

Understanding domestic abuse

In Scotland, domestic abuse is a violation of human rights. It is defined as a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour by a partner or ex-partner. This is not limited to physical violence; under Scottish law, it includes any behaviour that causes a person physical or psychological harm, or restricts their freedom.

Domestic abuse can take many forms:

- Coercive control: Monitoring your movements, checking your phone, or isolating you from friends and family.
- Financial abuse: Controlling your money or preventing you from working.
- Sexual and physical abuse: Any non-consensual sexual activity or physical harm.
- Emotional and mental abuse: Threats, humiliation, or constant criticism.

Impact on children

Scottish law recognises that children are victims of domestic abuse if they see, hear, or are present during any incident. This is treated with the highest level of concern by local authorities in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, and Moray to ensure the safety of the next generation.

Local statistics (North East Scotland)

Based on the most recent Scottish Government data (2022-2023):

- Aberdeen City: Recorded approximately 2,500 incidents of domestic abuse annually.
- Aberdeenshire: Reported over 1,600 incidents.
- Moray: Recorded approximately 750 incidents.
- Across Scotland, the police respond to a domestic abuse call every 9 minutes.

How we support our local community

We believe everyone in the North East deserves a home free from fear. Whether you live in the city centre or a rural farming community, our priority is your immediate and long-term safety. If you reach out to us, we offer confidential support and can:

- Secure Your Property: Work with local contractors to change locks or install "Sanctuary" measures in your current home.
- Rural Support: Provide specific assistance for those in isolated areas of Aberdeenshire or Moray who may find it harder to access transport or help.
- Housing & Homelessness: If you need to leave immediately, we will coordinate with the Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, or Moray Council Housing Teams to find safe, temporary, or permanent accommodation.
- Legal & Police Liaison: Help you navigate the Scottish court system, including applying for Interdicts or reporting to Police Scotland's North East Division.
- Specialist Referrals: Connect you with local advocacy services like Grampian Women's Aid or local MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment) groups.

North East Scotland Specialist Support

Below are the services specifically for residents in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, and Moray.

Local specialist services

- **Grampian Women's Aid (Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire)**
 - Support and refuge for women and children.
 - Phone: 01224 593381 | Website: grampianwomensaid.com
- **Moray Women's Aid**
 - Specialist support for those in the Moray council area.
 - Phone: 01343 548549 | Website: mwaelgin.co.uk
- **FearLess (North East Scotland)**
 - Support for anyone—men, women, and LGBT+—impacted by abuse.
 - Phone: 0131 624 7266 | Website: fear-less.org.uk

National Scottish Support

- **Scotland's Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage Helpline**
 - 24/7 support for anyone in Scotland.
 - Phone: 0800 027 1234
- **AMIS (Abused Men in Scotland)**
 - Confidential support for men.
 - Phone: 03300 949 395
- **Shakti Women's Aid**
 - Specialised support for BME women and children in Scotland.
 - Phone: 0131 475 2399

Emergency Services

- Police Scotland: Call 101 for non-emergencies or 999 in an emergency.
- Silent Solution: If you are in danger but cannot speak, dial 999 and then press 55 when prompted.