



Ministry  
of Justice

**Domestic Abuse Policy**

Ministry of Justice  
102 Petty France  
London  
SW1H 9AJ

By email to:

Law Society  
Resolution  
Family Law Bar Association  
Legal Aid Practitioners Group  
Bar Council  
Law Centres Network  
Criminal Bar Association  
Criminal Law Solicitors' Association  
Cilex  
London Criminal Courts Solicitors' Association

25 March 2024

**DOMESTIC ABUSE PROTECTION NOTICE AND ORDER PILOT**

In the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the Government legislated for a new, police issued, Domestic Abuse Protection Notice (DAPN) to provide immediate protection to a victim following a domestic abuse incident and a new civil Domestic Abuse Protection Order (DAPO) with a flexible duration to provide longer-term protection to the victim where necessary and proportionate. The DAPO will be the first order available in all courts: police can apply for an order to the magistrates' court, and victims and third parties to the family court and victims can also apply within ongoing family and specified civil proceedings. Courts can also make a DAPO of their own volition in criminal, family and specified civil proceedings.

The DAPO brings together the strongest elements of existing orders and the intention is for the DAPN/DAPO to be the go-to protective notice and order for all cases of domestic abuse. The DAPO can place firmer conditions on the perpetrator than other currently available protective orders, such as electronic monitoring ("tagging") and positive requirements, for example mandating attendance on a behaviour change or substance misuse programme. Breach of a DAPO will be a criminal offence.

It is the Government's intention to pilot the new notice and order from late May 2024, starting with Greater Manchester and three Boroughs in South London (Croydon, Sutton and Bromley), for an anticipated two years. This is an important pilot providing the opportunity to test a new, innovative order and the first order to become available across the criminal, family, and civil jurisdictions.

You may recall, we were last in direct contact with many of you in relation to the DAPO pilot last summer, when the Family Procedure Rule Committee consulted on its draft Family Pilot Practice Direction for DAPO, and we are hugely grateful for your responses, as always. Since then, we have continued to work with our operational partners to prepare for pilot implementation this year and lay the necessary secondary legislation.

We are now in the final stages of working towards a launch in late May. We have enclosed a DAPO guidance document, aimed at legal professionals, which you might find useful in supporting your members ahead of the pilot launch. You may also be aware that the Home Office are currently running a public consultation on the statutory guidance for the police, which closes on 16 April.

OFFICIAL

In addition, legal aid will be available for DAPNs and DAPOOs, subject to merits and means tests, largely in line with the current regime for protective orders, and the Legal Aid Agency are preparing to commence a contract consultation with civil and criminal legal aid providers in early April.

Finally, if you do have any questions or queries, in terms of the policy context for DAPOs and how they are intended to work in practice, we would be more than happy to assist, including to meet or host a roundtable if that would be helpful. The Legal Aid Agency will be your first point of contact for legal aid matters, as usual.

Yours sincerely

**Maja Vojnovic**

On behalf of the DAPO Implementation Team

The Ministry of Justice Domestic Abuse Policy Team

OFFICIAL