#  Ascend’s commitment to privacy & confidentiality

**Client No:**

When you engage with Ascend Domestic Abuse Service, it is important for you to know that the service is confidential and that your privacy and safety will not be breached by Ascend. Ascend wants to make sure that the privacy of all service users is respected and that information is not shared-except within very clear guidelines. These are as follows:

**Information Shared between Staff in Ascend**: To help us provide the best service possible to you the information shared with your allocated worker may be shared with other relevant staff in Ascend or in exceptional circumstances with the Management of North Tipperary Development Company.

**Information Sharing with other services/individuals:** Where you agree Ascend advocate on your behalf at meetings or on certain issues, for example on housing, we take your signature on this form as your written permission for us to do so. We will speak to you first so that we are clear about the information you want shared.

**Limits of Confidentiality:** In exceptional circumstances we will have to share your information with other appropriate services/individuals without your permission. If we are worried that you might harm yourself we will contact the relevant services so that you can get the help you need. If you have disclosed a specific danger to other people, we will have to report it.

If we are concerned that a child is at risk of harm we will endeavor to discuss this with you. We will need to contact and work with TUSLA’s Social Work Department. In an emergency, we have to contact the Social Work Department and/or Gardai before contacting you.

Access to Records and Files: Ascend Domestic Abuse Service will retain relevant information (Document Retention Policy (NTLP.PRO.003, available on request) that you may need in the future such as copies of paperwork you have given them.

To get a copy of your file at any time you will need to submit a written request to the Coordinator of Ascend Domestic Abuse Service with a proof of ID.

Ascend will keep your file for seven years (from your last contact with services) according to NTDC record retention protocols. If the file contains details of abuse to children, we comply with TUSLA’s requirement for retention in perpetuity.

Please be aware that information collected from you and other service users will be used for statistical purposes and shared **anonymously** to help improve services for women nationwide.

**Complaints Procedure:** Ascend Domestic Abuse would like to hear what you like and don’t like about the service. If for any reason you are not happy with the service you receive or if you feel you need to make a complaint, please try to speak to your allocated worker first. If this is not possible or comfortable for you, please let the Ascend Coordinator know so it can be dealt with it as soon as possible.

**Your Commitment to Ascend:** Please use your discretion around worker identity, meeting times and location so it is safe for you, other women, staff and volunteers.

You may withdraw consent at any time. You can do so by contacting or writing to the Ascend Coordinator or NTDC Manager.

**Would you like to hear of research, information or other opportunities in the time after you are an active service user of Ascend?**

**Yes No**

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**I am providing my written consent that information I share with Ascend staff will be recorded and kept on a database in accordance with Data Protection laws and principles. (NTLP.POL.0018 DATA PROTECTION POLICY, available on request)**

**I understand and accept the Ascend Domestic Abuse policy on privacy and confidentiality as explained above.**

**Signature by Service User:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Witnessed by Staff Member:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**