

# DOMESTIC ABUSE

## Practical steps for keeping safe during social distancing.



### Immediate risk - call 999 for the Police

Immediate risk to life comes before social isolation.

- The **Police** are responding to domestic abuse calls 24/7. Your call will be a priority.
- Ask your local Policing team to drive by where you live on a random but regular basis – to clearly show they are looking out for you.

### Contact West Mercia Women's Aid

If you are experiencing or recovering from domestic abuse:

- **Refuges** are open if you need to flee for your safety
- **Advice and support** is available for all who need it – by telephone or social media
- Women's Aid, the Police and other agencies are **working together** so that victims of domestic abuse are safe and supported

Contact **West Mercia Women's Aid** services through:  
**Helpline** number: 0800 783 1359 available 24 hours / 7 days a week.  
**LiveChat** – to chat 'silently' with a support worker on our website  
[westmerciawomensaid.org](http://westmerciawomensaid.org)  
available Monday to Friday, 9:00am - 2:30pm



### 'Make Yourself Heard' - What to do if you urgently need help from the Police, but can't speak.

If you're in an emergency situation and need **Police** help:

- **Dial 999**
- Cough or make another noise to let operator know you are there and your call is genuine. They can then alert the Police on your behalf.
- If transferred to the Police and you still can't talk, **press 55** and they will continue to listen

Follow the link below and memorise the process – it may make all the difference when you need urgent help.

[policeconduct.gov.uk](http://policeconduct.gov.uk)



### Smart use of your smart phone

Set up **speed dials** on your phone

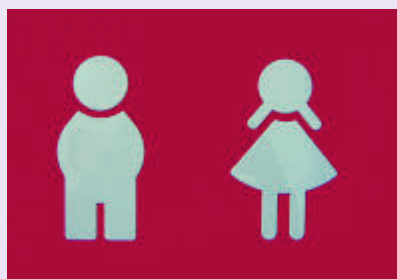
- for Police
- for a trusted friend who knows to call the Police if they get a 'dead call' from you.
- agree a **safe word** or **emoji** with friends and family, which they know means to ring **999** for you

**West Mercia Women's Aid Helpline Herefordshire is available all day everyday, as always.**

**0800 783 1359**

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### Safety for your children

Safety plan with your children if they are old enough to understand:

- Tell them to go to their room if violence starts to escalate
- Make sure they know to go to a neighbour for help, or dial 999 and ask for the **Police** and say they need help and give their address.



### Use your support networks

- Ask people to check in on you in a casual but regular way, that doesn't raise suspicions of your partner
- Everyone is contacting people more often at the moment to check that they are well – take advantage of this fact so that this all seems normal to your partner
- Find ways to safely stay in touch with friends and family. This will help your mental health especially in times of particular stress and anxiety



### Download a personal safety app

Personal safety apps have silent safeguarding options, such as alerting designated contacts if you are in danger. Find out more at

[hestia.org/brightsky](https://hestia.org/brightsky)  
[hollieguard.com](https://hollieguard.com)



### Safe at home

If you are in a situation where you may be assaulted or where the risk of violence is getting worse:

- Keep yourself close to exits if at all possible
- Know which rooms in the house have locks – to buy you the time to call others for help
- Choose a room in where you can barricade yourself and plan - where you can you pull a set of drawers in front of the door while you call for help, for example?
- Try to avoid the kitchen and bathroom where there is easy access to sharp objects and chemicals.



### How to help a neighbour or friend

- Call 999 and ask for the **Police**, if you feel someone may be in immediate danger
- Call **West Mercia Women's Aid Helpline** for advice on how to help if you have a worry (0800 783 1359)

At a 2 metre social distance, make a point of asking how they are coping with being isolated in the house. If you can't talk without being overheard, then say you would be happy to help them with 'any difficulties' they may be having – they will know what you mean.

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