
Overview

This standard is about your ability to assist victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse to explore and access appropriate support towards obtaining criminal and civil legal protection for themselves and, where relevant, their children and dependants.

This standard is for practitioners who support those experiencing domestic abuse, which may include instances of sexual violence and abuse in a domestic violence context.

It is recognised that abuse can occur without physical violence, yet can be equally damaging to those affected. Throughout this standard, where the term 'abuse' is used it is taken to include instances also involving physical violence.

Domestic abuse is frequently perceived as a gendered crime perpetrated by men against women; however this standard is intended for practitioners who support those experiencing domestic violence within any intimate or family relationship, regardless of their social background, age, gender, religion, sexuality or ethnicity.

In some organisations, the terms 'victim' and 'survivor' may be used individually or interchangeably.

**Performance
criteria**

- You must be able to:
- P1 obtain relevant information regarding victims and survivors, including:
 - P1.1 identified needs
 - P1.2 victim assessments
 - P1.3 existing support plans
 - P2 assess victims and survivors' circumstances relevant to obtaining criminal and civil legal protection in line with available guidance
 - P3 determine possible legal options which can contribute to protection of victims and survivors
 - P4 provide victims and survivors with relevant information about legal options available, including the protection afforded and how to access these
 - P5 explore with victims and survivors their views about the protection being sought and available legal options
 - P6 explain to victims and survivors what information you may have to share with others and why in line with organisational policies and procedures
 - P7 obtain consent of victims and survivors for agreed courses of action in line with organisational requirements
 - P8 refer victims and survivors to appropriate specialist services which can provide them with legal support
 - P9 provide support to victims and survivors which enables them to obtain and progress agreed legal support
 - P10 communicate with victims and survivors in a manner and at a pace which meets their needs and abilities, and:
 - P10.1 encourages questions
 - P10.2 confirms their understanding
 - P10.3 promotes victims and survivors' informed decision making
 - P10.4 encourages self-reliance
 - P11 identify and address concerns which victims and survivors may have regarding the process of accessing legal protection
 - P12 maintain accurate and up to date records in line with organisational policies and procedures
 - P13 maintain confidentiality in line with organisational policies and procedures

Knowledge and understanding

Legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements

You need to know and understand:

- K1 legal and organisational requirements relating to supporting and advising victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse, and their impact for your area of operations
- K2 relevant legislation applicable to your area of work
- K3 your organisation's policy and procedures for:
 - K3.1 registration of cases
 - K3.2 case management
 - K3.3 ensuring confidentiality of information
 - K3.4 disclosure of information to third parties
 - K3.5 specific circumstances under which disclosure may be made
- K4 the role, remit, objectives and services of your organisation relating to addressing domestic violence and abuse, including the provision of legal assistance and support to victims and survivors
- K5 limits of your authority and responsibility, and actions to take if these are exceeded

Key, general requirements in addressing domestic violence and abuse

You need to know and understand:

- K6 what constitutes domestic violence and abuse, and its prevalence in the community
- K7 signs of abuse and the methods used by abusers to gain power and control
- K8 the impact upon all those affected by domestic violence and abuse including victims, survivors, children and dependants
- K9 how children and dependants may be used by abusers as part of their abuse
- K10 information and areas of support sought by those affected by domestic and sexual violence and abuse
- K11 sources of information available to those affected by domestic and sexual violence and abuse
- K12 the role of principal external support agencies, and multi-agency arrangements towards providing support and interventions for victims and survivors in your area

Requirements particular to assisting in the accessing of legal protection**You need to know
and understand:**

- K13 legal options available to victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse according to their different circumstances, and:
 - K13.1 how these can be accessed
 - K13.2 timescales involved
- K14 how to access legal support and advice according to the needs and circumstances of victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse
- K15 the role of principal legal agencies involved in providing protection to victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse
- K16 the role of victims and survivors in progressing the available legal options
- K17 support available to victims and survivors to progress legal options
- K18 sources of relevant information regarding victims and survivors, and how to access these

Requirements relating to communicating with victims and survivors**You need to know
and understand:**

- K19 the importance of building trust and empathy with victims and survivors and methods for achieving this
- K20 different styles and forms of communication that may be appropriate when talking to victims and survivors
- K21 the importance of non-verbal communication, such as body language
- K22 how different cultures use and interpret body language in different ways
- K23 possible barriers to communication, including:
 - K23.1 causes
 - K23.2 feelings and reactions of victims and survivors
 - K23.3 ways to overcome them
- K24 the importance of being aware of your values and beliefs
- K25 the impact your values and beliefs may have when working with victims and survivors
- K26 how to challenge discriminatory or potentially damaging attitudes and behaviour and the importance of doing so

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Assist victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse
to access legal protection



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