

Domestic Violence

If you are the victim of domestic violence, you are not alone. On average, 20 people are physically abused by an intimate partner every minute in the United States. One in eight women in Oregon is abused by a domestic partner each year. Domestic violence is a serious crime that can include physical, sexual, psychological, financial and/or emotional abuse inflicted by a current or former intimate partner or family member.

Domestic violence is usually not a single incident and often becomes more severe and frequent over time. Besides physical violence, abusers may use emotional or verbal abuse, financial abuse, blaming tactics, isolation, and threats to maintain power and control over their partners. Threats of violence, suicide, or taking children away are very common tactics used by batterers. Often the abuse or stalking behavior will become more severe if the victim tries to leave the relationship.

The emotional effects of domestic violence can often be more devastating than the physical assaults. Domestic violence affects every member of the family. Children can be physically and emotionally harmed by exposure to the abuse between adults in the home.

You have the right not to be abused. Remember that domestic violence is a *choice* made by the abuser and it is a crime.



The Criminal Justice System

This brochure will help you understand how domestic violence cases are handled in the criminal justice system in Washington County.

Law Enforcement

When police respond to a report of domestic violence, the officer is required by law to arrest the abuser if they have good reason to believe that they have committed a crime of domestic violence against a domestic partner or an adult family member.

District Attorney's Office

Local law enforcement agencies forward their reports to the Washington County District Attorney's Office to determine if there is enough evidence to file charges.

Several factors are considered when a decision is made whether to prosecute, and for which crimes. These factors may include the existence of injuries, the use of a weapon, threats made by the abuser, the presence or involvement of children, and past history of abusive behavior by the offender.

The decision to prosecute is made by the District Attorney's Office and not by the victim. Only the State of Oregon, can press or drop charges in a criminal case.

No Contact and Conditions of Release

Whether the defendant is in custody or out on bail/release, there is a **no contact order** with the victim in place. This means the defendant **cannot have any direct or indirect contact with the victim** while the case is pending. No contact means no in-person, phone, letter, text, email, internet, or third-party contact. The no contact condition is for the safety and protection of the victim. Violations of the no contact order should be reported to the police at 503-629-0111 (non-emergency). In an emergency situation, call 911.

VINE is a program that can notify you of the defendant's release from custody, transfer to another facility, or discharge from supervision (probation/parole/post-prison supervision). **You must sign up to receive notice.** You may register to receive such notice through the Oregon VINE service by calling **1-877-674-8463** or by visiting the website www.vinelink.com.

Sentencing

In cases of domestic abuse, sentences are aimed at intervention and prevention. Typically, a period of formal probation is ordered, requiring the defendant to report to a probation officer. The defendant is usually ordered to participate in a batterers' treatment program. The defendant may also be required to complete treatment for alcohol or drug abuse, mental health counseling, anger, and/or parenting classes. In most cases, the Court orders that the defendant cannot have contact with the victim until it is approved by the probation officer. The Court decides whether jail time or a fine will be imposed.

Safety Planning

If you or someone you know is being abused, educate yourself in ways to help them to be safe. Provide unconditional emotional support during this difficult time. Do not force them to leave until they are ready. Leaving an abusive relationship without a plan is not always the safest solution for the victim. The violence may escalate during or after the time that the victim tries to leave the relationship.

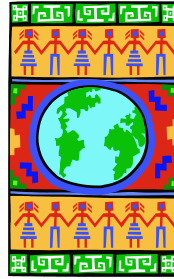
Once a person has decided to leave an abusive relationship, a safety plan should be made. The person should know where to go, how to leave, and whether the children will go with them. Before leaving, it may be good to pack a suitcase of necessities and put it in a safe place that is not in the home, but is readily available for quick pick-up. Things to include in this emergency suitcase are:

- Change of clothes
- Cash, credit cards and bank books
- Keys
- Identification: birth certificates, driver's license, and social security cards for yourself and each child
- Copies of essential documents: insurance papers, custody papers, restraining orders
- Important medications
- Phone numbers and other personal items

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT

The abuser is responsible for the abuse. There is no excuse for violence. Violence is a choice and there is no one else to blame.

Community Resources



- Emergency**.....9-1-1
- Non-Emergency Police**503-629-0111
- Oregon VINE Service**.....1-877-674-8463
Automated notification of offender status
- CCVS: Center for Counseling and Victim Services**.....503-846-3020
Counseling, Support Groups, Education Classes
- DVRC: Domestic Violence Resource Center**
Crisis Hotline (24/7).....503-469-8620
- Family Justice Center of Washington County**503-640-5352
Restraining orders, counseling and other community wrap around services
- Oregon Law Center**503-640-4115
- Call to Safety (formerly Portland Women's Crisis Line)**
Crisis Hotline (24/7).....503-235-5333
Shelter, housing, support groups
- National Domestic Violence Hotline**
.....1-800-799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233)
.....1-800-787-3224 (TTY)

Rev 6/2018

INFORMATION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Washington County District Attorney's Office Victim Assistance Program

Kevin Barton
District Attorney

Justice Services Building
150 N First Avenue, MS 40, Ste 300
Hillsboro, Oregon 97124

503-846-8671

www.WashingtonCountyDA.org