Suffolk LSCB has issued specific guidance to complement the statutory guidance contained in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' and it must be used when dealing with referrals relating to domestic incidents and abuse where children are members of the household where an incident has taken place, or are likely to be affected. The guidance includes the MARAC risk assessment tool and the SafeLives (formerly CAADA) ACPO DASH Risk Identification Checklist and guidance.

The SafeLives DASH Risk Identification Checklist (RIC) has been reproduced here as a 'quick guide'. The aim of the form is to:

- *help front line practitioners identify high risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking and "honour" based violence.*

- *decide which cases should be referred to MARAC and what other support might be required. A completed form becomes an active record that can be referred to in future for case management.*

- *offer a common tool to agencies that are part of the MARAC1 process and provide a shared understanding of risk in relation to domestic abuse, stalking and „honour"-based violence.*

- *enable agencies to make defensible decisions based on the evidence from extensive research of cases, including domestic homicides and "near misses" which underpins most recognised models of risk assessment.*

How to use the form:

Before completing the form for the first time we recommend that you read the full LSCB practice guidance and SafeLives guidance

These can be downloaded from
http://www.safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Dash%20with%20guidance%20FINAL.pdf

Risk is dynamic and can change very quickly. It is good practice to review the checklist after a new incident.

Recommended Referral Criteria to MARAC

1. Professional judgement: if a professional has serious concerns about a victim's situation, they should refer the case to MARAC. There will be occasions where the particular context of a case gives rise to serious concerns even if the victim has been unable to disclose the information that might highlight their risk more clearly. This could reflect extreme levels of fear, cultural barriers to disclosure, immigration issues or language barriers particularly in cases of 'honour'-based violence. This judgement

would be based on the professional's experience and/or the victim's perception of their risk even if they do not meet criteria 2 and/or 3 below.

2. 'Visible High Risk': the number of „ticks' on this checklist. If you have ticked 14 or more "yes" boxes the case would normally meet the MARAC referral criteria.

3. Potential Escalation: the number of police callouts to the victim as a result of domestic violence in the past 12 months. This criterion can be used to identify cases where there is not a positive identification of a majority of the risk factors on the list, but where abuse appears to be escalating and where it is appropriate to assess the situation more fully by sharing information at MARAC. It is common practice to start with 3 or more police callouts in a 12 month period but this will need to be reviewed depending on your local volume and your level of police reporting.

Please pay particular attention to a practitioner's professional judgement in all cases. The results from a checklist are not a definitive assessment of risk. They should provide you with a structure to inform your judgement and act as prompts to further questioning, analysis and risk management whether via a MARAC or in another way.

The responsibility for identifying your local referral threshold rests with your local MARAC.

What this form is not:

This form will provide valuable information about the risks that children are living with but it is **not a full risk assessment for children**. The presence of children increases the wider risks of domestic violence and step children are particularly at risk. If risk towards children is highlighted you should consider what referral you need to make to obtain a full assessment of the children's situation.

May 2015

SafeLives Dash risk Identification checklist for use by IDVAs and other non-police agencies[4] for identification of risks when domestic abuse, 'honour'-based violence and/or stalking are disclosed

Name of victim: Date: Restricted when complete

Please explain that the purpose of asking these questions is for the safety and protection of the individual concerned Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer. It is assumed that your main source of information is the victim. If this is **not the case**, please indicate in the right hand column	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	State source of info if not the victim (eg police officer)
1. **Has the current incident resulted in injury?** Please state what and whether this is the first injury.	☐	☐	☐	
2. **Are you very frightened?** Comment:	☐	☐	☐	
3. **What are you afraid of? Is it further injury or violence?** Please give an indication of what you think [name of abuser(s)] might do and to whom, including children. Comment:	☐	☐	☐	
4. **Do you feel isolated from family/friends?** Ie, does [name of abuser(s)] try to stop you from seeing friends/family/doctor or others? Comment:	☐	☐	☐	
5. **Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts?**	☐	☐	☐	
6. **Have you separated or tried to separate from [name of abuser(s)] within the past year?**	☐	☐	☐	
7. **Is there conflict over child contact?**	☐	☐	☐	
8. **Does [name of abuser(s)] constantly text, call, contact, follow, stalk or harass you?** Please expand to identify what and whether you believe that this is done deliberately to intimidate you? Consider the context and behaviour of what is being done.	☐	☐	☐	
9. **Are you pregnant or have you recently had a baby (within the last 18 months)?**	☐	☐	☐	
10. **Is the abuse happening more often?**	☐	☐	☐	
11. **Is the abuse getting worse?**				
12. **Does [name of abuser(s)] try to control everything you do and/or are they excessively jealous?** For example: in terms of relationships; who you see; being 'policed' at home; telling you what to wear. Consider 'honour'-based violence (HBV) and specify behaviour.				
13. **Has [name of abuser(s)] ever used weapons or objects to hurt you?**	☐	☐	☐	
14. **Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened to kill you or someone else and you believed them?** If yes, tick who: You ☐ Children ☐ Other (please specify) ☐	☐	☐	☐	

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[4] Note: This checklist is consistent with the ACPO endorsed risk assessment model DASH 2009 for the police service.

Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer.	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	State source of info
15. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever attempted to strangle / choke / suffocate / drown you?	☐	☐	☐	
16. Does [name of abuser(s)] do or say things of a sexual nature that make you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else? If someone else, specify who.	☐	☐	☐	
17. Is there any other person who has threatened you or who you are afraid of? If yes, please specify whom and why. Consider extended family if HBV.	☐	☐	☐	
18. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has hurt anyone else? Consider HBV. Please specify whom, including the children, siblings or elderly relatives: 　　Children ☐ 　　Another family member ☐ 　　Someone from a previous relationship ☐ 　　Other (please specify) ☐	☐	☐	☐	
19. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever mistreated an animal or the family pet?	☐	☐	☐	
20. Are there any financial issues? For example, are you dependent on [name of abuser(s)] for money/have they recently lost their job/other financial issues?	☐	☐	☐	
21. Has [name of abuser(s)] had problems in the past year with drugs (prescription or other), alcohol or mental health leading to problems in leading a normal life? If yes, please specify which and give relevant details if known. 　　Drugs ☐ 　　Alcohol ☐ 　　Mental health ☐	☐	☐	☐	
22. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened or attempted suicide?	☐	☐	☐	
23. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever broken bail/an injunction and/or formal agreement for when they can see you and/or the children? You may wish to consider this in relation to an ex-partner of the perpetrator if relevant. 　　Bail conditions ☐ 　　Non Molestation/Occupation Order ☐ 　　Child contact arrangements ☐ 　　Forced Marriage Protection Order ☐ 　　Other ☐	☐	☐	☐	
24. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history? If yes, please specify: 　　Domestic abuse ☐ 　　Sexual violence ☐ 　　Other violence ☐ 　　Other ☐	☐	☐	☐	
Total 'yes' responses				

Name of victim: Date: Restricted when complete

For consideration by professional

Is there any other relevant information (from victim or professional) which may increase risk levels? Consider victim's situation in relation to disability, substance misuse, mental health issues, cultural / language barriers, 'honour'- based systems, geographic isolation and minimisation. **Are they willing to engage with your**	
Consider abuser's occupation / interests. Could this give them unique access to weapons? Describe.	
What are the victim's greatest priorities to address their safety?	

Do you believe that there are reasonable grounds for referring this case to MARAC?		Yes ☐ No ☐	
If yes, have you made a referral?		Yes ☐ No ☐	
Signed		**Date**	
Do you believe that there are risks facing the children in the family?		Yes ☐ No ☐	
If yes, please confirm if you have made a referral to safeguard the children?	Yes ☐ No ☐	**Date referral made**	
Signed		**Date**	
Name			

Practitioner's notes