

9 MINUTE BRIEFING: 'CLARE'S LAW'

This briefing is aimed at practitioners working with children and families in Brighton and Hove, East Sussex & West Sussex

What is Clare's Law?

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), also known as Clare's Law, was created in 2014 after Clare Wood was killed in 2009 by an ex-partner in Greater Manchester. The aim of Clare's Law is to give an individual information regarding their current or ex-partner where there are concerns that this person may be abusive, controlling and coercive, or violent.

Information can be requested by the individual, a family member, friend, colleague or neighbour if you believe they are at risk from their current or ex-partner. A disclosure can also be given to safeguard children, for example if there are concerns about an ex-partner's new partner.

A disclosure can provide potentially life-saving information to help people to make a more informed decision about whether to continue the relationship they're in. Individuals now have the right to ask if a current or ex-partner has a history of domestic abuse or violence.

Individuals can make an application regarding a current or ex-partner, or if they have concerns about someone else's current or ex-partner. The police will carry out checks and will refer any information to a local multi-agency panel for a decision as to whether to make a disclosure.

How to make an application

Individuals can make an application under the scheme in the following ways:

- By completing our [online DVDS application form](#).
- By calling 101 and asking to make a DVDS application.
- By attending their local police station and asking to make a DVDS application.

Individuals should call 999 if they or someone else is in immediate danger.

They will initially be asked to provide information about the person they are making the application for.

If the application meets the criteria, a face-to-face or online visit will be held. Any disclosed information must be treated as confidential, and applicants cannot share this information with anyone else.

Read Sussex Police's [Clare's Law booklet](#) for details on the process and other support and helplines.

Examples of Clare's Law Applications:

Example 1

Jim became worried when his new boyfriend of two weeks, Logan, would message him multiple times in the day to tell him how happy he was with the relationship. Jim thought this was too intense for a new relationship, so made an application to find out if there was anything concerning in Logan's past.

The Police told Jim that Logan had been arrested for controlling and coercive behaviour of a previous partner, which had led to Logan being convicted for an assault. This allowed Jim to consider ending the relationship early.

Example 2

Charles was concerned for his children when his ex-wife, Mary, allowed her new boyfriend Rob to move in after just a few weeks. Charles made an application to make sure his children were safe.

The Police contacted Mary and told her that Rob had previously been cautioned for assaulting a female and had been arrested on another occasion for assaulting his girlfriend. Mary was already aware of this. When she asked who had submitted the application, she was told that applicants are kept confidential.

Example 3

Stephanie initially had no concerns about her new boyfriend Mark, but her support worker told her about Clare's Law, and she applied just to make sure.

The Police told Stephanie about Mark's conviction for stalking his ex-girlfriend, and that we had previously arrested him for assaulting her. The Police also shared this history with Stephanie's support worker so that she could work with Stephanie on processing this information.

Useful Resources

[Clare's Law](#)

[Request information under Clare's Law: Make a Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme \(DVDS\) application | Sussex Police](#)

[Domestic abuse and violence: Parental Guidance | NSPCC](#)

[8.1.3 Safeguarding Children impacted by Domestic Abuse – Sussex Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures Resource](#)