



Joined-up domestic abuse support
in Norfolk.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Factsheet

It is recommended that every person reads the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 in its entirety, the Act can be found here - www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted

For those who require a deeper understanding of the DA Act 2021, its implications and limitations to individuals, families, organisations and practice, should consider additional training on the subject. Such professionals include frontline workers/volunteers and managers. NIDAS Norfolk provide this and other training, details of which can be found here - www.nidasnorfolk.co.uk.

Please note, that we have focussed on the key changes of the DA Act 2021 for the purposes of the factsheet, there are other changes from the Act not mentioned in this factsheet.

Key Changes

1. There is now a statutory definition of domestic abuse

For the definition to apply, both parties must be aged 16 or over and 'personally connected'.

'Personally connected' is defined in the act as parties who are; those who have even been in an intimate personal relationship, engaged, married or in a civil partnership, those that have had parental relationship to the same child and those who are relatives.



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'Abusive behaviour' is defined in the act as any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional or other abuse.

2. Children as victims of domestic abuse

Children are now defined as victims if they experience the effects of the abuse and the individuals involved have a parental responsibility or are a relative.

3. The law on coercive control has been widened

This offence now covers all of the 'personally connected' relationships.

4. A person cannot consent to ABH offences or higher for sexual gratification.

This eliminates the rough sex defence. There is also a new offence non-fatal strangulation or suffocation.

5. It is illegal to disclose or threaten to disclose private photographs

It is now an offence to threaten to disclose private photographs (whether they exist or not) to cause distress to the victim.



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6. Perpetrators of domestic abuse are no longer allowed to cross-examine victims in family and civil proceedings

Victims are also prohibited from cross examining the perpetrator. Family courts will have the power to appoint an advocate to carry out the cross-examination in limited circumstances.

7. Domestic abuse and homelessness

Individuals who are homeless due to domestic abuse have a 'priority need'.

8. Secure tenancies

When victims with a secure tenancy are seeking a sole tenancy on an existing or new property due to domestic abuse, the new tenancy should be secure as well.

9. Local authority safe accommodation and refuges must be supportive

Not only must the property be safe, but refuges and safe accommodation should also provide a package of practical and therapeutic support for its residents, including children.

10. Medical evidence must be free of charge

No fees can be charged for 'relevant medical evidence' from 'registered health care professionals' or anyone working within the NHS.

Please note that a number of recommendations requested by key domestic abuse service providers were not included in this Act. For more information about what was requested, please visit - [Joint-Recommendations-on-the-Domestic-Abuse-Bill-.pdf](#) (womensaid.org.uk)

