



etbi
Education and Training
Boards Ireland
*Boird Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Éireann*

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE

POLICY

*For all staff in
Education and
Training Boards
Ireland*

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I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Education and Training Boards Ireland (hereinafter called “ETBI”) is dedicated to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all people. ETBI strives to foster a secure environment where every employee feels safe and is protected from any type of violence or abuse.
- 1.2 Domestic violence is a traumatic experience that can profoundly affect the physical, emotional, social and financial wellbeing of individuals and their families. The issue of domestic violence and abuse transcends gender, socioeconomic background, age, ethnicity, race, sexuality, religion, or disability. Domestic violence and abuse can occur in all forms of adult personal relations.
- 1.3 In the workplace, a decline in performance, absenteeism, presenteeism and erratic behaviour are some ways domestic violence can impact an employee's working life.
- 1.4 In supporting our people who may be experiencing domestic violence, ETBI seeks to create and promote a workplace environment where all colleagues feel able to discuss domestic violence, and those experiencing such violence are able to seek the support and assistance they need in a supportive and non-judgemental manner.
- 1.5 ETBI acknowledges that leaving a situation of domestic violence or abuse is extremely complex and challenging for those involved and may take multiple attempts. This policy aims to support our people through their experiences of domestic violence by providing ongoing support and accommodations where needed and when appropriate.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of this leave is to provide for a period of paid time away from work for staff members who have suffered, are suffering or are at risk from domestic violence or abuse. This leave will enable our people to take the time they need to seek assistance in a structured and supported environment, where decisions are victim led.

- 2.2 ETBI recognises the prevalence of domestic violence in our society and the impact it may have on our people. In line with our values and our commitment to the health and safety of our staff, ETBI opposes all forms of domestic violence and seeks to support victims and survivors of such violence through the provision of leave and other resources.

3. ELIGIBILITY

- 3.1 All staff members of ETBI are eligible for domestic violence leave. There is no minimum service period required in order to qualify for this leave.

4. DEFINITION

- 4.1 Domestic abuse is the physical, sexual, financial, emotional, or psychological abuse of one person against another who is a family member or has been an intimate partner, regardless of gender or sexuality.
- 4.2 The term 'domestic violence' goes beyond actual physical violence. It can also involve the destruction of property; isolation from friends, family, and other potential sources of support; threats to others including children; stalking; and control over access to money, personal items, food, transportation and the telephone. It occurs in all social classes, all ethnic groups and among people of every educational background. It can be described as the use of physical or emotional force or the threat of physical force, including sexual violence in close adult relationships.
- 4.3 Domestic violence profoundly affects the physical, emotional, social and financial wellbeing of individuals and families.
- 4.4 Domestic violence and abuse can occur between opposite or same-sex intimate partners of any age, who may or may not be married or living together. It can also occur between family members, or between carers and those they live with or care for in the home. The

perpetrator therefore may be the employee’s current or former spouse/partner, parent, child, other family member or other person in an intimate relationship with the employee.

4.5 While domestic violence can involve just one isolated individual offence of physical assault in a domestic relationship, the term is most often used to describe a pattern of repeated abusive and controlling behaviours that take place within an intimate or family-type relationship and may continue after the relationship has ended.

4.6 A list of non-exhaustive examples of domestic violence and abuse is listed below.

Physical Assault and Violence	Causing or potentially causing any harm to the body of the other person, including by engaging in any of the following behaviours: throwing of objects; shoving; hitting; slapping; punching; biting; burning; choking; mutilation. The use of a weapon aggravates the risk of harm.
Verbal Abuse	Refers to the use of language to ridicule, disrespect, manipulate, degrade, and demean; compelling you to engage in humiliating acts, whether in private or public.
Sexual Violence and Abuse	Sexual violence includes any form of sexual activity that takes place without the full and freely given consent of one of the people involved. It includes sexual degradation and any form of physical or emotional coercion or manipulation into any type of sexual activity that is against the wishes of one of the people involved. Any unwanted sexual activity from sexual touching to rape between spouses, cohabitants, partners or ex-partners is a form of sexual violence
Emotional or Psychological Abuse.	Causing or attempting to cause psychological harm to the other person by the use of verbal aggression and threats; humiliation; undermining of self-esteem; name calling; continual “put downs”; psychological degradation; exploitation; threatening to hurt children; intimidation; bullying.

<p>Coercive Control</p>	<p>A systematic pattern of behaviour with the purpose of undermining you and creating fear through threats, humiliation and intimidation, and depriving you of support and independence. It is a psychological or emotional form of abuse that is used to control and limit the freedom of an intimate partner/relationship.</p> <p>Some common examples of coercive behaviour include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolating you from friends and family • depriving you of basic needs, such as food • Monitoring your time • Monitoring you via online communication tools or spyware • Taking control over aspects of your everyday life, such as where you can go, who you can see, what you can wear and when you can sleep • Depriving you of access to support services, such as medical services <p>Coercive control can be difficult to detect from the outside looking into a relationship, so too can it be hard to spot when in the relationship itself. As the behaviour worsens and each iteration of abuse becomes a new normal, low self-esteem is just one of the many factors that can stop people from seeing the reality of their situation.</p>
<p>Financial or Economic Abuse</p>	<p>Controlling or attempting to control the other person by means of economic blackmail; having dominant or complete control of all monies and bank accounts; denial of access to necessary funds; preventing the victim from working or having financial independence.</p>
<p>Stalking</p>	<p>Stalking is a pattern of fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviour that causes you to feel distressed or scared. Stalking can occur at any point of your day-to-day life. Workplace stalking often</p>

	results in the perpetrator following you to and from your place of work or hanging around the workplace entrance.
Cyber Harassment / Tech Abuse	Many of the forms of control, threats and stalking are carried out virtually through email, text messages, telephone messages, social media and so on.

Alleged Perpetrators

Where alleged perpetrators of domestic violence or abuse are also employees of the ETBI, ETBI reserves the right to invoke the appropriate ETBI policies where relevant (e.g. Dignity and Respect Policy, Code of Conduct, etc.).

5. DURATION OF LEAVE

- 5.1 Paid domestic violence leave will be granted for up to 5 working days per 12 month period on a rolling basis. This leave may be taken as a block of leave or broken into separate days of leave as required. Requests for flexibility will be reviewed by the HR/IR Governance Officer on a case-by-case basis. Thereafter, should further time away from work be required, the staff member may have recourse to one or more of the other ETBI leave schemes as applicable, e.g. Sick Leave, Personal Unpaid Leave, etc.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS AND NOTICE PERIOD

- 6.1 The affected staff member should contact the HR/IR Governance Officer, as soon as practicable to request a period of domestic violence leave. Advance notification of leave

should be provided where possible. ETBI understands that in some cases advance notification may not be possible and that the period of leave may have already commenced before notification can be provided.

- 6.2 The affected staff member is not required to provide proof of their abuse or documentary evidence for the leave needed. However, proof may be requested by ETBI in some circumstances.

7. LINE MANAGERS RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 Line managers are advised to support staff members who disclose to them that they are experiencing domestic violence in a sympathetic, non-judgmental and confidential manner.
- 7.2 If a staff member discloses that they are experiencing domestic violence, the line manager must act promptly. They should discuss domestic violence leave and other supports available (see point 10 below) with the affected staff member and must alert the HR/IR Governance Officer to the need for this leave, if requested, as soon as possible.

8. AWARENESS AND INFORMATION

- 8.1 Information sessions will be available to staff on domestic violence issues including understanding the implications of domestic violence for the staff member in the workplace, and also how to recognise, respond and refer.
- 8.2 The Human Resources Department are not positioned as experts on domestic violence but will provide the information to support line managers and staff members as required.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 9.1 Any disclosure of domestic violence and subsequent request for leave will be treated with the strictest confidence ETBI, unless there is an immediate risk to the safety of the affected staff member, their colleagues or others.

10. ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

10.1 Staff members experiencing domestic violence should note the following supports available to them:

- Flexible working arrangements: affected staff members may request a change of working hours, work location or other relevant conditions of their employment. Such requests will be accommodated where possible.
- Change of Work Contact Details: affected staff members may request a change of work phone number and/or work email address as necessary.
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP): Spectrum life offers immediate telephone support. Details 24/7/365 Helpline Support - Freephone IRE: 1800 814 243
- Occupational Health Specialist: An appointment can be arranged with a Specialist of ETBI's Occupational Health Provider in order to provide support and accommodations and/or necessary medical advice to the employee. All referrals are treated with strict confidence. To arrange a referral for reasons related to domestic violence please email your HR/IR Governance Officer.

11. EXTERNAL RESOURCES

11.1 Please refer to Appendix 1 for a full list of additional support.

12. REVIEW OF POLICY

12.1 This policy will be kept under review to include any changes in legislation and good practice.

Appendix 1: Specialist services and workplace contacts

Women's Aid

Women's Aid operates the 24hr National Freephone Helpline for victims-survivors of domestic violence. Support can also be accessed through the Instant Messaging Support Service, available on the relevant websites.

1800 341 900

www.womensaid.ie

www.toointoyou.ie

Men's Development Network

Men's Development Network operates the Male Advice Line, the national Freephone Helpline offering confidential advice and support to male victims-survivors of domestic abuse

1800 816 588

www.mensnetwork.ie

Local services

There are specialist domestic abuse services located in towns right across Ireland. Details of your local service can be accessed through these websites.

www.safeireland.ie

www.stillhere.ie

www.womensaid.ie/get-help/

support-services/find-support-locally/

Other Services

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre

National Sexual Violence 24hr Helpline:

1800 77 8888

www.drcc.ie

Local rape crisis centres

www.rapecrisishelp.ie

LGBT Ireland

National LGBT Helpline:

1800 929 539

www.lgbt.ie

An Garda Síochána

112 or 999