

Overview

This standard is about responding immediately to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and violence who need safe accommodation urgently. This involves making a rapid assessment of victims and survivors' circumstances, arranging emergency accommodation where required and providing support to enable access to the accommodation.

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.

There are two elements

- 1 Gather information from victims and survivors requiring emergency accommodation
- 2 Support victims and survivors in accessing emergency accommodation

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**Performance
criteria**

Gather information from victims and survivors requiring emergency accommodation

- You must be able to:**
- P1 gather information which establishes the immediate risks to victims and survivors including:
 - P1.1 personal details
 - P1.2 immediate circumstances
 - P1.3 health and wellbeing
 - P1.4 any children and dependents involved
 - P2 assess information to identify victims and survivors under immediate threat of harm
 - P3 explain to victims and survivors the processes for emergency accommodation in line with relevant information and criteria, including:
 - P3.1 restrictions
 - P3.2 length of stay available
 - P3.3 associated charges
 - P3.4 assistance and further support available
 - P4 identify any obstacles to victims and survivors when accessing emergency accommodation in line with organisational requirements
 - P5 establish whether emergency accommodation is a suitable option to meet victims and survivors' needs
 - P6 provide victims and survivors with information to which allows them to make informed choices about available accommodation options, including:
 - P6.1 choices which address their immediate needs
 - P6.2 choices which are feasible
 - P7 determine the number of any children and dependants requiring safe, emergency accommodation in line with organisational requirements
 - P8 communicate with victims and survivors in a manner and at a pace which meets their needs, and:
 - P8.1 encourages questions
 - P8.2 confirms their understanding
 - P8.3 promotes victims and survivors' informed decision making

Support victims and survivors in accessing emergency accommodation

- You must be able to:
- P9 identify availability of safe, emergency accommodation which can meet victims and survivors' needs
 - P10 contact other agencies to provide accommodation which meets victims and survivors' needs
 - P11 identify support required by victims, survivors and any dependants to access accommodation which meets their needs
 - P12 make arrangements to enable access to accommodation in line with relevant protocols, processes and available guidance
 - P13 work with victims and survivors to confirm and agree accommodation arrangements which meets their needs
 - P14 maintain accurate and up to date records in line with organisational policies and procedures
 - P15 keep relevant others informed of progress in line with statutory and organisational requirements

Knowledge and understanding

Legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements

You need to know and understand:

- K1 legal and organisational requirements for the provision of safe, emergency accommodation for victims of domestic and sexual abuse, and their impact for your area of operations
- K2 relevant legislation applicable to your area of work
- K3 relevant others you may need to work with including:
 - K3.1 agencies and organisations
 - K3.2 colleagues
 - K3.3 community representatives
 - K3.4 service users
 - K3.5 stakeholders
 - K3.6 victims and survivors
- K4 your organisation's policies and procedures for:
 - K4.1 registration of cases
 - K4.2 case management
 - K4.3 ensuring confidentiality of information
 - K4.4 disclosure of information to third parties,
 - K4.5 circumstances under which disclosure may be made
- K5 your organisation's remit and services for addressing domestic violence and abuse, including the provision of accommodation and support to victims and survivors
- K6 the limits of your authority and responsibility and actions to take if exceeded

Key, general requirements for addressing domestic violence and abuse

You need to know and understand:

- K7 what constitutes domestic violence and abuse, and its prevalence in your local community
- K8 signs of abuse and the methods used by abusers to gain power and control
- K9 the impact of abuse upon all those affected, including victims, survivors and any children and dependants
- K10 how children and dependants may be used by abusers as part of their abuse
- K11 the types of information and support sought by those affected by domestic and

sexual violence and abuse

- K12 sources of information and support available to those affected by domestic and sexual violence and abuse
- K13 the role of external support agencies in providing safe, emergency accommodation and support for victims and survivors in your area
- K14 multi-agency arrangements for providing safe, emergency accommodation and support for victims and survivors in your area

Requirements particular to providing safe, emergency accommodation

You need to know
and understand:

- K15 the types and providers of safe, emergency accommodation
- K16 forms of support offered to victims and survivors and how to access these
- K17 the benefits and drawbacks of different types of accommodation for victims and survivors with different needs and issues
- K18 factors to take into account when assessing whether victims and survivors require emergency accommodation
- K19 factors to take into account when arranging safe accommodation for victims and survivors, including any children, dependants and young people
- K20 victims and survivors' rights in relation to where they may be housed and accommodated
- K21 the duties of local authorities to house and support different groups of individuals
- K22 the benefits available to certain groups of individuals including funding initiatives providing accommodation support, and how to access these
- K23 the importance of evaluating safe accommodation provided for victims and survivors and your role in this process
- K24 key factors affecting the behaviour of individuals, including physical, social, psychological and emotional development
- K25 factors impacting upon the vulnerability of victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse
- K26 reasons why some victims may feel loyal to their abusers
- K27 arrangements required by victims and survivors considered to be at a very high risk, and how to progress such arrangements

Requirements relating to communicating with victims and survivors

**You need to know
and understand:**

- K28 the importance of, and methods for, building trust and empathy with victims and survivors
- K29 appropriate styles and forms of communication including body language
- K30 how different cultures use and interpret body language in different ways
- K31 barriers to communication including:
 - K31.1 their causes
 - K31.2 ways to overcome them
 - K31.3 feelings and reactions victims may have
- K32 the importance of being aware of your values and beliefs
- K33 the impact your values and beliefs may have when working with victims and survivors
- K34 how to challenge discriminatory or potentially damaging attitudes and behaviour and the importance of doing so

Developed by	Skills for Justice
Version number	2
Date approved	December 2013
Indicative review date	December 2018
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating organisation	Skills for Justice
Original URN	SFJ GK201
Relevant occupations	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA); Crisis Worker; Refuge Worker
Suite	Preventing and addressing domestic violence and abuse
Key words	sexual; provision; safety; immediate response; assessment; risk