

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Our approach to helping residents who are experiencing domestic violence

If you are experiencing domestic violence, we will do all we can to help.

What we mean by domestic violence

Domestic violence is when someone deliberately controls and abuses another person who they are close to. The abuse may be physical, emotional, mental, sexual or financial.

What you can expect from our service

If you tell us that you are experiencing domestic violence, we will meet with you in a safe place to discuss your situation within 24 hours. We will respect your privacy and keep the details confidential. However, we are required by law to tell social services about any cases of abuse where children or vulnerable adults are present in the home.

We will stay in touch with you and offer to meet with you again to find out whether your situation has improved and if you are in danger.

What will happen after you report domestic violence to us

Violent or threatening behaviour is always a crime, even if the person responsible is your husband, wife or partner. We will always encourage you to tell the police, especially if you are in immediate danger. The police have specially trained officers working in local community safety units who can give you legal advice, collect evidence and make arrests.



When you decide what you want to do, we can help you to contact agencies who will be able to support you. Women's Aid and Refuge both offer emergency refuge accommodation to women and their children who have been affected by domestic violence. Together they run the 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline (freephone 0808 2000 247 - all calls are completely confidential).

Local agencies can offer various kinds of support and there are also agencies that specialise in supporting men, older people, people from particular ethnic backgrounds, and individuals who are in same-sex relationships.

Other ways in which we can help include:

- ▶ making your home safer – we may be able to refer you to a local authority scheme for improving the security of your home
- ▶ tenancy action – if we have enough evidence against an abuser who is an Octavia tenant, and if you agree, we can seek legal advice about taking action about a breach of tenancy
- ▶ prioritising you for a transfer – if the violence continues we can give you a high priority on our housing transfer list, although this can still involve a long wait. If you need alternative accommodation very quickly then we can put you in touch with the local authority or a women's refuge.

Making sure that we are succeeding

If you report domestic violence to us, we will ask for your feedback to find out if you are satisfied with our service and to find out what we can do to improve.

How to contact us about domestic violence

For more information or if you are experiencing domestic violence please contact us via our website octaviahousing.org.uk or contact your resident service officer, leasehold services officer or supported housing officer on the number below.

Please contact us if you need any part of this information in Braille, on audio tape or explained in a different language.

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