

Policy Summary

Domestic violence

Customer summary of a Genesis Housing Group policy

This policy sets out how we tackle domestic violence. It applies to all customers of Genesis Housing Group, except for those customers who come under Pathmeads contract management, for example, Westminster and Hackney, who will be covered by the policies adopted by that authority or provider.

Introduction

Every person has the right to be safe from abuse and fear. Domestic violence is a criminal offence and a breach of our occupancy agreements. We will not tolerate harassment, violence or abuse by customers against other members of their household.

Definition

Domestic violence is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

Responding to a report of domestic violence

We will treat all reports of domestic violence seriously, sympathetically and in confidence. All reports of domestic violence will be treated as high risk, which means we will contact the victim within 24 hours of receiving the report.

We will arrange to meet with the victim in a safe environment. We will ask them if they would like to speak with someone of a particular gender. We will provide a translator where necessary, and will not use a child, friend or relative of a victim to translate. We will interview the victim separately from their partner. We will take detailed case records. We will listen sensitively and be non-judgemental in our responses.

We will provide victims with a range of options to deal with the domestic violence and will agree an action plan with them.

We will provide victims with advice and information, aiming to stop the abuse or minimise the risk of incidents.

If a staff member has any concerns relating to child abuse, this will be reported to the relevant authorities, in line with our policies and procedures on safeguarding children and young people from abuse. Similarly, if there are vulnerable adults in the household who may be suffering from abuse, this will be reported in line with our policy and procedures on safeguarding adults from abuse.

We will keep in regular contact with the victim and will update them on the actions we take.

We will take a written record of any report of domestic violence from a third party. We will encourage the person making the report to provide as much evidence as possible, while assuring them that the information they give will be treated confidentially. If appropriate, we will encourage the person reporting the domestic violence to talk to the victim about making a report in person either to us or to another agency. Following a report from a third party, we will arrange to contact the alleged victim.

The perpetrator

We will not disclose to the perpetrator anything that the victim has reported to us. We will provide general housing advice to perpetrators when requested. Where the perpetrator is willing to confront their abusive behaviour, we will refer them to appropriate support services.

Safety of the victim

We will carry out a risk assessment to determine the threat to the victim's immediate and long term safety. This will be done sensitively and as part of a general conversation with the victim about their safety and the risk of harm faced. We will explore with the victim steps they can take to increase their safety.

Any repairs to tenants' properties or communal areas relating to security, or as a result of damage to a property due to violence, will be dealt with as an emergency repair which means the work will be completed within our target time of 24 hours.

We will provide additional security improvements or 'target hardening' measures at tenants' homes, where appropriate and where the perpetrator no longer lives in the accommodation.

Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality and security is absolutely essential. We will take measures to ensure that confidential information provided by the victim is not seen by the perpetrator. Information will only be provided to external agencies as agreed with the victim, or where it is required by law or where there is an overriding need.

Working in partnership

We will work with other agencies, such as the police, local authorities and health services to tackle domestic violence. We will establish close working arrangements with specialist agencies that can provide support, counselling and advice to victims of domestic violence.

Legal action

We will advise victims of the legal remedies available to them. We will advise and support the victim to make an application for an injunction. Where the perpetrator is our tenant, we may take possession action against them.

Re-housing

Where the victim is unable to remain in their home owing to the ongoing presence of the abusive partner or the threat of future violence, we will ensure they are aware of their options for re-housing.

We will have procedures in place for victims living in social rented housing and supported housing to move to safer accommodation away from the home where they experienced the domestic violence. Rent arrears in these circumstances will not prevent a transfer. We will explain that even emergency transfers can take a long time.

We will inform the victim of the services provided by the Homeless Persons Unit and of other options including a refuge or women's shelter. Where appropriate, we will support the victim to make an application as homeless.

Ending a tenancy

We will advise tenants to seek independent legal advice regarding any action they take on their tenancy. If there is a joint tenancy, as landlords we have a relationship with all joint tenants and will not advise one party to carry out an action that will result in the loss of the tenancy for another.

Providing housing and support to households moving into our homes

Households moving into properties owned and managed by Genesis Housing Group will include those who have left their previous accommodation due to domestic violence. These households may need ongoing support and advice. Where we are aware that the household has experienced domestic violence and is in need of support, we will either provide support services ourselves, or will aim to work in partnership with external support agencies to ensure appropriate support is given.

Closing a case

We will review all open domestic violence cases on a regular basis and only close cases after discussing this with the victim. A case may be closed where an investigation has been concluded, appropriate action has been taken and no further incidents have occurred over a given period. We will explain why the case has been closed, and will advise them that should they suffer repeated domestic violence the case will be reopened or a new case begun.

Contact us



If you are a **PCHA customer** phone us on **020 8451 8000** or email **info@pcha.org.uk** **www.pcha.org.uk**



If you are a **Springboard Housing Association customer** phone us on **020 8475 0033** or email **info@springboardha.org.uk** **www.springboardha.org.uk**



If you are a **Pathmeads customer** phone us on one of the numbers below: Temporary housing **020 8900 4900** Octavia Hill **020 8900 4998** Key Places **020 7380 9025** or email **info@pathmeads.org.uk** **www.pathmeads.org.uk**



If you are a **St Matthew Housing resident** phone us on **01284 732550** or email **info@stmatthewhousing.org** **www.stmatthewhousing.org**

If you need any part of this information in large print, Braille, on audio tape or explained in your own language please contact us on the number below.

Si necesita esta información en Braille, en CD, en cinta o en su propio idioma, póngase en contacto con nosotros en el teléfono siguiente.

Spanish

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على أي جزء من هذه المعلومات مطبوعًا بأحرف كبيرة أو بطريقة برايل أو مسجلًا على أسطوانة مدمجة أو شريط صوتي أو مشروحًا باللغة التي تتحدثها، يرجى الاتصال بنا على الرقم الموضح أدناه.

Arabic

যদি আপনি এই তথ্যগুলোর যে কোন একটির সম্বন্ধে বিস্তারিত জানতে চান, অথবা আপনার নিজের ভাষাতে ব্রেল, সিডি, অডিও টেপ-এ পেতে চান তাহলে নিম্নলিখিত নম্বরে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Bengali

Si vous souhaitez obtenir une partie de ces informations en Braille, sur CD, cassette audio ou expliqué dans votre langue, veuillez nous contacter au numéro indiqué ci-dessous.

French

જો તમારે કોઈ પણ ભાગની આ માહિતી બ્રેઈલ, સી.ડી. ઉપર, ઓડિયો ટેપ અથવા તમારી પોતાની ભાષામાં સમજી શકો તેની જરૂર હોય તો નીચે જણાવેલ નંબર ઉપર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

Gujarati

Se necessitar de parte desta informação em caracteres aumentados, em Braille, em CD, cassete áudio ou apresentada no seu idioma, por favor contacte-nos, através do telefone abaixo indicado.

Portugese

Haddaad u baahan tahay warkan afkaaga-hooyo, afka loogu talagalay dadka aan arki karaan – afka faraha ama CD-ga ama ajeladda rekorka nala xirir. Namberkan isticmaal.

Somali

**Telephone 020 7563 0037
or email info@ghg.org.uk**