

MARAC Coordination in the West Midlands is
changing.

Welcome to the MARAC Transformation Project

On 1st April 2019, West Midlands Police, in partnership with MARAC partners across the region, will embark upon an innovative, regional approach to MARAC Coordination. Together, we will improve the way we manage risk, ensuring a positive, consistent experience for our victims, ultimately aiming to reduce reoffending and end the repeat victimisation of our region's highest risk victims of Domestic Abuse.

This will happen with the support of a team of four MARAC Coordinators and six MARAC Administrators, all based within West Midlands Police. The team will operate across the region, providing a comprehensive coordination and support function that is consistent and resilient.

Birmingham

Walsall

Dudley

Sandwell

Coventry

Wolverhampton

Solihull

The first 12 months of this project will present a period of transition, change and learning, both for the MARAC Coordination team, and the wider MARAC partners.

Many of those changes will come into effect from 1st April 2019 and the following slides will support you in understanding what they are and how they might affect you.

REFERRING TO MARAC

- As of 1st April 2019, only the West Midlands MARAC Referral Form will be accepted as a MARAC referral for any of the seven local authority areas in the region.
- The form is being circulated with this guidance.
- **All** other forms will be rejected and returned with advice.
- For Police partners, the new form must be submitted via SharePoint, a link and training will be provided separately to those teams.
- For all other partners, the new form must be saved in Microsoft Word and sent securely to marac_referrals@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk, either using secure email, or by password protecting the document (see the password guidance attached with this circulation).

REFERRING TO MARAC CONTINUED...

- On receipt, your referral form will be processed by one of our six MARAC administrators, where they will assess threshold and the quality of the information provide. Both Police and non-Police referrals will be assessed in the same way.
- The whole administration team will process all referrals and so you may hear from more than one person over time.
- If threshold is met, or professional judgement is clearly explained and all of the required information is available, the referral will be accepted and listed for the next available MARAC meeting.
- Once assessed, you will be contacted by the administrator to either confirm the listing and invite you to the meeting, or to resolve any issues with the content of the form.
- Once accepted, the administration team will also alert the relevant IDVA service to the case being on MARAC, and ask them to offer support to the victim if they are not already doing so.
- Partners should still make IDVA referrals where the victim has asked for or accepted the offer of such support, and document this on the referral form.

REPEAT MARAC REFERRALS

- Repeat MARAC referrals which meet the definition of a repeat under Safe Lives guidance ([here](#)) and require further multiagency safeguarding input should be referred into MARAC in the same way as normal MARAC referrals. There is an option on the form to declare the case as a repeat.
- There are currently high numbers of repeat incidents which technically meet the Safe Lives definition of a repeat, but don't require further safeguarding coming into West Midlands Police.
- In order to manage this, these types of repeats will be listed on the MARAC agenda "for information only".
- They will *only* be discussed, if, on receipt of the agenda, another partner provides further evidence that the case is improperly safeguarded and requires discussion. This must be raised *before* the meeting to allow partners time to research the case themselves.
- "Information only" cases will still be logged as MARAC repeats on all databases and monitored in line with on-going work around serial perpetrators and repeat victims.

MARAC TRANSFERS

- If you become aware of a MARAC victim leaving your local authority area within 12 months of the meeting, you have a duty of care to ensure the case is transferred to the new MARAC.
- The good news is, your new MARAC administration team will be happy to process all MARAC transfers on your behalf.
- Once you become aware of a victim moving to a new local authority area, simply phone or email the team and request a transfer with the following details:
 - Victim name and DOB
 - Old and new address
 - Details of who in the household is moving with them
 - and finally, any safeguarding concerns at the new address which you may be aware of
- We will list all “Outgoing MARAC Transfers” at the end of each MARAC agenda so that partners are kept informed of such changes.

RECEIVING THE AGENDA

- The agenda will include the information needed to be able to research the victim, offender and child in the case. It will also tell you who has made the referral and whether the case is a repeat. Information around the actual grounds for referral will be shared at the meeting.
- Wherever possible, the schedule of sending the agenda will reflect current arrangements.
- Each agency currently has different email systems and ways they can safely receive the agenda.
- Over the next 12 months, your MARAC Coordinators will be working with you to get all MARAC partners access to secure emailing systems.
- We know that in the mean time we must work with what we have and so the agenda will be sent in one of two ways:
 - 1. Securely from West Midlands Police email to your secure email such as CJSM, GCSX, GSI etc.
 - 2. Un-securely from West Midlands Police email, but with a password encrypting the document (see attached guidance.)

RECEIVING THE MINUTES

- The MARAC minutes will now arrive as a PDF document which cannot be edited.
- Each case will have its own PDF file which will include the original referring information, comprehensive minutes and actions recorded by one of our administrators.
- The minutes will all be sent in one email (where size allows) and will be sent in two ways, similar to the agenda:
 - 1. Securely from West Midlands Police email to your secure email such as CJSM, GCSX, GSI etc.
 - 2. Un-securely from West Midlands Police email as a password-protected zip file. This is one file which will be compressed and encrypted, allowing us to send the information securely. You will have to unzip and extract the files on receipt (see the attached guidance.)

ATTENDING MARAC MEETINGS

- All MARAC referrers will be expected to attend the meeting to present their case. This is an expectation in addition to the usual MARAC representative, but it may be that the referrer arranges for that rep to present the case for them. Your Chair asks simply that the person presenting the case knows the case and can answer questions about it. Sending someone who cannot do that is unfair on them and on the partners around the table.
- Cases with no referrer in attendance will not be heard.
- Those wishing to attend to either present a case, or attend only to hear a specific case will now be able to contact the MARAC team on the usual email to request a time slot *in advance* of the meeting.
- Attendees showing up on the day without a timeslot and expecting cases to be moved for them is strongly discouraged and the advice given to Chairs is to decline such requests, in fairness to those who have timeslots booked.
- The way the MARAC meeting looks now, and how it will look from 1st April 2019 is not going to be significantly different. You may see operational changes such as name cards, different seating arrangements etc. All of these will be with a view to improving the flow of the meeting.

RESEARCHING CASES BEFORE THE MEETING

- All MARAC referrers will be expected to attend the meeting with cases fully researched.
- The agenda will be sent out at least five working days before the meeting to allow time for this to be completed.
- Data quality is imperative to the success of the MARAC and ensuring victim safety.
- Researching in advance of the MARAC allows for any inconsistencies to be clarified before the information is presented. It also lowers the risk of incorrect information being presented or important detail being missed.
- Additionally, searching for case updates in real time causes delays to the case hearing. The MARAC group should not be expected to wait for fellow representatives to find a case, and then differentiate through the relevant and irrelevant information they find before conveying. This is counter-productive and unnecessary.
- Attendees will no longer be permitted to search for case updates in real time using their laptops, tablets or phones. Research is to be completed in advance and devices should only be used where a specific piece of information from your pre-prepared update requires further clarification.

ACTION TRACKING

- Once the team are in place and have received training, all MARAC actions will be robustly tracked by the MARAC administration team, supported by the MARAC Coordinators.
- Actions are the responsibility of the attending representative to escalate/disseminate as appropriate and feed back outcomes.
- Partners should start thinking now about who is the right person to appoint as a single point of contact for MARAC action tracking.
- Actions will be tracked regularly and incomplete actions will be escalated in a number of ways.
- Further guidance around this will be circulated in due course.

DEPUTY MARAC CHAIRS

- We will soon be giving the opportunity to individuals across the region to train to become Deputy MARAC Chairs.
- This training will equip attendees with the essential skills needed to:
 - Implement and sustain an effective MARAC, ensuring that all appropriate agencies are engaged, that they are identifying high-risk victims and producing robust action plans
 - Reflect on local circumstances influencing your MARAC and address these with the assistance of SafeLives
 - Increase the support available to high-risk victims
- Attendees should be experienced in managing risks around Domestic Abuse and of supervisory level within their organisation.
- Trained Chairs will be asked to commit to Chairing a minimum number of meetings per year, according to their availability and the local frequency.
- Those interested should contact the Senior MARAC Coordinator at laura.rogers@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk for more information.

FUTURE PLANS

- The next 12 months will see lots of working going on behind the scenes of the new team, including but not limited to
 - Your new MARAC Coordinators delivering a regional training model around MARAC and DASH
 - Implementation of a victim feedback model to properly hear and review the victim's voice
 - Improving the type and quality of data collected around MARAC
 - Improving systems and the ways in which we share information
 - Investing more time and resource into educating agencies where referrals rates are lower than expected
- We invite thoughts and ideas from across the region and will take all feedback seriously. MARAC Coordination may indeed now sit within one MARAC agency, however MARAC remains a multiagency function and the expertise and input of our partners is more important than ever during this period of transformation.

YOUR MARAC CONTACTS

- For all and any queries related to the MARAC Transformation Project, please contact the Senior MARAC Coordinator for advice:
 - Laura Rogers
 - Laura.rogers@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk
 - 07760991794
- For all general queries around MARAC referrals and MARAC meetings:
 - Marac_referrals@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk
 - 101 ext 811 3048
- On 1st April 2019, each area will have a dedicated MARAC Coordinator and access to our six administrators, who are all going through the recruitment process at this time. Full details of the wider MARAC team will be published in due course.