

Hampshire Police - Domestic Abuse response – COVID-19

There are 6 strategic objectives for the Hampshire Constabulary in terms of COVID-19;

- Prevent spread of infection
- Protect the most vulnerable
- Maintain critical services
- Looking after our people
- Maintain public order & confidence
- Recover to new a normal.

This document seeks to explain our response to domestic abuse within the Targeted Operating Model state of RED.

Hampshire Constabulary's continued response to visible reporting of domestic abuse: In line with the move to a Targeted Operating within a COVID-19 Model:

Reports of domestic abuse are being received from the public in the normal way of by phone – 999 or 101 and online reporting via the Force website.

Our response currently to this in terms of deployments is as follows:

- Grade 1s will be deployed to.
- Grade 2 where victim and perpetrator are co-habiting will also be deployed to.
- HMICFRS guidance around phone contact is still in place.
- CSPECSS advanced risk assessment questions will be asked of callers where there is not likely to be a deployment.
- Non-deployed matters will be sent to the Resolution Centre via the Triage process within Contact Management. Current working practices there will be utilised subject to change in line with the move to Red. PPN1 to be completed and referred to MASH.

The Operations Manager within Contact Management has been spoken to personally by the author of this report in terms of the deployment detail.

In terms of the work beyond Contact Management, where an officer is deployed to a domestic abuse incident there is an expectation that the matter will be dealt with in the usual way.

All tactical options are still available to the attending officer. No legislation has been repealed in terms of criminal law.

There is still an expectation that a PPN1 will be fully completed. The workflow through Niche RMS will direct the PPN1 to the MASH.

MASH will continue to process the PPN1 in the same way as prior to the move to Red.

MASH will continue to refer the victim of domestic abuse to the Commissioned Services in the following terms:

- Standard risk crimes of domestic abuse will be shared with the Victim Care Services
- Medium risk cases will be referred to Commissioned Services where the victim consents to be referred.
- High risk cases will be referred to Commissioned Services as current practice.

HRDA and MARAC meetings continue and being led by the MASH teams.

There remains multiple touch points in terms of safeguarding provision for victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse:

1. Initial attendance by Response and Patrol and / or Prevention and Neighbourhood staff where the deployment is a grade one or grade two where victims and perpetrator are cohabiting
2. Initial contact by investigator (RC if medium or standard risk) and not as above in 1.
3. Follow up contact from PIC Investigator where secondary investigation is necessary
4. Further identification by Prevention and Neighbourhood staff in terms of Area DMM / TPM meeting or vulnerability tracker

Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders:

These are still an option in terms of a tool to keep victims safe. Force Solicitor confirms this. However, we need to consider the strategic objective in terms of COVID-19, in particular the minimising the spread of COVID-19 and protecting the most vulnerable. The Force Solicitor's Department requires as much notice as possible in terms of any DVPN that is being considered or actioned. The Courts cannot refuse to hear an application but there is a lack of clarity currently in terms of their capacity to deal with DVPN/O's.

There should be a particular focus on the necessity element of the application to consider the wider public health issues, safety of victim and effect on the perpetrator. Use of bail conditions should also be considered.

Response to hidden Domestic Abuse – that which is not reported:

The key issue here is to be able to get messages to victims of domestic abuse who may not be able to ring Police from their home address or may flee their family homes. Messaging will include;

- Publicising information through newsletters and websites with information for the pan-Hampshire Commissioned Services.

- Smart use of social media platforms and messaging to alert victims to ways to make themselves safe and to call police only if at immediate risk.
- Social media messaging targeting perpetrators, to encourage them to think about how they might desist abusive behaviour;
- Social media messaging aimed at perpetrators reminding them that DA is an offence and that investigations into crime will continue – this will avoid perceptions of an ‘atmosphere of impunity’.
- Promote local, regional and national helplines.
- Further options are also available to Hampshire Police in terms of our own social media messaging.

Prevention and Neighbourhoods have committed to digital engagement in terms of their move to Red to monitor community tension.

Refuges

Refuges remain open and should be contacted if required.

Commissioned Services:

The OPCC and the Local Authorities commission the domestic abuse services in each area. Full details of their current position in terms of capability (as affected by COVID-19) have posted onto the DA Hub

Signposting:

Awareness leaflets will be sent via email to supermarkets, pharmacies, schools and will be sent to P&N, DA champions for onward circulation. This is being coordinated by Victoria Snow, force crime prevention officer, who has access to relevant networks

The DA Hub should be the point of information and guidance for all officers. This DA Hub has been updated with additional COVID-19 information and updates from partners.

Further messaging will be made through use of force social media pages.

Useful Documents that will be uploaded to the DA Hub which can be provided to victims and perpetrators;



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