



Ministry  
of Justice

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**21 October 2024**

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

I am writing to provide an update on the implementation of the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 ('the Act'), which as you know includes the duty to collaborate which will – once implemented – introduce new responsibilities for PCCs, local authorities, and integrated care boards (ICBs). Implementation timings remain subject to the Spending Review and internal departmental allocations process. However, noting the duty could commence from Spring 2026, I am setting out potential earliest possible timings, for planning purposes. Confirmed implementation dates will be shared in due course, following confirmation on budgets:

**The duty to collaborate:** A duty on PCCs, local authorities and ICBs to collaborate in the commissioning of community support services in England for victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and serious violence. This includes a requirement to develop a joint needs assessment and local strategy which demonstrates how they will collaborate to deliver and improve relevant victim support services.

The Act received Royal Assent on 24 May 2024, but individual measures within the Act will not come into force until the Government specifically commences them. Following Royal Assent and the General Election, we have been supporting new ministers to establish plans for implementation.

I am grateful for your patience as we have done this and, as above, can now share some broad implementation timescales, subject to the ongoing Spending Review and departmental allocations processes. We will continue to work with you as we draw up the detailed plans that sit below this.

### **Anticipated timeline:**

- **Engagement:**  
We will be holding working group meetings from mid-October with representative bodies including the APCC, NHS England and Local Government Association to gather feedback on the draft guidance and discuss the implementation process ahead of launching the consultation.

- Launch consultation:  
We expect to hold a public consultation in early 2025 to ensure all stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the guidance and comment on implications. We intend to publish an impact assessment alongside this consultation.
- Finalise statutory guidance and commencement:  
Following the consultation, we will review responses and publish the Government's response to the consultation with the final statutory guidance. We expect this to take 3-6 months. It is at this point that we would commence the provisions in the Act.
- Implementation:  
We will enter an implementation period of up to 6 months for local areas to prepare for the Duty, ensuring the appropriate collaboration forum and necessary relationships with key partners. We expect the Duty to go live at the earliest in 2026 and will work with you to find a suitable date for when all bodies should be actively implementing the provisions outlined in the legislation and set out in the statutory guidance. This is when areas will begin to prepare duty holder's needs assessments and strategies, with the first of those likely being due for publication in early 2027 at the soonest.

We appreciate your commitment and ongoing support, and we look forward to working with you as we develop the duty ahead of implementation and beyond. Thank you for your continued collaboration. Please feel free to reach out to Raveena ([raveena.jawanda1@justice.gov.uk](mailto:raveena.jawanda1@justice.gov.uk)) if you have any questions or need any further clarification. if you have any questions or need any further clarification.

Best regards,

Isla Scott