

**Domestic abuse.
It's all our business.**



Co-op Case Study

Family of retail businesses, the Co-operative Group, began working with EIDA in 2020. EIDA spoke to People Policy Manager, Kerry Allison, about how the Co-op has taken action on domestic abuse.

How it all started

Aware of the rise in calls to domestic abuse helplines during the coronavirus pandemic, we decided to review our people policies. We realised that nobody really knew about our existing policy on domestic abuse and it had not been revisited in some time. We used the EIDA resources to re-write our policy and manager's guide. By making these live documents, many people could input their views and we could work on it together.

The next steps

We launched our policy and resources at the same time as our [Aspire colleagues network for women and allies](#) was running their own plan as part of our [16 Days of Action](#) on domestic abuse. We also produced a poster for staff areas with a QR code that linked to the policy and information on how to download the [Bright Sky app](#) and translated a short version of our policy into the six languages most spoken among our employees. We promoted these initiatives at an event we ran with EIDA to raise awareness about domestic abuse.

The impact so far

The response from our workforce has been amazing, particularly the responses to the re-launch of the policy and the engagement during the event we ran with EIDA. Many people are coming forward and sharing stories which is so great to see.

Measuring and reporting

Given the confidential nature of domestic abuse disclosures, we do not have any formal structures of recording or reporting back to senior leadership on the progress of our response to domestic abuse. We are lucky to have had such strong support from senior leadership on this topic from the start.

What are your plans for the future?

We aim to do more to help colleagues recognise abuse in themselves as much as among others. Our focus will be on keeping domestic abuse front of mind among managers, peers and HR colleagues now that we have relaunched the policy. We are in the process of putting together a long-term plan to help us meet these aims.

Three takeaways for other employers

- 1- Get people talking! Holding events and webinars will encourage colleagues to share stories and experiences and break the taboo around domestic abuse.
- 2- Use all your existing internal comms channel such as posters, social media activity, press and colleague network communications.
- 3- Keep the initial momentum going. We had so much buzz around this topic during the initial launch. Our aim now is to keep domestic abuse on the agenda.