

AAFDA caseworkers have been providing specialist help for families facing these reviews since they became law in April 2011. With expert knowledge of domestic abuse, they have all been trained to be chairs of Domestic Homicide Reviews. They know how a review should be conducted.

AAFDA is a member of the national panel that decides if a Domestic Homicide Review is of an acceptable standard and can be published. AAFDA's Chief Executive is an appointed 'reader', which means that he provides expert assessments of reviews to this national panel.

The Chief Executive of AAFDA instigated the Pemberton Homicide Review, described as a "gold standard" by one expert. This review was a pilot for the Domestic Homicide Reviews that followed.

### Some reasons why you may wish to contribute to the review:

- Your input can help the reviewers see the tragedy through the eyes of the victim, their family and friends. This can help them to make the best recommendations.
- You may know of attempts your family member made to get help from organisations; those carrying out the review could be unaware of these.
- Many families say they want to help prevent similar tragedies occurring. Your contribution may help officials to gain a complete understanding of what happened, so giving them the best opportunity to help other victims.

[www.aafda.org.uk](http://www.aafda.org.uk)

### What else does AAFDA do?

Helps public and voluntary bodies via training to:

- Improve their services to prevent domestic abuse.
- Interact with families after domestic homicide.
- Improve the way these fatalities are reviewed.

### Feedback from families on AAFDA's work:

*"Without your help and support, we could not have progressed in gaining a greater understanding of what further questions we should be asking."*

*"Thank you so much for this letter, you have written it very sensitively and very thoroughly. These are all areas that have been confusing for us, and you have explained each option clearly."*

*"We will always remember how AAFDA helped us understand the potential for inquests to uncover information and enabled us to get involved and influence the scope of that inquiry."*

If you wish to find out more about how AAFDA can help you, please do get in touch

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AAFDA is a registered charity no. 1125973

IN MEMORY OF JULIA & WILL PEMBERTON



**Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse**

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## SPECIALIST HELP FOR FAMILIES WITH REVIEWS & INQUIRIES AFTER DOMESTIC HOMICIDE

E-mail [info@aafda.org.uk](mailto:info@aafda.org.uk)

Phone **07768 386922**

(we can call you back)

[www.aafda.org.uk](http://www.aafda.org.uk)

AAFDA, helping the victim's  
voice to be heard

## What is AAFDA?

Formed in April 2008, AAFDA (Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse) is a charity that helps families after domestic homicide. Within AAFDA there is personal experience of domestic abuse and homicide. We listen to families tell their stories and provide information, guidance, support and, where appropriate, advocacy and practical help.

## Some of the main reviews or inquiries after domestic homicide:

An Inquest will be opened. If there is a criminal trial the Inquest will be adjourned and will often not be resumed after the trial as the Coroner may deem the trial was sufficient. But there are circumstances when the Inquest will be resumed. If there is no trial, the Inquest will be continued. The purpose of an Inquest is to establish (where possible) the medical cause of death, who died, where and when they died and how they came by their death. An Inquest is a public court hearing which also comes to a conclusion about the death, for example unlawful killing. Please contact us for more details on Inquests.

If the person killed was over 16, there should be a Domestic Homicide Review. If a child was hurt or killed, there may be a Serious Case Review (there are also Adult Safeguarding Reviews). Depending on the extent of any mental health services involvement, there may be a Mental Health Inquiry. Sometimes these reviews are combined. The main purpose of these reviews is to learn from the tragedy so that others are protected. Sometimes, the statutory agencies hold internal reviews too.

Separately, if police have been involved, there may be an Independent Police Complaints Commission Inquiry.

[www.aafda.org.uk](http://www.aafda.org.uk)

## If you are facing one of these reviews, this is how AAFDA can help you (some of this information is different for an Inquest):

- Answer questions and explain the nature and purpose of these reviews.
- Explain what the review will do and how you can contribute.
- Accompany you to meet those conducting the review if you decide to contribute information to the review team.
- Represent your views to the review team should you not wish to have contact.
- Be available for you to contact throughout the review period.
- Once the report of the review team is available, discuss the contents with you.
- Be available once the review / Inquest is over, to offer a listening ear and support.
- Give guidance and help on dealing with media.
- Recommend other organisations that may be able to help.

**See the film on the front page of our website which shows how we help families with these reviews.**

[www.aafda.org.uk](http://www.aafda.org.uk)

## Why families may need our help.

Understanding a review process and what it leads to will probably not be easy at this time. You may have lots of questions and there is likely to be jargon we can explain.

Participation is voluntary in most reviews after domestic homicide. AAFDA understands these reviews and can help you to work out if you want to be involved and how to contribute if you decide to take part. These reviews can take place over many months and sometimes over a year or more. They usually result in written reports which are published unless there are compelling reasons why they should not be. (There are specific rules for an Inquest).

## What does AAFDA know about these reviews?

AAFDA has a very good understanding of the main reviews conducted after domestic homicide. In terms of your involvement, many aspects of Domestic Homicide Reviews, Mental Health Inquiries, Serious Case Reviews etc, are similar.

We have particular expertise in Domestic Homicide Reviews and helped to design their process. The Home Office asked AAFDA to help write the statutory guidance that supports those conducting these reviews and to write leaflets to inform the families and friends of victims. The statutory guidance and the leaflets can be seen on AAFDA's website.

**Centre of Excellence for reviews after domestic homicide and for specialist peer support.**

[www.aafda.org.uk](http://www.aafda.org.uk)