

Domestic Abuse is **NOT** a private matter

Ascend Domestic Abuse Service
for Women - North Tipperary



**SERVICE
USER
CHARTER**



SERVICE USER'S RIGHTS

YOU HAVE A RIGHT:

1. To be heard, listened to and believed
2. To be treated as an individual with evolving needs. Staff engagement should reflect these changes and always engage with service-users at a level that they feel comfortable with
3. To be treated with respect and dignity by Ascend Domestic Abuse Service staff at all times
4. To have straight-up, realistic and non-judgemental information about Domestic Abuse and supports available
5. To have your personal information kept confidential within the staff team. In some very exceptional circumstances this may have to be shared, but staff will explain this to you as part of our confidentiality policy
6. To access services regardless of your age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, marital status, family status or membership of the Travelling Community
7. To have a support worker and an individual plan of safety created based on your needs - if you want one
8. To be involved in drawing up and reviewing your safety plan

9. To be aware that information you share with Ascend is collected and stored in a safe and confidential manner
10. To know that you will be supported by Ascend on issues of and arising of Domestic Abuse for as long as you need
11. To receive non-judgemental information on the service options available to you and, wherever possible, be offered the opportunity to make choices about these options
12. To complain and make comments without it having a negative effect on your access to the service. You should be offered support in doing this if you want it

SERVICE USER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

YOU ARE EXPECTED TO:

1. Respect the dignity and privacy of staff and other service users
2. Treat other service users and staff with courtesy and respect. Threatening, abusive or violent behaviour is not acceptable
3. All of your engagement with us contributes towards the development of Ascend and helps improve our service. You can further get involved in our work as listed.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

1. By engaging with your Support worker in ensuring your safety and well-being
2. Joining our Service User Forum, Saor
3. Attending Personal Development groups and support groups
4. Supporting Ascend in its public awareness campaigns
5. Participating in steering groups for partner initiatives and regional forums
6. Making other women aware of our services

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

You have the right to complain if you are not fully satisfied with any aspect of the service provided to you by Ascend Domestic Abuse Service.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

If you wish to make a complaint please do one of the following:

1. Discuss the matter with the staff member you dealt with or his/her line manager so that an opportunity is provided to address your concerns there and then (if you do not know the line manager please ask at reception).

2. Having spoken to the staff member of his/her line manager if you are not satisfied with the outcome of these discussions then make a formal complaint by completing and forwarding a complaint form to us. Forms are available on our web-site.

Ascend Domestic Abuse Service understands that individuals making a complaint have the right to use a support system/ advocate during this process.

ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

Where a written complaint is submitted on the attached complaint form, Ascend Domestic Abuse Service will act as follows:

1. We will write to acknowledge your complaint within five working days and let you know the staff member dealing with your complaint
2. We will outline the action being taken to address the issue/s raised in your complaint
3. We will investigate and issue a response to your complaint within twenty one working days. We will take the learning from the complaint process and where necessary amend our practices in order to improve our performance

A complaint must be made within twelve months of the date of the action giving rise to the complaint.

REDRESS

An effective complaints system will enhance the quality of our service and enable us to review current policies and procedures which may be giving rise to complaints. Redress should be consistent and fair to both the complainant and the service against which the complaint was made. Redress may include:

1. An apology
2. An explanation
3. Admission of fault
4. Change of decision

CONTACTING ASCEND DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

A written complaint using the official complaint form should be forwarded to: **CEO, NTDC, Friars Court, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary**

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Ascend Domestic Abuse Service recognises the need for confidentiality and ensures that all information received from service users is stored in a secure place. Access is only given to management staff on a need to know basis. All staff members adhere to the following guidelines and are trained accordingly:

1. All information relating to the welfare or protection of a child/person is only shared on “a need to know” basis in the interests of the child/person
2. No undertakings regarding secrecy are given; this is made clear to all parties involved
3. Information gathered for one purpose is not used for another without consulting the person who provided the information
4. Family members are informed or consulted at each stage of the Reporting Procedure. However parents/carers will not be informed if there is a risk of endangering the child
5. Giving information to others for the protection of the child is not a breach of confidentiality

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

We at Ascend Domestic Abuse Service recognise that the welfare of children is paramount and are committed to best practice in accordance with Children First Guidelines which promotes the general welfare, health, development and safety of children and protects them from harm of all kinds. Ascend Domestic Abuse Service’s (NTDC’s) Child Protection Policy adheres to National Policy Guidelines and Best Practice. Staff being recruited to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults have Garda clearance before commencement in the post.

**For information or an appointment
with Ascend contact:**

Office Number: 0505-23379

Confidential Number: 0505-23999 / 086-8283399

E: ascend@ntdc.ie

W: www.ntdc.ie



www.facebook.com/AscendDomesticAbuse



TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

NTDC
North Tipperary
Development Company