

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK

CLARE'S LAW

# Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme

## WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone. It is not only physical violence. It can include controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, economic or sexual abuse, threats or intimidation.

**Clare's Law covers all of these forms of abuse.**

### ■ Who can apply?

- **Anyone aged 16 or over** who is concerned about their own relationship.
- **Anyone worried about someone else** – for example a friend, family member, colleague or neighbour.
- **Any professional**, such as a social worker, health professional or support worker, who has concerns about a person at risk - while also following local safeguarding procedures.
- The scheme is open to people of any sex or gender, in any intimate relationship.

### ■ Why apply?

- **Act early** to prevent risk from increasing.
- **Support informed choices** based on information shared.
- **Access safety advice and support** while making those decisions.

**IF YOU ARE WORRIED  
THAT YOU, OR  
SOMEONE YOU KNOW,  
MAY BE AT RISK OF  
DOMESTIC ABUSE...**

...you can ask the police to check whether their current or ex-partner has a history of abusive or violent behaviour. This is known as making a 'Right to Ask' request under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), also called Clare's Law.

### ■ What is Clare's Law (DVDS)?

A national scheme in England and Wales that lets the police share information about someone's past abusive or violent behaviour, helping people make safer and more informed choices. It was introduced after Clare Wood was murdered in 2009 by an ex-partner, following her family's campaign for people to be able to find out about a partner's history.

## HOW TO APPLY:

Apply in any of the following ways:

### Apply online via Clare's Law:

Police.uk request form



### Thames Valley Police:

TVP DVDS request page



Call 101 or visit a police station

If someone is in immediate  
danger, call 999



### ■ What you'll be asked

You will be asked for:

- **Your details**, including whether you are applying for yourself or someone else.
- **Details of the person at risk** (this may be you, or the person you are applying for).
- **Details of the person you want police to check.**
- **The nature of the relationship** between the person at risk and the person you want the police to check.

- **What is worrying you, and why.**
- **Safe contact details** for you and, if appropriate, for the person at risk. The police will only use safe, agreed ways of contacting you. This is to avoid increasing risk.

### ■ What happens after you apply

- The police will carry out initial checks and assess any risk. If they identify an immediate risk of harm, they will take the necessary steps to keep people safe.
- The police will contact you to discuss your application, using the safe method provided.
- If the police decide that a disclosure is appropriate, they will choose the safest and most appropriate person to receive it – usually the person at risk. This will be in person or by an agreed safe method.  
If you applied on someone else's behalf, you may not receive the disclosure yourself.
- Anyone who receives information will be asked to keep it confidential and use it only to protect those at risk.
- The process should be completed within 28 days of your application.

## FURTHER SUPPORT

If no information is shared, it does not mean the person poses no risk. Reasons for this may include that concerns have not previously been raised, reported, or recorded with the police.

**Victims First:** Free, confidential support for all crime victims in Thames Valley.

☎ 0300 1234 148 🌐 [victims-first.org.uk](https://victims-first.org.uk)

**National Domestic Abuse Helpline:**

Advice, safety planning and support.

☎ 0808 2000 247

**Women's Aid:** Specialist support for women, plus refuge space directory.

🌐 [womensaid.org.uk](https://womensaid.org.uk)

**Men's Advice Line:** Confidential support for men experiencing abuse.

☎ 0808 801 0327 🌐 [mensadviceline.org.uk](https://mensadviceline.org.uk)

**Galop:** Specialist domestic abuse support for LGBTQ+ people.

☎ 0800 999 5428 🌐 [galop.org.uk](https://galop.org.uk)

For further information visit

[victims-first.org.uk/  
crime-info/guidance-and-  
support/domestic-abuse/](https://victims-first.org.uk/crime-info/guidance-and-support/domestic-abuse/)

