



Every woman deserves
respect and support

Leeds Women Aid (LWA) Position Statement in relation to COVID-19 Update 29 June 2020

We continue to provide most of our services whilst protecting our staff, stakeholders and partners.

We are following Government and Public Health Guidance and working with Leeds City Council and other commissioners.

LWA delivers a range of face to face and telephone support services and is the lead partner in the local authority commissioned Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS) and the Women's Lives Leeds (WLL) Partnership. Both have position statements.

What we are doing

We are regularly updating our plans and risk assessments in line with the latest information and advice. Briefly:

1. We are currently operating the majority of our services, taking referrals as usual, but some are being delivered in a different way (see below).
2. We are being updated by Adult Commissioning and Public Health teams and tap into other forms of information and advice as it becomes available.
3. We have reviewed our policies and procedures including our contingency plans and Home Working policy.
4. We continue to provide briefings to staff and residents in all areas of our organisation.
5. We will update the Board immediately of any significant occurrences.
6. We are in regular contact with commissioners/funders & will inform them immediately of matters that impact individual clients, staff or jeopardise service delivery.
7. We are continuing to pay staff if they are sick or they are having to self-isolate.
8. We offer staff an Employee Assistance and Health Plan through Simply Health which offers mental health support and access to GPs.
9. We have equipped our teams with technology, so they can work remotely, and we have increased additional measures in our offices and at refuge sites to reduce the risk of infection we have stopped all non-essential business travel.

Our Services:

We are continuously reviewing our contingency plans and Risk assessments to reduce risk and make sure our staff are protected and our services continue. We've already taken a range of steps to maintain our services, including:

- Refuge sites will be staffed by at least one member of staff, but following social distancing with at least a 2-metre distance
- LDVS community services are continuing remotely apart from Drop-in services which are suspended until further notice. In some limited circumstances we will do face to face work where a full risk assessment is completed. See LDVS position statement.
- The WLL services are continuing to operate with support being provided remotely, through internet-based platforms, via telephone catch ups and in some instances where full risk assessments have been completed, through socially distancing walks.

- The Women Friendly Leeds movement too is continuing in momentum, with all social media platforms being used to the best of their advantage. (Twitter, Facebook, What's App, Zoom, Microsoft Teams etc.)
- The new LWA Online chat service has increased delivery hours and is available from 1.30pm -3.30pm Mon-Fri and 7.30pm to 9.30pm on Tuesday and Thursday evening.
- Children & Young People's workers have developed packs for the children and face time is being used with those who are self-isolating.
- The GP appointment services are continuing remotely.
- Fundraising & Marketing is continuing.
- The LWA charity shop will be opening on 15th July (TBC). Plan and risk assessments are in place.
- Donations are being dropped off at the shop on set days (Monday and Thursday) and are being offered to clients.
- Forced Marriage Training still suspended.
- Our current Staying Safe Programme was almost finished, and the final week postponed until we can run it safely.