

# Guidance for students, staff and managers on how to deal with domestic violence and abuse during the COVID-19 'lock-down'.

## Introduction

Domestic violence and abuse can happen to anyone.

Domestic abuse is not limited to verbal, sexual and physical violence, but can include online abuse such as cyber bullying on social media, revenge pornography and 'gaslighting' (psychological manipulation).

Under the current COVID-19 lock-down, individuals are required to stay at home and this may mean living in close proximity to others for long periods of time, often isolated from their usual support networks. Those from the LGBT+ community may find themselves living back at home with families that are hostile to their sexuality or gender identity. For those at risk of domestic abuse this is likely to be a frightening time of increased stress and anxiety with the risk of abuse increasing significantly.

## Advice for staff and students

The wellbeing of City's students and staff is our top priority. If you feel that you are at risk of abuse or experiencing abuse please tell **someone** you trust. You are encouraged to tell your line manager, [harassment adviser](#), [HR adviser](#), or [trade union rep](#) who will listen and provide support in confidence. Try to maintain regular contact with a trusted colleague and remember you are not alone.

City can also provide support through [the counselling service](#), [the trade union](#) and the [Crisis Support Service](#).

There are many sources of external support and help available:

<b>National Domestic Abuse 24 hr helpline:</b>	<b>0808 2000 247</b>
<a href="#">Online request to call back at a safe time</a>	
<b><a href="#">Refuge</a> 24 hr helpline:</b>	<b>0808 8010 800</b>
<b><a href="#">Galop for LGBT+ community</a></b>	<b>0800 999 5428</b>
<b><a href="#">Government advice for those on dependent's visas</a></b>	
<b><a href="#">Sign Health for the deaf (in BSL)</a></b>	<b>(WhatsApp/Facetime) 07970 350366</b>
<b>Male Advice line:</b>	<b>0808 801 0327</b>
<b><a href="#">Chayn: help and support available in numerous languages</a></b>	

If you are worried that your online search for help might be discovered; the following link explains how you can hide your search history: <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/cover-your-tracks-online/>

**If you feel you are in immediate danger but cannot talk on the phone:**

**Call 999 from a mobile  
Press 55 for Police assistance without needing to speak**

If you are worried about hurting someone in your household, confidential support is available to you without judgement:

**[Respect Phonenumber](#): 0808 802 4040**

### **Advice to Managers**

We all have a role to play in supporting students and colleagues experiencing domestic abuse. The [government](#) website has further guidance on recognising the signs of domestic abuse and tips on how to support individuals who are experiencing it. Advice can also be found on the [TUC](#) website.

Remember that you may be the first person the individual has confided in about their situation and how you respond to them is likely to influence their decisions to seek further support. Encourage them to speak, listen and reassure them without passing judgement or asking for proof. Sign post them to the support available and seek their formal permission before making contact with any advisory services on their behalf. Maintain regular contact with the individual and raise with HR immediately if you unexpectedly lose touch with them.

Document control:  
Author JW/HR  
Date: April 2020  
Review: July 2020