

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Domestic Abuse Training Strategy

INDEX

		Page Number
PART 1	POLICY STATEMENT	3
	1.1 Policy Statement	3
PART 2	POLICY	3
	2.1 Introduction	3
	2.2 Scope	4
	2.3 Implementation	4
	2.3.1 Aims	4
	2.4 Roles/Responsibilities	4
	2.4.1 Council Level	4
	2.4.2 Service Level	5
	2.4.3 Manager Level	6
	2.5 Training Materials/Resources	6
	2.6 Communication Systems	6
PART 3	MONITORING AND REVIEW	7
	3.1 Monitoring and Review	7

PART 1

1.1 POLICY STATEMENT

Domestic abuse is a crime, the impact of which cuts across all social, geographic and cultural groups regardless of the gender of the victim or the perpetrator. Falkirk Council acknowledges the right of the individual to live free from fear and regards all forms of domestic abuse as unacceptable. The Council acknowledges that addressing domestic abuse is a national priority and will adopt a responsible approach to implementing a training strategy that will reflect these values.

PART 2

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This training strategy meets the recommendations contained within the Scottish Executive's National Training Strategy and recognises The National Strategy's definition of domestic abuse as being:

“Domestic abuse (as gender-based abuse), can be perpetrated by partners or ex-partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate women and are perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family and friends)”.

Falkirk Council, as an active member of the Falkirk Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Forum (FMADAF) and the Forth Valley Domestic Abuse Strategy Group (FVDASG), recognises the benefit of joint working as a means of making the required changes to working practices to ensure the best possible service is delivered to anyone affected by domestic abuse. It is also recognised that all relevant employees in Falkirk Council must be equipped with the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for dealing with domestic abuse issues and working across professional boundaries.

This training strategy is designed to achieve effective service delivery across all Services of the Council and to complement the aims and objectives of the Forth Valley Domestic Abuse Training Strategy as guided by the Forth Valley Training Consortium.

2.2 SCOPE

Falkirk Council recognises that to achieve the aims of this training strategy it will be necessary to have full commitment and support from all Services within the Council. The training strategy therefore applies to all potential and existing employees, Elected Members and Trade Union representatives in the work they undertake in delivering Council Services.

2.3 IMPLEMENTATION

2.3.1 Aims

Falkirk Council has developed this training strategy to address training requirements of key employees to enable them to deal effectively with domestic abuse issues and raise awareness of matters that arise within the FMADAF. The Council believes domestic abuse training is essential to enable employees to provide a good service to members of the public and also care for employees who are victims of domestic abuse. The aims of this strategy are to: -

- Recognise the important role of training in working towards the elimination of domestic abuse.
- Develop preventative strategies and provide timely responses to situations.
- Establish the requirement for all relevant Services in Falkirk Council to view domestic abuse training as ‘core business’ and demonstrate their commitment to this change of culture.
- Ensure all employees, Trade Union Representatives and Elected Members have an awareness of Falkirk Council’s vision and aims under the Falkirk Council Domestic Abuse Training Strategy, the impact of domestic abuse on their work role.
- Ensure employees have an understanding of the FMADAF and the services provided by the partner agencies to ensure the best service possible is given to clients.
- Review and evaluate available training materials/ resources in conjunction with partner agencies.
- Ensure training information/options are cascaded to Services to enable relevant employees the opportunity to receive appropriate training.

2.4 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

2.4.1 Council Level

Falkirk Council will act as a proactive member of both the FMADAF and the FVDASG to ensure an effective response is provided to training across agency boundaries.

The Chief Executive and the Chief Officers of the Council are responsible for the effective implementation and operation of the policy across the Council as a whole and within the various Services respectively.

Falkirk Council will be responsible for ensuring that current employees, Trade Union Representatives and Elected Members are given access to information about domestic abuse. It is envisaged that this may be by:-

- incorporating information into existing induction packs
- providing information which can be included in the employee handbook
- ensuring that appropriate policies are communicated widely
- providing information on intranet sites and newsletters wherever possible
- displaying information on notice boards.

2.4.2 Service Level

Each Service will be responsible for ensuring that all appropriate employees have access to relevant Domestic Abuse training. It will be the responsibility of each Service to determine which employees receive training. Such training should be guided by the recommendations contained in the National Training Strategy which identifies key services.

The following list is indicative but is not limited to the key Services. It is recommended that consideration is given to the need for training in all Services within the Council particularly those who come into contact with members of the public.

- **Housing & Social Work** – Social Work Services has a statutory responsibility and will come into contact with service users who have experienced domestic abuse or who have perpetrated such abuse. As a result Social Workers should have a sound understanding of the impact, causes and consequences of domestic abuse. Most employees in Housing Services will require basic awareness training and some will require more specialised training.
- **Education** – It is essential that teachers are equipped with an awareness of domestic abuse and the prevention strategy enabling them to respond appropriately to children who may be exposed abuse.
- **Law & Administration** – District Court employees need to be aware of issues when dealing with the public as front line staff.
- **Human Resources** – Advisers should receive training to enable them to respond appropriately to members of staff who are experiencing or indeed perpetrating abuse by providing advice and support and to take the lead role in terms of policy, communication, network development and the circulation of training information.

2.4.3 Manager Level

Service Managers have a critical role to play and an example to set in the process of changing the organisation's culture. Management support is crucial to ensure Services adopt working practices that contribute to the effective implementation of employee training, including flexible working, budget commitment and communication of related policies and good practice.

Service Managers will be expected to ensure domestic abuse training is delivered to appropriate employees and to monitor the effectiveness of such training through a training analysis, individual support/1-1 meetings or other such process. This will determine:-

- what training has already been delivered, and to whom
- what refresher training is required
- what additional training is required – both multi-agency and service specific
- what information is needed to be provided to new employees, e.g. by means of induction, employee handbooks etc.

While each Service Manager within Falkirk Council will be responsible for deciding the most appropriate means of providing the required level of domestic abuse training, it should be noted that the Council has access to training materials and resources through partners of the forum and via the Forth Valley Domestic Abuse Training Consortium.

2.5 TRAINING MATERIALS/RESOURCES

Falkirk Council will work with partner members of the Forth Valley Domestic Abuse Training Consortium to share training information and resources as well as ensure that information on funding opportunities for training is cascaded within the Council and with other partners. Where appropriate joint applications for funding will be submitted.

2.6 COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Falkirk Council as a member of the FMADAF will review communication systems both internally with Senior Managers and externally with agency partners in relation to Domestic Abuse issues on an annual basis.

The FMADAF will develop a newsletter to share information with partner agencies. This information may be in relation to training events, funding opportunities, domestic abuse meetings, national or local initiatives, workshops, consultation processes or the sharing of statistical information.

Falkirk Council will contribute any relevant information required and place relevant articles in the internal employee magazines Talking Shop and SpeakEasy.

Falkirk Council will ensure that minutes of the FMADAF meetings and related policies/procedures etc are communicated to the relevant personnel within the Council and posted on the intranet site to ensure domestic abuse issues and disclosures are dealt with effectively.

Each Service will nominate a representative who will be responsible for disseminating relevant information within the Service. Contact details of each representative will be kept up-to-date and available from the administrator of the FMADAF.

PART 3

3.1 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Falkirk Council will develop a sensitive but effective means of evaluating service provision and levels of support to employees affected by domestic abuse within the Council and at the same time respect confidentiality. Such evaluation will assist in the identification of training needs and in determining appropriate training provision.

Human Resources in conjunction with the FMADAF, Service representatives and Trade Unions will monitor and review the policy as necessary, or no later than December 2008.