

# 6. Stopping Abuse Through Technology

## Stopping abusive calls and contact at work

***A common form of domestic violence reported by victims at work is abusive phone calls.***

### Confidentiality At Work

Where a person discloses, or an employer discovers that an employee is receiving unwelcome or abusive emails or calls, their disclosure should be treated confidentially.

Workplaces are encouraged to assess the risk of unwanted contact at work and put in place effective safety planning to stop harm that can be caused this way.

### Email

Any email communication containing threats of harm should be reported to the police (and workplace security) immediately.

- Providing the person with a new secure email address may be necessary or another option is to automatically divert all emails from the person sending the abuse into to a separate folder and/or block these emails completely.
- Any abusive, threatening or excessive email received should be kept or copied. This evidence may support the victim to obtain a domestic violence protection order to stop the abuse and can be used as evidence of breach of any protection order that might be in place.

### Mobile calls or text messages

- If abuse is coming through a personal or work mobile phone, then a replacement phone with a number unknown to the perpetrator may assist in stopping unwanted contact. Most domestic violence services can provide replacement mobile phones upon request.

- Calls or text messages containing threats of harm should be reported to the police (and workplace security) immediately.
- The time, date, length and content of all unwanted calls should be noted. Any abusive text messages should be saved or copied as this can provide useful evidence of abuse.

### Safety of Handset Calls

- If the calls are coming through this way then consider changing the phone number of the handset or extension.
- Removing the person's name or phone number from publicly available contact lists (or from internal phone directories where the abusive person is also an employee). This should include automated phone directories.
- Consider screening calls with voicemail or a diverted number. Other strategies include:
  1. Providing a telephone handset with 'caller ID', allowing the worker to screen their own calls.
  2. Ensure coworkers understand not to inadvertently disclose contact or other locational details of the person experiencing abuse to the abuser.

*When using Facebook, Instagram, Messenger or other social media site, whether for work or personal use it is important to check that the settings on the social media accounts keep your personal information private. For more information on the privacy settings for individual social media services or private messenger apps visit the E Safety Commissions eSafety Guide.*

