

How will the MARAC help me (and my children)?

If you have been referred to MARAC it is because the person who is referring you believes you could be at high risk of current or future harm. The MARAC can help high risk victims and survivors access more resources locally.

The MARAC can help you and some of these actions might be:

- Drawing up a safety plan to protect you
- Making sure any agencies that you approach are aware of your situation so they can support you better
- Ensuring schools do not allow your children to leave with anyone but you
- Arranging joint meetings between agencies to help coordinate any support you may need
- Assisting in emergency housing transfers if require
- Supporting you to help you move on from the abusive relationship

Complaints

Any complaints regarding your case heard at MARAC should be forwarded to:

maracni@psni.pnn.police.uk
or
MARAC Coordinator
65 Knock Road
BELFAST
BT5 6LE

Who can I talk to about Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse can affect people in all kinds of relationships, regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, faith, disability or lifestyle. Anyone, whether or not they have been referred to the MARAC, can access help and support from the following agencies:

24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline

0800 917 1414

email support: 24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org

text SUPPORT to 077 9780 5839

(open to all women and men affected by domestic violence)

Police (non emergency)

0845 600 8000

Womens Aid Federation NI

028 9024 9041

www.womensaidni.org

Men's Advisory Project (MAP)

028 9024 1929

Rainbow Project

(For Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual or Transgender)

028 9031 9030

Victim Support NI

028 9024 4039

Local Health and Social Care Trusts
e.g. GP, health visitor, midwife, social worker

PHONE 999 and ask for the Police if you are in immediate danger

"I was worried about what they would all say about me - but I came to realise that they were all there to help me."

Northern Ireland Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference MARAC

Working together to reduce
the risks for domestic
abuse victims at risk
of serious harm

How it works

Personal, Professional,
Protective Policing



Department of
Health, Social Services
and Public Safety
www.dhsspsni.gov.uk



Department of
Justice
www.djni.gov.uk

What is Domestic Violence and Abuse?

In Northern Ireland domestic violence and abuse is defined as **“threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on one person by another where they are or have been intimate partners or family members, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation”**

As well as physical violence, examples of abuse can involve:

- undermining your self-confidence,
- threats to others including children,
- controlling behaviour such as isolation from friends and family,
- restricting access to money, personal items, food, transportation or the telephone
- destruction of personal property
- stalking

Domestic violence and abuse is about a past or current partner, or a member of your family trying to have power and control over you. It can happen to anyone.

Domestic abuse includes unlawful activities such as forced marriage, ‘honour’ based crimes and female genital mutilation. Extended family members may condone or even share in the pattern of violence.

What is a MARAC?

MARAC stands for Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference. The aim is to increase the safety and well-being of the adults and children who have been exposed to domestic abuse.

It is a meeting where agencies discuss the risk of serious harm to people experiencing domestic abuse in their local area, and make

safety plans to support those at most risk.

Actions will be agreed and taken by those agencies present to reduce the risk of further violence and reduce the risk of it happening again.

If a case comes to the attention of an agency and there are concerns that require an immediate response, an Emergency MARAC will be called.

Why have a MARAC?

Only those who have been identified as being at “high” risk of harm from domestic abuse are discussed at a MARAC. The MARAC provides a way of sharing information between agencies. Sharing information means agencies can get a clearer picture of the situation and can better understand the needs of the people experiencing domestic abuse. Agencies at the MARAC then try and provide the right help to make someone safer and reduce the risk.

Who is referred to MARAC?

People are referred to MARAC because they have been identified as being at ‘high’ risk of current or future harm from domestic abuse. Normally this is because of the things an abuser is doing or the things they are saying they will do. A referral to MARAC is made to keep you safer by working with other agencies to get help and support you.

In most cases, people give their consent to be discussed at the MARAC. In a small number of cases, someone may be referred to the MARAC without their consent. This only happens where there is an urgent need to protect that person and/or their children. Individual agencies make a decision to refer someone to MARAC and they will have clear policies and procedures about how and when they do this.

Who attends the MARAC?

- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Health & Social Care Services
- Education
- NI Housing Executive
- Probation Board NI
- Women’s Aid
- Victim Support NI
- Men’s Advisory Project

Designated agencies will attend to speak on behalf of those they are supporting. For example, this could include someone from a Housing Association or voluntary or community organisation.

Do I need to attend the MARAC?

No, you do not attend the meeting itself. Workers from the agencies above attend the MARAC. The agency referring you to MARAC will voice your concerns about safety and your wishes regarding the outcome to the meeting on your behalf.

This agency will contact you after the meeting to inform you of the safety plan and the support that agencies are offering.

What about confidentiality?

The MARAC will respect your right to privacy and confidentiality. Any information resulting from the meeting will be kept secure and only shared to ensure you and your children are protected. The abuser is not aware that the MARAC is taking place and they will **not** be told about the safety plan.

Everybody at the MARAC meeting has to sign a confidentiality agreement before the meeting begins.