relevant, so that nothing is overlooked, and public protection is not compromised. However, there are certain principles that must be taken into account when considering whether to share information.

At all times, the ability to both share and disclose information must be considered on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the sharing of information is lawful, i.e. necessary and proportionate.

Information that is shared under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme remains the responsibility of the agency that holds it. For example, the Probation Service will hold information regarding their statutory supervision of a perpetrator, and the police hold information regarding their separate management of a perpetrator.

Information-sharing must adhere to common law and legislation. Whilst ordinarily non-statutory agencies are bound by a common law duty of confidence (which requires that information provided should not be used or disclosed further in an identifiable form except as originally understood by the provider, or with his or her subsequent permission), case law has established a defence to breach of confidence where the disclosure is in the public interest. The prevention, detection, investigation and punishment of serious crime and the prevention of abuse or serious harm may well amount to a sufficiently strong public interest to override the duty of confidence.

The information-sharing must comply with the data protection principles set out in the DPA and reproduced in the ICO Code of Practice. Among other things, this means that the information shared must be accurate and up to date; it must be stored securely; and it must not be retained for any longer than necessary. There are some differences between

the principles in the respective pieces of legislation: the UK GDPR and Part 2 of the DPA 2018 for general data processing; and Part 3 of the DPA 2018 for law enforcement processing. You should refer to the detailed guidance on the ICO website¹⁸.

In normal circumstances, data shall be handled only with the data subject's consent, transparently, and only in ways which the data subject would reasonably expect. However, section 29(1) of the DPA provides an important exemption to the requirement to comply with the data principle 1 if the sharing of personal data is necessary for the prevention and detection of crime (guidance on section 29 is available on the ICO website¹⁹). Under the DVDS, it will be appropriate for information to be shared under this exemption and without the consent of the data subject (**B**) if it can be shown that such sharing is necessary for the prevention of a crime against **A**. However, in the case of personal data, a condition from Schedule 2 must be met and a condition from Schedule 2 and one from Schedule 3 must be met in the case of sensitive personal data. It is also important to note that such information shared must comply with the remaining data protection principles. Use of the exemption should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Data sharing must also comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA). Article 8 of the ECHR, given domestic effect by the HRA, provides a right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence. Any interference with this right by a public authority (such as a criminal justice agency) must be "necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others".

The sharing of personal information about a potential perpetrator may be an interference with a person's right to a private and family life. To comply with Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, any such interference must be shown to be necessary and proportionate in the pursuit of a legitimate aim, such as public safety or the prevention of disorder or crime.

In human rights law, the concept of proportionality means doing no more than is necessary in pursuit of a legitimate aim. The six law enforcement data protection principles under Part 3, Chapter 2 of the DPA 2018 are the main responsibilities you should follow when processing personal data for law enforcement purposes. The third principle requires that **the personal data you are processing is adequate, relevant and not excessive**. This means the data must be limited to what is necessary for the purpose(s) you are processing it.

¹⁸ [Codes of practice | ICO](#)

¹⁹ <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1594/section-29.pdf>

Annex G – Template checklist on disclosure decision-making process

Section 1 – Questions for Consideration

Is **B** known for domestic abuse related convictions?

Where **B** is known for domestic abuse related convictions, does the Disclosure Application highlight safeguarding concerns in view of the nature of this previous history?

Is **B** known for other offences relating to safeguarding (to include intelligence, breach of civil orders, harassment or injunctions, etc, Police National Database or information obtained by local checks)?

If **B** is known for offences/intelligence/information relevant to safeguarding and they are in an intimate relationship, give consideration to ‘concerns’ outcome route.

Reconsider if there is an immediate/imminent risk of harm identified and, if so, take immediate action to safeguard person(s) at risk.

Section 2 - Review the outcome of the initial contact and face-to-face stages

Were concerns raised as a reason for making the application?

Was the behaviour of the subject/applicant’s observations raised as a reason for making the application?

With all the above questions, consideration must be given as to why.

Reconsider if there is an immediate/imminent risk of harm identified and, if so, take immediate action to safeguard person(s) at risk.

Section 3 – Further Information

Is there any other information, not covered in the above questions, that highlights safeguarding concerns?

If yes, give full details and consideration to ‘concerns’ outcome route.

CONCERNS: Yes / No (delete as applicable)

Rationale and justification for chosen outcome route (free text):

Officer/Agencies represented and completed:

DECISION: Disclosure / Non-Disclosure (delete as applicable)

CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO INVITE B TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS:

Yes / No (delete as applicable)

Rationale and justification for chosen outcome route (free text):

Officer/Agencies represented and completed:

CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO INFORM B OF DISCLOSURE:

Yes / No (delete as applicable)

Rationale and justification for chosen outcome route (free text):

Officer/Agencies represented and completed:

CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO REFER B TO APPROPRIATE LOCAL FRAMEWORK FOR MANAGING OFFENDERS (e.g. MAPPA, IOM)

Yes / No (delete as applicable)

Rationale and justification for chosen outcome route (free text):

Officer/Agencies represented and completed:

Section 4 – Legal Authority

Due consideration to be given to Common Law Power to disclose information about a person's convictions where there is a need for such disclosure to protect the public from crime;

AND

Disclosure would not be in breach of the Human Rights Act 1998, Data Protection Act 2018 or a breach of confidence.

Annex H – Template containing minimum information to be disclosed (including form of words)

Template to be retained by the Police

Section 1 – Details of Person Receiving Disclosure Information

Surname:

Forename(s):

DOB:

Address:

Section 2 – Details of Subject of Disclosure Information

Surname:

Forename(s):

DOB:

Section 3 – Details of Disclosure Meeting

Time:

Date:

Agency:

Persons present:

Role:

Section 4 – Undertaking by Person Receiving Disclosure Information

The following information should be read as it appears below (verbatim) to the individual receiving disclosure information. If the individual does not agree to this undertaking, you should consider carefully whether disclosure should proceed at this point. The decision to continue/to not continue must be considered prior to the actual visit and should be included in the risk assessment/decision making stage. Also provide the individual with further contact details that can be accessed 24/7 in case there are further child protection concerns.

Prior to receiving any disclosure information, you must clearly understand how you can use the information that is disclosed to you.

You can:

- use this information to keep yourself and others safe;
- use the information to keep your child(ren) safe;
- ask what support is available;
- ask who you should contact if you think you or others are at risk; and
- ask for advice on how to keep yourself and others safe.

You cannot:

- Share the information disclosed to you with any other person. If you feel you need to share the information with another person, you must contact the person or department who disclosed this information to you and seek their permission to do so.
- Failure by you to keep this information confidential may result in legal proceedings being instigated against you, depending on the circumstances.
- You will be asked to sign an undertaking to agree to abide by the above and keep the information disclosed to you confidential. If you do not agree to sign this undertaking, it may result in you not receiving disclosure information.

UNDERTAKING

I understand the section above about how I can use the information disclosed to me in this meeting. I understand that the information is confidential and that legal proceedings against me may result if I breach this confidentiality. I agree to abide by these conditions in relation to the information that will be disclosed to me in this meeting:

Signature (of person receiving disclosure information):

Time:

Date:

Section 5 – Details of Disclosure of Information (NOT to be left with applicant in any format)

Exact form of words being disclosed:

Section 6 – Declaration

I have received and fully understand the information that has been shared with me today. I understand the warnings I have been given about the confidentiality of this information.

Signature (of person receiving disclosure information):

Time:

Date:

Section 7 – Empowerment and Citizen-Focused Closure

An appropriate follow-on / safety plan should be agreed for the person receiving disclosure (page 19 of the guidance). This should give consideration to what action the person should now be advised to take to safeguard their child(ren) and any relevant children. Victims should be signposted to the relevant support services via link or leaflet (Annex J). There should be continued care support provided on an ongoing basis throughout the process.

This should be explained to the person and the possible consequences of failure to follow this advice should be made clear.

Empowerment Pack issued or directed to website? Yes / No (delete as applicable)

The plan should note which agency is responsible for checking that the person follows advice to safeguard the child(ren) concerned; this may be the police, Children's Social Care or another appropriate agency. It should be noted which agency will provide any support to the person to assist with this; this may be the police, Children's Social Care or another appropriate agency/charity (e.g. Women's Aid, Stop it Now!).

Any further queries or concerns contact:

Officer/Staff name:

Office No:

Department name:

24/7 Contact No:

Officer/Staff Making Disclosure

Officer/Staff completing:

Time:

Date:

Section Additional Information

Section No:

Details:

Annex I – Template form of words for non-disclosure

Template to be retained by police

Case Reference Number:

Dear (insert applicant's name):

The disclosure process provides a formal opportunity to contact the police in order to make a request for information about a named individual who is in a relationship. In the event that this individual has convictions for domestic abuse related matters, careful consideration is given to disclosing information to a person at risk and/or a person who is in a position to safeguard that individual. Disclosure may also be given where there is other information suggesting that the individual poses a risk of harm and disclosure is necessary to keep someone safe.

In relation to the enquiry that you made under the case reference number above, from the information that you provided to the police and the checks made on these details, we can confirm that in line with criteria set out above, the police have no information to disclose relating to the subject of your application. An absence or lack of information, however, does not mean that there is nothing to disclose which could be of risk of harm **A** or that any concerns are unfounded.

Although there is no information to disclose to you on this occasion, you must remain vigilant to any indicators that this individual poses a risk of harm. The decision in this case is based on the information available to the police service at this point in time. The police will never be able to offer categorical assurances about the risk posed by any individual. Please refer to the Applicant Pack provided as part of the process for further information about safeguarding.

You are thanked for making a request under the Disclosure Process and we would take this opportunity to reiterate that your enquiry is a positive step towards keeping people safe.

If you have any further concerns in the future regarding for your safety or someone else you are encouraged to report your concerns to the police or the Domestic Abuse Helpline on contact telephone numbers provided.

Signed:

Officer/Staff member:

Rank/Role:

Number:

Station/Department:

Date:

Local police telephone number:

Domestic abuse helpline:

Annex J – Support Available for Victims

1. **Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse helpline** – 0808 2000 247
2. **Age UK** – an organisation that supports older people and victims of elder abuse. They can be contacted on 0800 678 1602. They are open from 8am to 7pm, 365 days a year.
3. **Ask for ANI** – a codeword scheme for victims to access support from the safety of their local pharmacy. Their contact number is 0191 287 7028. They are open from 8:45am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.
4. **Broken Rites** – a group offering mutual support and information to separated and divorced spouses and partners of clergy, ministers, and Church Army Officers. Please e-mail enquiries@brokenrites.org.
5. **Clinks** – an organisation that supports the voluntary sector working with people in the criminal justice system and their families. Clinks have a directory of services, although it is not exhaustive, and are experienced in supporting women who have suffered domestic abuse. Their telephone number is 020 7383 0966.
6. **Dogs Trust Freedom Project** – a specialist dog fostering service for victims fleeing domestic abuse. Their contact number is 020 7837 0006 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm).
7. **Hestia Respond to Abuse Advice Line** – a specialist advice line supporting employers to help staff experiencing domestic abuse on 0203 879 3695 or via email Adviceline.EB@hestia.org 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.
8. **Hourglass** – a specialist organisation aiming to end the harm, abuse, and exploitation of older people in the UK. Their helpline can be accessed by phone on 0808 808 8141, by text on 07860 052906, or by emailing helpline@wearehourglass.org.
9. **Galop** – a specialist organisation and LGBT anti-violence charity offering support to LGBT victims. Their Domestic Abuse Helpline is 0800 999 5428.
10. **Imkaan** – a women’s organisation providing dedicated support for black and minority ethnic women. Their contact number is 44 20 7842 8525, open Monday to Friday from 10am to 5pm.
11. **Jewish Women’s Aid** – a specialist organisation supporting Jewish women and children affected by domestic abuse. Their helpline is 0808 801 0500 and is open

Mondays-Thursdays from 9.30am to 9.30pm (excluding Jewish holidays and bank holidays).

12. **Karma Nirvana HBA helpline** – a specialist organisation supporting victims of ‘honour’-based abuse and forced marriage. Their helpline is 0800 599 9247 and is open 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday.
13. **ManKind Initiative** – a specialist organisation supporting male victims of domestic abuse and their children. Please call 01823 334244 to speak to them confidentially, open at weekdays from 10am to 4pm.
14. **Men’s Advice Line** – 0808 801 0327 open Monday to Friday 9am-8pm or email info@mensadviceline.org.uk
15. **Muslim Women’s Network** – a specialist organisation supporting Muslim women and girls. Their helpline is 0800 999 5786/ 0303 999 5786 or email: info@mwnhelpline.co.uk
16. **National Domestic Abuse Helpline website** – Live chat is available Monday – Friday 3pm – 10pm at www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk) and
17. **National LGBT Domestic Abuse helpline** – 0800 999 5428 Monday to Friday 10am-5pm.
18. **National Stalking helpline** – 0808 802 0300 9.30am to 4pm Monday to Friday.
19. **NSPCC** – The UK’s leading children’s charity working to prevent abuse, rebuild children’s lives and support families. Their contact number is 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
20. **NSPCC FGM helpline** – 0800 028 3550 or email fgm.help@nspcc.org.uk.
21. **Paladin** – an organisation that provides support for victims of stalking. Please contact us on 020 3866 4107 or email: info@paladinservice.co.uk.
22. **Refuge** – an organisation that provides support for all victims of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls. Their National Domestic Abuse Helpline is 0808 2000 247. Their main website can be found at www.refuge.org.uk and their tech safety website which provides information on tech abuse and step-by-step guides on securing technology can be found at www.refugetechsafety.org.
23. **Respect** – an organisation that works with male victims of domestic abuse and domestic abuse perpetrators on 0808 8024040 or visit respectphoneline.org.uk.
24. **Restored** – a specialist organisation working to tackle domestic abuse by partnering with churches and Christian organisations. Their contact number is 0203 9063 930.

25. **Revenge Porn helpline** – open between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday. 0345 600 0459 or help@revengepornhelpline.org.uk.
26. **Sign Health Domestic Abuse Service** – a specialist domestic abuse service to support the health and wellbeing of Deaf people. Please call on 0203 947 2600 or text 07966 976749.
27. **Solace Women’s Aid** – an organisation supporting all victims of violence against women and girls. Please call on 0808 802 5565.
28. **Southall Black Sisters** – an organisation providing support for ethnic minority victims and migrant women. Their Helpline is 020 8571 9595, open between 9:00am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday.
29. **Stay Safe East** – a specialist organisation providing support for disabled and Deaf victims of domestic abuse. Telephone or SMS/Text: 07865 340 122.
30. **Surviving Economic Abuse** – a specialist organisation dedicated to supporting victims of economic abuse. Please email info@survivingeconomicabuse.org.
31. **UK Forced Marriage Unit** – 020 7008 0151
32. **Victim Support** – a specialist service helping anyone affected by any types of crime, not only those who experience it directly, but also their friends, family and any other people involved.
33. **Women’s Aid** – an organisation supporting women affected by domestic abuse.

Wales-specific organisations

34. **Live Fear Free helpline** – 0808 801 0800 open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
35. **Dyn Wales helpline** – an organisation supporting male victims of domestic abuse. 0808 801 0321 or email support@dynwales.org (support for male victims).
36. **Welsh Women’s Aid** – an organisation supporting Welsh women affected by domestic abuse.
37. **BAWSO** – a specialist organisation dedicated to supporting ethnic minority communities.