



## Welfare Factsheet 2 – Domestic Violence or Abuse

### What is Domestic Violence or Abuse?

There are a number of different definitions of domestic violence. In Imaan's view, domestic violence is physical, psychological, sexual or financial violence that takes place within an intimate or family-type relationship and forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. This can include forced marriage and so-called 'honour' crimes. Domestic violence often includes a range of abusive behaviours, not all of which are, in themselves, inherently 'violent' - hence some people prefer to use the term 'domestic abuse' rather than 'domestic violence'.

### Safety Plan

If you are experiencing domestic violence or abuse, devising a safety plan will allow you to think about how you can improve your safety if and when further violence or abuse occurs. **It won't guarantee your safety**, but could help improve it. Your personal safety plan may include some of the following:

- If you or your family are in immediate danger, call the police on 999.
- Tell someone you can trust what is happening, and think about setting up a password with either a friend, neighbour or family member that you can use to explain there is an emergency and you need help quickly.
- Prepare a bag of clothes, medication and other essentials for yourself and children, eg, copies of driving licence, birth certificates, passports, benefit books or letters, important numbers, etc. Hide the bag somewhere safe.
- If you have a car, make an extra set of keys and hide them where you can get to them if you need to.

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- Teach your children to call 999 in an emergency and what they would need to say (for example, their full name, address and telephone number).
- Try to keep a small amount of money and your credit/debit cards on you at all times - including change for the phone and for bus fares.
- If you think your partner is about to attack you, try to get to a safer place, such as rooms that have a way out and access to a telephone. Try to avoid rooms that have potential weapons in them, such as the kitchen or garage, and rooms like the bathroom where it is easier for them to trap you.
- Keep any abusive letters, emails and text messages as evidence of abuse.
- If your partner injures you go to a doctor or hospital for treatment so there is a record of the abuse.
- If you are planning to leave your partner, think about how you can do this as safely as possible. Sometimes this can be the most dangerous time for you. If your partner knows you are planning to leave, they may become more violent and abusive.
- Plan to leave at a time you know your partner will not be around, and if you have legal custody of children, take them with you as there may be further complications if you don't.

**If you have already left the relationship and are still being harassed:**

- Tell someone you can trust what is going on.
- Try not to isolate yourself. Work out the safest routes to and from home and work and use them. If you can't do this try to travel with someone else
- Make sure your home is safe. Think about getting your locks changed and make sure that all doors and windows are secure.

## Advice services for LGBT domestic abuse:

### Broken Rainbow

Monday: 2 - 8pm  
Wednesday: 10 - 1pm  
Thursday: 2 - 8pm

**Tel: 0300 999 5428**

### Stonewall Housing

Mondays, Thursdays and Friday: 10.00am – 1.00pm

Tuesdays & Wednesdays: 2.00pm – 5.00pm

**Tel: 020 7359 5767**

### Women's Aid

24 hours domestic violence helpline

**Tel: 0800 2000 247**