



**Committed to Justice
and Safety**

**A Guide for Victims of Domestic
Violence & Stalking**

Katherine Fernandez Rundle
STATE ATTORNEY
Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Miami-Dade County

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of controlling behavior by one person who has or has had a personal, intimate or family relationship with another person. Domestic Violence may include making threats to you, slapping, choking or pushing, holding you down, kicking, forcing or pressuring you to have sex when you don't want to, or any other types of unwanted behavior. If any of these things have happened to you, you may have feelings of helplessness, fear, shame, guilt and anger. You may blame yourself for the things that are happening and feel responsible for what happens to your abuser. There may be other problems in your home, such as lack of money and worry for children or other family members, that make it hard to leave an abusive relationship.

Domestic violence can happen to anyone, regardless of religious, social, economic, ethnic or educational background. Domestic violence happens to people of all ages and in every community.

Please remember that you are not alone! There are people and agencies willing and able to help you.

How do I create a safety plan?

There are no easy answers to ensure safety, only helpful tips. Safety in the home, workplace, and areas of frequent travel should all be considered.

HOME

- Add alarm system to your home or apartment.
- Trim bushes and trees around home to eliminate or reduce hiding places.
- Place security pins in windows and sliding glass doors.
- Install bars across the center of sliding glass doors.
- Make sure deadbolts are secured with screws at least two inches long.
- Attach motion-sensor lights to outside of home.
- Install locks on bedroom doors.
- Install panoramic peepholes on entry doors.
- Keep a cellular phone with you at all times.
- Keep important documents (birth certificates, Social Security Numbers) in a security box or safe location.
- Keep an "escape bag" with necessary daily items at the home of a trusted friend.

CAR

- Look inside and underneath car before entering.
- Vary the routes you take to places of frequent travel.
- Drive with your doors locked at all times.
- Always leave enough space between you and the car in front of you to quickly change lanes.

WORK

- Make sure your co-workers are aware of your situation.
- If possible, vary your work schedule.
- Have someone else record your voicemail message, so that it is not your own voice.
- Have someone walk you to and from your car.
- If possible, eliminate times you are working by yourself.
- Instruct co-workers at your work place to not disclose any information about you or communicate to a third party.

PUBLIC

- Vary your daily routine.
- Tell only trusted individuals about your future plans.
- If you have an Injunction for Protection or other type of restraining order, carry it with you at all times.
- Avoid isolated places, such as alleyways, restrooms, etc.

What is Stalking?

Florida Statute 784.048 states, "Any person who willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly follows or harasses another person commits the offense of stalking". Harassing behaviors may include vandalism, annoying or threatening phone calls, following or other violations of protective orders, sending unwanted letters or cards, leaving you gifts, showing up at your workplace, home, or school, or attempting to obtain information about you from others.

TYPES OF STALKING

Simple Obsessional

This type of stalker is the most common. It is usually a male who knows the victim as an ex-spouse, ex-lover or former boss who begins a campaign of harassment against the victim. The stalking behavior begins either after the relationship goes bad, or has ended, or there is a perception of mistreatment.

Love Obsessional

This stalker is a stranger to the victim, but is obsessed, and thus begins a campaign of harassment to make the victim aware of the stalker's existence. This type of person often stalks a celebrity or public figure, but can also become obsessed with a bank teller or grocery store clerk.

Erotomania

This stalker is often female and falsely believes that the victim is in love with her and, but for some external influence, they would be together. The victim may be someone rich or famous or in a position of power, such as an employer, movie star, or political figure. In this situation, those who are close to the victim (i.e., a spouse or lover who is perceived as "being in the way") may be the most at risk.

Shelters

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTERS

- Advocates For Victims North/Safespace ..(305) 758-2546
- Advocates For Victims South/Safespace...(305) 247-4249
- Women in Distress(954) 760-9800
- The Lodge.....(305) 693-1170

WOMEN'S SHELTERS

- Missionaries of Charity (Mother Teresa)
724 NW 17th St.(305) 326-0032
- Miami Rescue Mission
2250 NW 1st Ave.(305) 571-2250
- Salvation Army
1907 NW 38th St.(305) 637-6720

MEN'S SHELTERS

- Camillus House
726 NE 1st Ave. (305) 374-1065 ext 414/428
- Miami Rescue Mission
2020 NW 1st Ave.(305) 571-2211
- Salvation Army
1907 NW 38th St.(305) 637-6720

Important Numbers and Hotlines

- Emergency 911
- Advocates For Victims North/Safespace (305) 758-2546
- Advocates For Victims South/Safespace .(305) 247-4249
- 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline.....(305) 349-5888
- Switchboard of Miami(305) 358-4357
- Florida Abuse Hotline..... 1-800-96-ABUSE

Other Referrals

LEGAL REFERRALS

- Legal Aid Society
123 NW 1st Ave., Miami.....(305) 579-5733
- Legal Services of Greater Miami
3000 Biscayne Blvd., 5th floor, Miami.....(305) 576-0080
10720 Caribbean Blvd., Suite 400,
Cutler Ridge.....(305) 232-9680

FINANCIAL & JOB ASSISTANCE

- Bureau of Crimes Compensation1-800-226-6667
- Jobs for Miami Training Academy & Workforce
7900 NE 2nd Avenue, 6th floor(305) 759-6511

Where can I obtain an injunction for protection?

Lawson E. Thomas Courthouse Center
175 NW 1st Ave., Mezzanine Floor, Miami. (305) 349-5888

South Dade Justice Center
10710 SW 211th St., Room 1306, Cutler Ridge. (305) 252-5807

North Dade Justice Center
15555 Biscayne Blvd., Room 103, Miami. (305) 354-8736

Hialeah Courthouse Center
11 East 6th St., Hialeah (305) 520-4031

Office of the Attorney General Address Confidentiality Program

The State of Florida's Address Confidentiality Program assists victims of domestic violence who are attempting escape from actual or threatened violence through relocation. The participants are provided with an address designated by the Office of the Attorney General as a substitute mailing address in order to prevent their assailants from finding them. Through use of the substitute mailing address, program participants receive cost-free, security mail forwarding. The Attorney General serves as each client's legal agent for receipt of mail and service of process. Victims who have left an abusive situation may apply. Please contact 1-800-226-6667 for further information (Office of the Attorney General).

Do not leave this or any other handouts where the abuser can find them!

* In accordance with the American Disabilities Act, persons needing reasonable accommodations to attend any criminal proceeding should contact their Victim/Witness Counselor or Secretary or for the hearing impaired, call (TDD) 1-800-955-8771 via Florida Relay Service.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2004-WF-BX-0001 awarded by the Violence Against Women Grants Office, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department or the Florida Department of Children and Families.

The State Attorney's Office

recognizes the importance of stopping domestic violence.

The Domestic Crimes Units and their staff are dedicated to assessing your needs and supporting you through the criminal justice process.

We have units at the main State Attorney's Office, E.R. Graham Building, and at the Courthouse Center, in addition to several branch locations, that handle felony and misdemeanor domestic violence crimes. Paralegals and Victim/Witness Counselors are available to help you.

There are two ways in which cases are brought to the attention of these specialized units:

Walk-In Complaints are when any citizen comes to the State Attorney's Office after a domestic violence incident where there has been no arrest. A paralegal will take your sworn testimony regarding the incident, and a determination will be made after an investigation as to whether or not we are able to go forth with criminal charges.

After an Arrest, you may be notified to appear on a scheduled date and time to give your sworn testimony regarding the incident. This is called a Pre-filing Conference.

MAIN LOCATIONS

E.R. Graham Building
(Felony Arrest Cases & Walk-in Complaints)
1350 NW 12 Ave. (305) 547-0150

Lawson E. Thomas Courthouse Center
(Misdemeanor Arrest Cases & Walk-In Complaints)
175 NW 1st Ave. (305) 349-5830

BRANCH LOCATIONS

(Walk-in Misdemeanor Complaints only)

Hialeah Courthouse Center
11 East 6th St., 2nd Floor
(305) 520-4039

North Dade Justice Center
15555 Biscayne Blvd., 2nd Floor
(305) 354-8725

South Dade Justice Center
10710 SW 211th St., Suite 1901
(305) 234-1430

Miami Beach Center
1130 Washington Ave.
(305) 535-4210

Joseph Caleb Center
5400 NW 22nd Ave.
(305) 636-2240