

Calling the Police



Sometimes the best way to keep yourself safe is to call the police -- especially if you feel like you're in immediate danger, your restraining order has been violated or you've been injured by your partner. If you have any doubt about safety, you can call the police -- even if you haven't been physically hurt or touched in any way.

What Can the Police Do?

While you may be hesitant or afraid to call the police, they may be able to help and protect you when you need it the most. Police may:

- Stop the abuse long enough for you to escape to a safe place.
- Give you a temporary restraining order, or if not, refer you to the right court agency where you can ask for one, depending on your state.
- Arrest your abusive partner for hurting you or violating your restraining order.
- Help you document the abuse, including taking pictures of your injuries and interviewing witnesses.
- Help you find further assistance in your community by connecting you to a local domestic violence shelter or agency.

What Can I Do?

If the police are contacted, remember these important tips:

- When you call 911 or your local police department, tell them you're in danger and need help immediately. If the police don't come soon, call again and tell them that it's your second call.
- If you have a restraining or protective order, tell them about it when you call.
- Once the police arrive, show them the protective order.
- Get the officers' NAMES and BADGE NUMBERS.
- Ask the police to take pictures of your injuries and interview any witnesses.
- Show the police any threatening text messages or emails from your abusive partner.
- Allow the police to listen to any harassing voicemails left on your phone.
- Insist they file a report and get its number. If they refuse to take a report, go to your local police department and file one yourself that day or the next business day.
- If you believe you'll be unsafe once the police leave, get information from them about local agencies you can go to for help. You can also ask about getting an emergency restraining order that can help protect you immediately.
- On the next business day, call the police department to get the name and phone number of the detective or investigator assigned to your case. Call them to get more information.

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