

Family Violence Get Safe and Get Help

What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is when someone in your household is hurt by someone who is or was a partner, spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend, or other part of your household or family.

Domestic violence includes hitting, hurting, threatening, or making you feel afraid by following you or preventing you from moving around freely.

You and your family deserve free and confidential help.

There are people who can help you for free. They can help with:

- Crisis counseling
- Safety planning
- Finding a shelter
- Finding a support group
- Advocating with the police
- Referring you to other services such as legal services

Help is available in every county in Ohio. The Ohio Domestic Violence Network has a list of the domestic violence shelters in each Ohio county on its website, www.odvn.org.

If you need to contact an advocate immediately, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 24 hours a day, at 800.799.7233, or go to www.thehotline.org.

IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL 911 RIGHT AWAY.

How is domestic violence different from other types of abuse?

Domestic violence is a defined legal term and means something different than emotional and economic abuse. Those types of abuse are harmful too.

Domestic violence is about safety because a current partner, former partner, family member, or household member is doing something to make you unsafe. This can be physical violence, the threat of physical violence, or stalking.

While other behaviors like name-calling, economic control, and other forms of intimidation can be just as harmful, they may not meet the legal definition of domestic abuse. If you are not sure if something is domestic violence, you should call your local police department or domestic violence shelter.



What can the law do about domestic violence?

Domestic violence is a crime in Ohio. Reporting domestic violence to a police officer can trigger a series of steps that brings about criminal prosecution and brings you help.

- In a criminal case, a survivor of domestic violence can ask for a "Temporary Restraining Order" from the prosecutor or victim's advocate. This orders the attacker to stay away from you while the criminal case proceeds.
- Legal aid firms like SEOLS and domestic violence shelters can help with a "Civil Protection Order." This orders the attacker to stay away from you for a set period of time. You can get a Civil Protection Order even if there is a criminal case against the attacker. As a part of the Civil Protection Order, you may also get sole possession of a house or a car, temporary custody of a shared child, an order for the attacker to stay away from schools and workplaces, and monetary support.
- If you make your local Child Support Enforcement Agency aware of the domestic violence, you can get child support. You can keep your whereabouts hidden. You do not have to cooperate in locating the person who owes child support.
- If you make Job and Family Services aware of the domestic violence, you may not be required to work to receive cash benefits. Also, you may be able to collect those benefits longer than you otherwise would.
- If you receive subsidized housing benefits (including a housing voucher, public housing, or tax-credit housing), you cannot be evicted because of the domestic violence. You can also request a transfer to a different unit if your safety is threatened.

**The information on this flyer is not legal advice.
If you are seeking representation or legal advice, please contact SEOLS.
An attorney-client relationship does not exist between you and SEOLS.**

How to contact SEOLS:

Athens Office **740.594.3558**
800.686.3669
 Serving Athens, Gallia, Meigs, Morgan, Noble,
 Vinton, and Washington Counties

Chillicothe Office **740.773.0012**
800.686.3668
 Serving Fairfield, Fayette, Hocking, Jackson,
 Pickaway, Pike, and Ross Counties

Newark Office **740.345.0850**
888.831.9412
 Serving Knox, Licking, Muskingum, and Perry
 Counties

New Philadelphia Office **330.339.3998**
800.686.3670
 Serving Coshocton, Guernsey, Holmes, and
 Tuscarawas Counties

Portsmouth Office **740.354.7563**
800.837.2508
 Serving Adams, Lawrence, and Scioto Counties

Steubenville Office **740.283.4781**
800.837.4781
 Serving Belmont, Carroll, Harrison, Jefferson, and
 Monroe Counties