

# Coronavirus (COVID-19) and domestic abuse

## West Berkshire Support and Guidance

Are you worried about relationship conflict and domestic abuse during the coronavirus outbreak?

### What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is more than physical violence. It can also include, but is not limited to:

- coercive control and 'gaslighting'
- economic abuse
- online abuse
- verbal abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- psychological abuse

For more information about what domestic abuse is and the forms that this can take please visit the following link: <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/crime-info/types-crime/domestic-abuse>

### How could your relationship be affected?

The coronavirus could put a strain on all relationships, especially as families are now spending more time alone with each other. This additional pressure could manifest itself in different ways and could mean that:

- You and your partner could be bickering or arguing more
- You might feel trapped which may trigger feelings of anxiety and may transfer onto your partner
- You could be self-isolating with someone who is harming you
- You could be/feel that you are at an increased risk of domestic abuse as you and your partner are unable to leave the home
- You are unable to make a private phone call for help, support or advice
- You may be worried about your partners behaviour and the safety of you and your family

### REMEMBER:

1. Support is available whether you are still in the relationship or not and if you are in danger, you can leave.
2. Refuges are still open and there are spaces available should you need it.
3. Don't feel as if your situation is any less important during this time in comparison to other arising issues.
4. It is not fair and it is not your fault.
5. Domestic abuse is unacceptable in any situation, no matter what stresses a person could be under and you do not need to feel as if this behaviour should be accepted.

### Where can I get help?

**A2dominion** – This is our local domestic abuse service for West Berkshire. The telephone helpline is available from 10am - 7pm, Monday to Friday on **0800 731 0055**. If safe to do so, you can also email [das@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:das@a2dominion.co.uk)

**National domestic abuse helpline** – Telephone helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on **0808 200 0247**

**Women's Aid** – A live chat service is available Monday to Friday, 10am - 12pm via the following link <https://chat.womensaid.org.uk/>. If safe to do so, you can also email [helpline@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:helpline@womensaid.org.uk)

**Men's Advice Line** – Telephone helpline is available Monday to Friday from 9am, closing times vary on **0808 801 0327**. Webchat is available Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between 10am – 11am and 3pm – 4pm via their website.

**Flag DV** – Offers free legal advice for victims of domestic abuse. Telephone helpline is available Monday to Friday, 10am – 7pm on **0800 731 0055**.

**Please look out for your neighbours during this difficult time as they may be unable to protect themselves.**

**Everybody has the right to live free from fear and domestic abuse.**

**Call 999 if you are worried about somebody's safety, otherwise call 101 to report any concerns.**

### Websites to visit for further advice, guidance and resources:

**West Berkshire Council:** <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/article/36906>

**Government:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-and-domestic-abuse>

**A2dominion:** <https://a2dominion.co.uk/en/about-us/Domestic-abuse-support-services>

**Women's aid:** <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/covid-19-coronavirus-safety-advice-for-survivors/>

**Flag DV:** <http://www.flagdv.org.uk/>

**Community Support Hub:** <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/coronavirus-communityhub>

### Are you in immediate danger?

Call **999** - If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police - the police will continue to respond to emergency calls.

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call 999 and then press 55.

This will transfer your call to the relevant police force who will assist you without you having to speak.