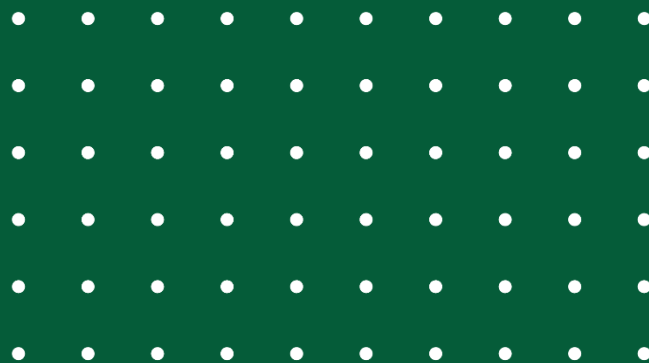




POLICY

DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY



May 2025

This policy forms part of our commitment to the Make a Stand pledge which has been developed by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) in partnership with Women's Aid and the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance and has been created to encourage housing organisations across to make a commitment to supporting people who are experiencing, or are at risk of, domestic abuse.

This policy sets out how Cill Dara Housing Association will take steps to assist and support any person experiencing or being threatened with domestic abuse, it applies to all tenants, including those living with our tenants.

Domestic abuse is still a largely hidden crime and measuring the true scale of the issue is difficult. Domestic abuse happens in all communities regardless of gender, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity.

As a housing provider we are well placed to recognise the signs of domestic abuse. It is essential that we take all reports of domestic abuse seriously and work positively and pro-actively with the victim to offer support.

In addition, we will seek to assist perpetrators of domestic abuse who wish to positively change their behaviour by helping them access support and assistance.

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse is a pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and/or violent behaviour, including sexual violence, by a partner or ex-partner. Domestic abuse is overwhelmingly experienced by women and perpetrated by men but can affect either sex. It doesn't matter how old someone is, what race or ethnicity they are, what class they are, whether or not they are disabled, or whether they have children – anyone can be a victim of abuse.

For many people who live with domestic abuse there will be no scars, bruises or broken bones, but for some it can take their life. No one kind of abuse is more serious than any other.

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological

- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour

Coercive control is a persistent pattern of controlling, coercive and threatening behaviour including all or some forms of domestic abuse (emotional, physical, financial, sexual including threats) by a current or former intimate partner.

Our Policy

At Cill Dara Housing Association, we believe that our tenants and householders should not live in fear of violence or abuse from a partner, former partner or any other member of their household.

We commit to treating people experiencing domestic abuse in a sympathetic, supportive and non-judgemental way. A victim's disclosure alone is sufficient for them to be given advice and assistance as a matter of priority by staff.

We will:

- Provide signposting to people experiencing domestic abuse so that they can access appropriate services as early as possible and receive advice and support to allow them to make choices about what to do next. (A non-exhaustive list of services is noted in **Appendix 1**).
- Support people who are/have experienced abuse to feel safe at home through the provision of small, practical adaptations within the home to enable victims to remain in a familiar environment (see **Safe at Home Protocol**).
- Ensure that where children and young people are affected by domestic abuse, they too have access to services as early as possible.
- Ensure that people experiencing abuse are not deterred from reporting abuse.

- Follow Child Protection and Adult Protection policies if we believe a child or vulnerable adult is at risk due to an abusive relationship or home environment.
- Work with our community partners to raise awareness of issues regarding both domestic abuse and gender-based violence, whilst providing practical and emotional support to victims.

Although this protocol will focus on solutions to allow individuals to remain in the home, victims will also be advised of alternative housing solutions where it would not be reasonable to continue to occupy their current accommodation.

Policy Aims

Our policy aims to achieve the following:

- We will promote the welfare of all victims of domestic abuse who come into contact with the Association.
- Create safe environments where victims of domestic abuse feel they can approach us and are listened to so enabling them to make informed decisions about their lives and live more safely.
- Provide timely and effective guidance by working in partnership with An Garda Síochána, Women's Aid, Teach Tearmainn, and Kildare County Council to respond to any cases of abuse that may arise or be brought to our attention.
- Provide our employees with clear and practical guidance help support and protect victims of abuse, allowing victims to have more information about their available choices so they can be empowered to fulfil their ambition.
- Work in partnership with An Garda Síochána, Women's Aid, and Teach Tearmainn to offer support by way of signposting to perpetrators of domestic abuse who recognise and seek to change their behaviour.
- We will liaise with appropriate agencies to provide safety and support measures where necessary to witnesses.

This policy links to the following policies:

- CDHA Safe at Home Protocol
- Allocations Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Estate Management Policy

- Anti-social Behaviour Policy
- Void Management Policy

Cill Dara Housing Association - Safe at Home Protocol

Cill Dara Housing Association along with our community partners are committed to raising awareness of issues regarding gender-based violence and domestic abuse, whilst providing practical and emotional support to victims.

We understand that everyone has a right to feel safe at home. Although this protocol will focus on solutions to allow individuals to remain in their home, victims will also be advised of alternative housing solutions where it would not be reasonable to continue to occupy their current accommodation or where it is their wish to move to another property.

1. Protocol Aims

The safety measures identified through this Protocol are intended as an early intervention to minimise risk. The aim of this Protocol is to identify those at risk of Domestic Abuse through a multi-agency referral, where small, practical adaptations within the home can enable victims to remain in a safe and familiar environment.

2. Referrals

Referrals can be made by third parties such as An Garda Síochána, Women's Aid, Teach Tearmainn, and Kildare County Council, and should be forwarded on to Cill Dara Housing Association.

A referral can also be made by a member of staff or through self-referral by the tenant.

If the situation is assessed as high risk, there may be an action for a full property survey to be completed by An Garda Síochána.

The referral will provide sufficient information to support the request to fit additional security measures.

The referral will provide specific details of what additional security measures are required to support the individual to remain in their own home.

The form will be sent by email to the appropriate housing representative and followed up by a telephone call.

3. Scope

The most appropriate partner agency will undertake a Safe at Home assessment of the housing circumstances of the individual with a view to her/him being able to remain in their own home.

The assessment will apply to the security of the property and a minimum standard of measures that could be achievable.

Cill Dara Housing Association will fund, and complete, the following adaptations, as appropriate following a referral, within their respective properties;

- Window locks
- Security chains
- Door viewers (peep holes)
- Lock changes
- Removal of glass panels from external doors
- Slip bolts
- Repairs to broken windows or doors due to domestic abuse.

If a full home security survey is undertaken and recommendations arise that are not included in the list above, they will be discussed between the Association and An Garda Síochána. The decision reached will be recorded as an incident update.

4. Feedback

It will be the responsibility of the housing provider to ensure that the referrer is informed of:

- Whether the safety measures have been agreed
- If the safety measures have not been agreed, the rationale for this

- The timescale for the safety measure to be completed based on the risk identified
- Confirmation when work has been completed
- Feedback to local referring agency.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or in line with change in regulation and/or legislation. Appropriate training and guidance will be provided to staff as a result of any changes.

Equality and Diversity

Cill Dara Housing Association aims to ensure that equality, fairness, dignity, and respect are central to the way we work and how we treat our customers. We support diversity and uphold equal opportunities in all areas of our work as an employer and service provider.

With reference to the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 and Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 Cill Dara Housing Association will not discriminate against tenants, staff, visitors, suppliers or others based gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveler community. In addition, the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 prohibit discrimination in the provision of accommodation services against people who are in receipt of rent supplement, housing assistance, or social welfare payments.

Upon request this policy can be made available free of charge in other formats including; large print, audio, Braille, and community languages.

Appendix 1: Support Agencies – Local and National

Emergency Services

Appendix 1

[An Garda Síochána](#)
In an Emergency Dial 999

Local Services

Teach Tearmainn

Teach Tearmainn provide a suite of free and confidential support services to women and children in County Kildare who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

Phone: 1800 919 191

Email: helpline@teachtearmainn.ie

National Support Services

WOMEN'S AID

Women's Aid can help you if you are experiencing domestic violence. They give advice on how you can help yourself and others.

Phone 1800 341 900 — 24 hours a day.

MEN'S AID

Men's Aid Ireland is a service for men who are experiencing domestic violence.

Phone 01 554 3811 — Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm.

Email hello@mensaid.ie

AKIDWA

AkiDwA is a national network of African and migrant women living in Ireland. It aims to promote equality and justice.

Phone: **01 834 9851**

Email info@akidwa.ie

OLDER PEOPLE

Older people who are experiencing abuse in the home can call the HSE information line on 1800 700 700.

The call line is open:

- Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm
- Saturday and Sunday, 9am to 5pm

CHILDLINE

Childline is a confidential support service for children and young people. They take calls about a wide range of difficulties, including abuse.

Phone 1800 66 66 66

Chat online anytime at childline.ie

TUSLA – CHILD AND FAMILY AGENCY

Phone: 01 771 8500

Email: info@tusla.ie

PARENTLINE

Parentline provides a free service dealing with child-to-parent violence.

Phone: **01 8349851**

Email: info@parentline.ie

The call line is open:

- Monday to Thursday from 10am to 9pm
- Friday between 10 am and 4pm

SEXUAL ASSAULT OR RAPE

Contact the Rape Crisis Centre if you need to talk to someone in confidence about sexual assault or rape.

Phone: 1800 77 88 88

LGBT Ireland

Phone: 1800 929 539

Email: info@lgbt.ie

Monday to Thursday: 6:30pm to 10:00pm,

Fridays: 4:00pm to 10:00pm,

Weekends: 4:00pm to 6:00pm

Out of Hours:

Freephone the Samaritans on 116 123

24/7 and 365 days a year.

HELP FOR PERPETRATORS OF ABUSE

MEND provides support for men who are looking to overcome abusive or violent behaviours.

Phone: 051 844 260/1

Email: mensnetwork.ie

Men's Development Network

051-844260/1

men@mensnetwork.ie