

Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control Policy



A Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Registered Charity No. 1195780

Muslim Sports Foundation (MSF)

Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control Policy

1. Policy Statement

Muslim Sports Foundation (MSF) recognises that domestic abuse is a serious safeguarding issue that can affect individuals across all communities, backgrounds and circumstances.

MSF is committed to promoting safety, dignity and wellbeing, and to responding appropriately where concerns about domestic abuse arise in connection with its governance, partnerships or associated activities.

This policy is informed by UK law, recognised safeguarding good practice and Islamic principles of justice, compassion, accountability and the protection of life and dignity.

MSF acknowledges that domestic abuse can have a significant impact on adults, children and families, including long-term physical, emotional, psychological and social harm.

2. Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- set out MSF's approach to domestic abuse and coercive control
- provide clarity on how concerns may be recognised and raised
- ensure appropriate safeguarding escalation where required
- support individuals by signposting to specialist support
- reinforce MSF's governance and safeguarding responsibilities

This policy is supportive and safeguarding-focused, not investigative or disciplinary.

3. Relationship to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- MSF Safeguarding Adults Policy
- MSF Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- MSF Safeguarding Reporting and Response Procedure
- MSF Whistleblowing (Disclosure of Malpractice) Policy
- MSF Code of Conduct for Coaches, Contractors, Volunteers and Participants
- MSF Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- MSF Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Where domestic abuse concerns involve:

- a child or young person, safeguarding children procedures must be followed
- an adult at risk, safeguarding adults procedures must be followed

This policy does not replace statutory safeguarding duties or specialist domestic abuse services.

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- MSF Trustees
- contractors, consultants and volunteers acting on behalf of MSF
- individuals engaged through MSF governance, funding or partnership arrangements

It applies to concerns:

- disclosed to MSF
- observed in connection with MSF activity
- raised through safeguarding, complaints or whistleblowing routes

MSF does not provide frontline domestic abuse services and does not investigate allegations.

5. Understanding Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control

Domestic abuse is defined in UK law as a pattern of behaviour between people aged 16 or over who are personally connected, which may include:

- physical abuse
- emotional or psychological abuse
- sexual abuse
- financial or economic abuse
- controlling or coercive behaviour

Coercive control refers to behaviour designed to make a person dependent or subordinate by isolating them, exploiting them, controlling their everyday behaviour, or restricting their freedom.

Domestic abuse can occur regardless of:

- gender
- age
- faith
- ethnicity
- disability
- marital status
- socio-economic background

Children may be directly abused or harmed through exposure to domestic abuse.

6. Cultural Sensitivity and Faith Context

MSF works within Muslim communities and wider society. Safeguarding practice must be culturally sensitive, inclusive and accessible.

Cultural or religious considerations must never be used to:

- justify abuse
- minimise harm
- discourage disclosure
- prevent safeguarding action

Domestic abuse is never acceptable and is inconsistent with Islamic ethical principles and UK law.

7. Recognising Domestic Abuse

Indicators may include, but are not limited to:

- disclosures of fear, control or harm
- unexplained injuries or changes in behaviour
- isolation or restricted access to support
- financial control or dependence
- anxiety, withdrawal or distress

Indicators do not prove abuse, but must always be taken seriously.

8. MSF's Role and Responsibilities

As a non-delivery, non-employing organisation, MSF's role is governance-led.

MSF will:

- take disclosures seriously
- respond sensitively and respectfully
- prioritise safety
- follow safeguarding procedures where required
- signpost to specialist support services
- seek assurance from partner organisations where relevant
- escalate concerns where necessary to protect individuals

MSF does not:

- investigate domestic abuse allegations
- provide counselling or specialist intervention
- replace statutory services

9. Reporting and Responding to Concerns

Domestic abuse concerns may be raised:

- through safeguarding reporting routes
- via the Trustee Safeguarding Lead
- under the Whistleblowing Policy where appropriate

If there is immediate danger, emergency services must be contacted by calling 999.

Where children or adults at risk are involved, safeguarding procedures must be followed without delay.

10. Support and Signposting

MSF recognises the importance of access to specialist support.

Where appropriate, individuals may be signposted to:

- NHS domestic abuse support services
- local authority safeguarding teams
- specialist domestic abuse charities

- culturally specific support organisations
- national helplines

Signposting will be appropriate to the individual's circumstances and may include national, local or culturally appropriate services.

MSF will promote awareness of domestic abuse support through proportionate communications and safeguarding resources.

11. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information will be:

- handled sensitively
- shared on a need-to-know basis
- disclosed without consent where necessary to protect individuals or meet legal duties

Confidentiality will not prevent safeguarding action where there is risk of harm.

12. Training, Awareness and Governance Oversight

MSF adopts a proportionate approach to domestic abuse awareness, reflecting its role.

This includes:

- safeguarding training for the Trustee Safeguarding Lead and relevant Trustees
- inclusion of domestic abuse awareness within safeguarding training plans
- governance oversight of safeguarding and wellbeing risks
- promotion of safeguarding awareness campaigns where appropriate

Delivery partners retain responsibility for frontline training and response.

13. Roles and Responsibilities

Trustee Safeguarding Lead

The Trustee Safeguarding Lead provides governance-level oversight of safeguarding matters, including concerns relating to domestic abuse.

The Safeguarding Lead does not provide direct support or advice to individuals affected by abuse, but ensures that appropriate safeguarding procedures are followed and that concerns are escalated where required.

Head of Business and Governance

The Head of Business and Governance is responsible for receiving and recording concerns raised under this policy, ensuring appropriate signposting, and supporting governance oversight and learning.

Contact details

Safeguarding concerns or disclosures may be raised via:
safeguarding@muslimsports.org.uk

14. Monitoring and Review

The Trustee Safeguarding Lead is responsible for oversight of this policy.

The Board of Trustees will receive appropriate safeguarding assurance.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required by:

- changes in law or guidance
- learning from safeguarding concerns
- serious incidents

Policy title	Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control Policy
Approved by	Board of Trustees, Muslim Sports Foundation
Date approved	26 March 2026
Review cycle	Every two years, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, guidance or following a safeguarding incident
Next review due	25 March 2028
Policy owner	Trustee Safeguarding Lead
Responsible officer	Head of Business and Governance