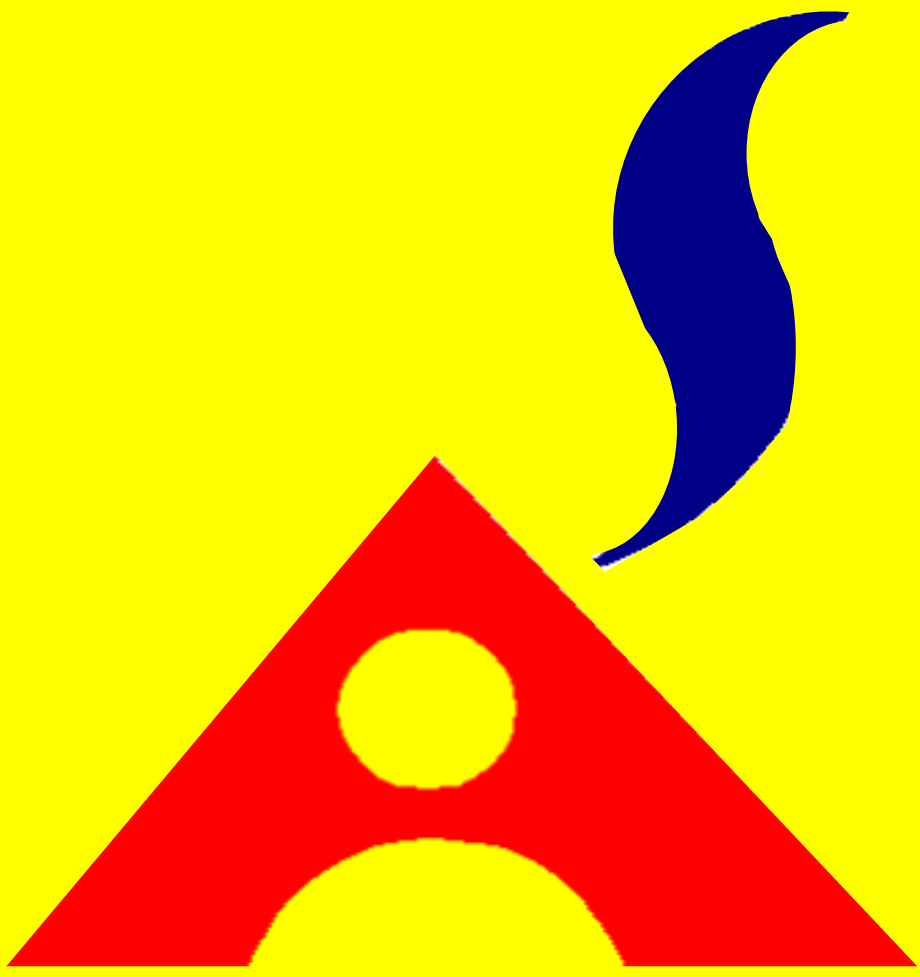


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



GUIDELINES FOR THOSE AFFECTED

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a serious crime and it can take many forms. For example, it may take the form of physical or verbal abuse, threats and intimidation, sexual abuse or damage to your possessions or your home.

In many cases, domestic violence is committed by men against women. However, the Association's policy recognises that men can be the victims and it can happen within any close relationship. The policy therefore applies to any person, regardless of their gender or sexuality, that is experiencing violence or abuse from their partner or any member of their family.

If you are suffering from any form of domestic violence contact your Housing Officer, Support Worker, Project Worker or Key Worker who will be able to give you advice on the options open to you.

We will encourage but not force you to contact the Police if you believe that you or another member of your family is in danger. They will always support you and they are an invaluable source of information.

What can SAHA do to help you?

We aim to provide you with a sympathetic, supportive and non-judgemental service. All information will be treated in the strictest of confidence and we aim to be flexible in our approach to dealing with the victims of domestic violence. We take the issue of domestic violence very seriously and we encourage people to report any incidents to us.

We are not able to fulfil the counselling or advice role of specialist agencies but we can offer basic advice and assistance. Where we cannot provide the advice and assistance, information will be given on the specialist agencies that can.

Strict confidentiality will be maintained in accordance with our Confidentiality Policy. On no account will any information be given to other agencies or individuals without your consent. No information will be passed to your partner, nor will they be approached without the expressed request of the victim.

An interview will be offered to any person experiencing domestic violence within 24 hours of contacting their Housing Officer, Support Worker, Project Worker or Key Worker, and where this is not possible, for example due to a weekend, we can refer you to an appropriate agency such as Women's Aid Refuge.

We will offer support; for example, we aim, where necessary, to:

- Repair damage to your home
- Provide extra security measures
- Advise of specialist agencies that are available to give counselling and support
- Maintain regular contact with the person who has experienced the domestic violence

We will offer support to all members of a household and also to neighbours if they are affected by the incidents.

Should I move out of my home?

We do not provide temporary accommodation for people fleeing domestic violence but will provide advice and assistance to remove a violent partner from the household and help the person escaping the violence find a safe and secure place to live.

You may feel pressurised into leaving your home. We would always advise you against giving up your tenancy without seeking independent advice from an external agency such as the Citizens Advice Bureau or a local solicitor. We can refer you to the appropriate organisation to assist you.

Who are the support organisations that can help?

The Government and the Police are committed to tackling the crime of domestic violence, and working with victims to help them to rebuild their lives. There are many local and national organisations that provide support, counselling and refuge for domestic violence victims. You can contact the Customer Services Centre (0800 970 88) who can give you more details.

The National Domestic Violence Helpline provides confidential support and advice to all victims, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Their telephone number is 0808 2000 247 and this is a Freephone line. Other organisations such as Relate, The Samaritans and Refuge, can also provide support, contact numbers are detailed on the final page of this leaflet.

In addition, there is a national Victim Support line on 0845 30 30 900 that you can call whether the crime is recent or in the past, and whether or not you want to report it.

Useful contact numbers.

Victim Support:	0845 30 30 900
Women's Aid/Refuge:	0808 2000 247
Relate:	01788 573 241
Shelterline:	0808 800 4444
The Samaritans	08457 90 90 90
National Child Protection Helpline (NSPCC):	0808 800 5000

Data Protection

Salvation Army Housing Association will hold all personal and sensitive information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

SAHA contact details:

Salvation Army Housing Association

Customer Services Centre

33/35 Chorley New Road, Bolton, BL1 4QR

Phone: 0800 90 6363

Fax: 01204 375768

Email: servicecentre@saha.org.uk

Registered Offices: Barber Surgeons Hall, 1A Monkwell Square, London, EC2Y 5BL