Home Office

Ministry of Justice

Domestic Abuse Protection Notices & Orders (DAPN/DAPO)

Why a new Domestic Abuse Protection Framework?

The challenge

- Domestic abuse can take many forms, including physical and non-physical abuse.
- Victims often require protection that is tailored to their individual circumstances and maintained for as long as necessary.
- The protective order landscape has developed over time, with different orders available through different routes and offering different powers, durations and enforcement mechanisms.
- This can create complexity for practitioners and victims and make it more difficult to deliver a consistent response.

The reform

- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 legislated for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice (DAPN) issued by the police for immediate protection after a DA incident, and civil Domestic Abuse Protection Order (DAPO) issued by the courts.
- DAPNs and DAPOs will be rolled out across all police force areas and courts from 25 November 2026.
- The DAPN and DAPO is a joint policy between the Home Office and Ministry of Justice, with responsibilities shared across both departments.

The policy ambition

- To take the 'strongest' elements of existing orders and create a single, 'go-to' protective order for greater, more flexible protection for victims from all forms of domestic abuse.

About the DAPO



Available in all courts. DAPO's are the first cross-jurisdictional order, available in family, civil and criminal courts. Police can apply in magistrates' courts, victims and third parties in family courts, and courts of their own volition in ongoing proceedings. The requirements which can be imposed by a DAPO and the consequences for breach are the same regardless of the court in which the DAPO is made.



Breach is a criminal offence. Breach of any DAPO requirement is a criminal offence, punishable by a fine or up to five years in prison or both.



All forms of domestic abuse. A DAPO can protect against all forms of domestic abuse as defined in the DA Act, including controlling and coercive behaviour and economic abuse.



Mandatory notification requirements: The perpetrator must notify the police of their name and address within three days of the order being made. Throughout the lifetime of the DAPO, the perpetrator must notify police of any changes to these details within 3 days of the change. Failure to comply is breach of the DAPO.

About the DAPO



Prohibitions and restrictions: The court can order any requirements necessary for victim's protection, such as a ban on contacting the victim or entering an exclusion zone around victim's home or workplace.



Positive requirements: The court can order the respondent takes a specific action. This can be programme-based requirements such as perpetrator behaviour change programme, substance misuse or mental health interventions, or non-programme based requirements such as surrendering passwords to social media accounts.



Electronic monitoring (EM): The DAPO is the first civil order to use EM (tagging) to monitor compliance with the conditions attached to a DAPO. EM can be imposed for a maximum 12 month period, but can be extended.



Greater flexibility on duration: The DAPO has no minimum or maximum duration. This flexibility allows courts to tailor the length of the order to the circumstances of the case, ranging from shorter-term protection similar to a DVPO to longer-term protection more akin to a Restraining Order or Stalking Protection Order.

DAPO pilot: What have we learned?

The pilot

- On 27 November 2024 DAPOs were launched in Greater Manchester, three London boroughs (Croydon, Bromley and Sutton) and with the British Transport Police in those areas.
- The pilot expanded to Cleveland in March 2025 and North Wales in April 2025.
- The pilot is being evaluated by an external research partner (Ecorys).

Early findings:

- Over 1,000 DAPOs have been made to date.
- Police remain the primary applicants, accounting for the majority of DAPOs granted.
- DAPOs are being used to protect victims from all forms of domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour.
- Courts are using a broader range of conditions, including positive requirements and electronic monitoring in some cases.
- DAPOs are providing protection over longer periods.
- Breaches are being enforced robustly, including custodial outcomes in some cases.

Key takeaway:

The pilot has demonstrated that DAPOs can provide flexible, longer-term protection for victims and are working across a range of domestic abuse circumstances.

Positive requirements

- Programme-based positive requirements (such as referrals to behaviour change programmes, substance misuse or mental health support interventions):
  - **will** only be available for police led applications and DAPOs made in criminal proceedings at the point of national rollout.
  - **will not** be available through family and civil court DAPO applications at rollout as currently there is no referral mechanism.

- Non-programme based positive requirements, such as removing content relating to the victim from social media or returning keys to a property, will be available across all jurisdictions.

Programme-based positive requirements

- We recognise provision for programmes and interventions currently varies across England and Wales.
- The Government is seeking to strengthen provision through wider investment in domestic abuse and stalking interventions.
- For police led applications and DAPOs in criminal proceedings, where programme-based requirements are available from rollout, the police will need awareness of local providers and pathways, similar to current arrangements for other orders containing positive requirements (e.g. SPOs).
- The Crime and Policing Act 2026 introduced changes which will be commenced at national rollout. These changes allow courts to:
  - Make a DAPO at the first hearing.
  - Require the respondent to attend a suitability assessment.
  - Include a programme requirement that takes effect if the respondent is assessed as suitable.

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Electronic Monitoring (EM)

- Electronic monitoring can be used to monitor compliance with an exclusion zone or a curfew.
- Electronic Monitoring has been used in a small number of cases during the pilot where EM has been imposed to monitor an exclusion zone.
- Electronic monitoring will not be available from the start of national rollout in November 2026.
- Given wider pressures on the EM system, including increasing demand from other tagging cohorts as a result of the Sentencing Act, additional time is needed to ensure the necessary provider capacity, technology and operational processes are in place to support delivery.
- EM is therefore expected to be introduced from early 2027 once operationally ready.
- Further information will be provided on the national operating model and operational processes ahead of implementation in 2027.

Children

- Pilot evidence has shown lower than expected use of DAPOs in the family courts.
- Feedback suggests that one of the reasons for this is that DAPOs cannot currently provide direct protection to children in the same way as Non-Molestation Orders (NMOs).
- MoJ and HO Ministers are keen to address this gap and recognise the importance of ensuring children can be protected through the DAPO framework.
- However, this would require legislative change and will not be in place for national rollout in November.
- The Government is considering legislative options to address this issue.
- Until any legislative change is made, NMOs will remain available where direct protection for children is required.

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Operational considerations for rollout

Transition from DVPO to DAPO

- DAPOs will eventually replace the existing DVPN/DVPO framework.
- Ministers have agreed a **6-month transition period** from November 2026.
- During this period, forces may continue to use DVPNs/DVPOs alongside DAPNs/DAPOs.
- The transition period will be kept under review as implementation progresses.

Legal aid

- Civil legal aid is available to victims, perpetrators and (where applicable) eligible third parties in DAPO proceedings in the family, civil and magistrates' courts, subject to the usual eligibility requirements.
- Criminal legal aid is available for perpetrators in limited circumstances, including breach proceedings and where a DAPO is made alongside criminal proceedings.

Court fees

- There are no court fees for DAPO applications for victims, third parties or perpetrators.
- Court fees will apply for police-led DAPO applications, in line with DVPOs and SPOs.
- The Home Office has secured funding to cover police-led DAPO application costs from rollout until **March 2027** so forces will not be expected to meet these costs during the initial rollout period.

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DAPN and DAPO Awareness sessions

Three separate awareness sessions are being run by Rights of Women and FLOWS to support professionals to prepare for national rollout.

Please sign up using the links below.

- **Domestic Abuse Support Professionals Briefing,** 2 November 2026 12:30-14:00: https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/for-professionals/training-and-events/events/preparing-for-dapn-and-dapo-rollout-domestic-abuse-support-professionals-briefing/?swcfpc=1

- **Legal Practitioner Session**, 4 November 2026 12:30-14:00: https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/for-professionals/training-and-events/events/preparing-for-dapn-and-dapo-rollout-legal-practitioner-session/?swcfpc=1

- **Social Worker and Local Authority Professionals Briefing**, 6 November 2026 12:30-14:00: https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/for-professionals/training-and-events/events/preparing-for-dapn-and-dapo-rollout-social-worker-briefing/

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DAPN/O Resources

Useful links

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents
- Crime and Policing Act 2026: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2026/20/section/142
- Domestic Abuse: how to get help: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help#how-to-call-the-police-when-you-cant-speak

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