



Dear Fellow Delawarean,

When it comes to protecting our families, safeguarding our wallets, knowing our rights as victims of crime, or understanding how the law can make our communities better; information is the key. Equipped with knowledge, we can make choices that greatly reduce our risk of becoming a victim of domestic violence or fraud, and we can learn how to get help if we are mistreated.

The mission of the Delaware Department of Justice is to protect Delawareans from harm by enforcing the law and being your advocate. We're here to help you, and also to give you the information you need to help yourself and your family. Inside this brochure, you will find useful tips on avoiding becoming a victim of domestic violence, what to do if you are victimized, and ways to contact the Department of Justice for further assistance. Together, we can keep Delaware safe and strong.

Beau Biden
Attorney General

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Breaking the... **Cycle of Domestic Violence**

Protecting Delaware's Communities



Delaware Department of Justice



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Family Division

- New Castle County • (302) 577-8400
- Kent County • (302) 739-7641
- Sussex County • (302) 856-5353
- Para asistencia en Espanol • (877) 851-0482

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Types of Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is not just behaviors that lead to physical injury. It is a pattern of behaviors used to gain power and control over another person. Some examples include...

- **Isolation:** Preventing or interfering in relationships with family and friends
- **Physical:** Any form of assault committed against a spouse/significant other, or children or pets.
- **Sexual:** Engaging in any form of sexual activity without consent is abuse even if the abuser is the spouse/intimate partner.
- **Emotional:** Using emotions as a weapon to have power or control over the spouse/intimate partner.
- **Economic:** Using money to keep the spouse/significant other financially powerless.



Break the Cycle!

The cycle of domestic violence:

1. **Tension-building stage:** The batterer becomes increasingly tense, angry, verbally abusive and may commit some minor physical abuse or destroy the victim's personal property. The victim blames himself/herself for the batterer's behavior.
2. **Explosive stage:** The batterer's violence spirals out of control and out of proportion to the situation. People trying to help the victim may also be in danger during this stage.
3. **Honeymoon stage:** The batterer apologizes to the victim and often promises the violence will never happen again. Despite the batterer's promises during the honeymoon stage, without help from counseling and other outside sources, nothing will prevent the violence from happening again.

24-Hour Hotlines

New Castle County • (302) 762-6110
Kent/Sussex Counties • (302) 422-8058
Abriendo Puertas (Latinas) • (302) 745-9874
Child Abuse Report Line • (800) 292-9582

Department of Justice Domestic Violence Unit

New Castle County • (302) 577-8500
Kent County • (302) 739-4211
Sussex County • (302) 856-5352

Department of Justice Victim/Witness Services Unit

(800) 870-1790

Victims' Compensation Assistance Program

(302)255-1770
(800)464-HELP

DOs and DON'Ts

What to do if you think someone you know is being abused:

- If you hear sounds of violence, call the police. Don't put yourself in danger or wait for the situation to resolve itself.
- Secretly provide the suspected victim with the telephone number to a local shelter or counseling and support services. You can say that you are passing them out to everyone you know.
- Offer your support. Many victims may feel isolated, fearful, and/or angry. Being a good listener can help.

What NOT to do if you think someone is being abused:

- Don't try to break up the fight. Leave the police work to the police. Call 911.
- Don't confront the batterer. Instead, urge the victim to call for help.
- Don't jump to conclusions about why a victim may be staying in a relationship. No one likes being abused. It often takes a long time for a victim to leave.
- Don't offer to let a victim of domestic violence stay in your house without thinking about it first. You could be placing your own family in danger. Offer to help get a victim into a shelter instead.