

What is stalking?

Stalking can happen to anyone. Stalking often happens when someone is trying to leave a relationship.

Stalking involves following someone in a way that causes the victim to feel fearful or emotionally distressed. Here are some examples of stalking behavior:

- Following someone on foot or by car
- Watching someone at work or at home
- Sending unwanted letters or emails
- Making unwanted telephone calls
- Leaving unwanted cards, flowers or gifts

Many stalking victims think they did something to deserve the stalking behavior. However, this is not the case: statistics show that stalking frequently occurs when someone tries to leave an abusive relationship.

- 59% of female stalking victims are stalked by their intimate partner
- 30% of male stalking victims are stalked by their intimate partner
- “Stalking Fact Sheet” Stalking Resource Center

Is stalking a crime in Pennsylvania?

Stalking is a crime in Pennsylvania. There are two basic elements to the crime:

- The stalker must complete at least two acts of unwanted behavior, *no matter how close or far apart in time they are*, and
- The victim must experience *reasonable fear* of serious bodily injury or *substantial emotional distress*.

The County District Attorney makes the final decision to file criminal charges in criminal cases, including stalking charges.

Pennsylvania Domestic Violence 24-hour Hotlines

County Condado	Hotline number Teléfono de Emergencia	County Condado	Hotline number Teléfono de Emergencia
Adams	(800) 787-8106 (717) 334-9777	Juniata	(717) 242-2444
Allegheny	(888) 299-HOPE (724) 224-HOPE (724) 339-HOPE (412) 364-5556 (412) 678-4616 (412) 687-8005	Lackawanna	(570) 346-4671 TTY (570) 346-4671
Armstrong	(800) 841-8881 (724) 548-8888	Lancaster	(717) 299-1249
Beaver	(724) 775-0131 (877) 629-1841	Lawrence	(724) 652-9036
Bedford	(800) 555-5671 (814) 623-7664	Lebanon	(717) 273-7190
Berks	TTY (888) 817-9660 (610) 372-9540	Luzerne	(610) 437-3369 (800) 424-5600 (570) 823-7312 TTY (570) 823-5853
Blair	Español (610) 372-7463 (800) 500-2849 (814) 944-3585	Lycoming	(800) 326-8483 (570) 323-8167
Bradford	(570) 265-9109 911	McKean	(888) 822-6325 (814) 368-6325
Bucks	(800) 220-8116	Mercer	(888) 981-1457 Local & TTY (724) 981-1457
Butler	(800) 400-8551 (724) 776-6790	Mifflin	(717) 242-2444
Cambria	(800) 999-7406 (570) 536-5361 (814) 443-2824	Monroe	(570) 421-4200
Cameron	(814) 486-0952	Montgomery	(800) 642-3150 (215) 643-3150 (800) 773-2424 (215) 885-5020 (610) 970-7363 (610) 279-1548
Carbon	(800) 424-5600 (570) 823-7312	Korean	(215) 886-8725
Centre	(814) 234-5050 (877) 234-5050	Montour	(800) 544-8293 (570) 784-6631
Chester	(888) 711-6270 (610) 431-1430	Northampton	(610) 437-3369
Clarion	TTY (610) 431-7262 (800) 992-3039 (814) 226-8481	Northumberland	(800) 850-7948 (570) 644-4488
Clearfield	(800) 598-3998 (814) 938-3580	Perry	(800) 852-2102
Clinton	(570) 748-9509	Philadelphia	(866) 723-3014
Columbia	(800) 544-8293 (570) 784-6631	Bilingual	(215) 235-9992
Crawford	(888) 881-0189 (814) 333-9766	Pike	(570) 296-HELP
Cumberland	(800) 852-2102 (717) 258-4249	Potter	(877) 334-3136 (814) 274-0240
Dauphin	(800) 654-1211 (717) 238-7273	Schuylkill	(800) 282-0634 (570) 622-6220
Delaware	(610) 565-4590	Snyder	(570) 374-7773 (800) 850-7948
Elk	(814) 772-1227	Somerset	(800) 999-7406 (814) 443-2824
Erie	(814) 438-2675 (814) 454-8161	Sullivan	(800) 894-3706 (570) 946-4215
Fayette	(724) 439-9500	Susquehanna	(570) 346-4671 TTY (570) 346-4671
Forest	(800) 338-3460 (814) 338-3460	Tioga	(800) 550-0447
Franklin	(800) 621-6660 (717) 264-4444 (800) 621-6660 (717) 485-5840	Union	(800) 850-7948 (570) 523-6482
Greene	(800) 791-4000	Venango	(800) 243-4944 (814) 677-7273 (814) 827-3472
Huntingdon	(814) 643-1190	Warren	(800) 338-3460 (814) 726-1030
Indiana	(800) 435-7249 (724) 349-4444	Washington	(800) 791-4000 (724) 223-9190
Jefferson	(800) 598-3998 (814) 938-3580	Wayne	(800) 698-4VIP (570) 253-4401
		Westmoreland	(888) 832-2272 (724) 836-1122
		Wyoming	(570) 836-5544
		York	(800) 262-8444 (717) 846-5400

Area codes (800), (866) and (888) are toll free.

Domestic Violence

STALKING

Is it happening to you?

What every stalking victim should know



6400 Flank Drive • Suite 1300 • Harrisburg, PA 17112
(888) 235-3425 • Fax: (717) 671-5542
www.pcadv.org

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How can a Protection From Abuse order help me?

A Protection From Abuse (PFA) order is an important tool for any stalking victim because it allows the police to arrest the stalker, even if the police did not see the stalking behavior. The process for getting a PFA differs in every county, but the law requires the court to accept your petition without paying a filing fee. **You will need to prove the following two things in order to get a PFA:**

- You are either related to the stalker, married or previously married to the stalker, you have a child(ren) with the stalker, or you have an intimate relationship with the stalker (either sexual or dating); and
- You were followed or contacted by the stalker for no lawful reason and you fear that the stalker will cause you serious bodily injury. (There are other ways to prove “abuse” that do not involve stalking. Speak to a domestic violence advocate to find out more about PFAs.)

Once you get a PFA, you can ask the court to order that the stalker have no contact with you at home, work or school, as well as many other protections.

What is a defiant trespass letter and how can it help?

Sending a stalker a letter telling them that you do not want them near your home, work or school and that you do not want contact with them can be a powerful tool. This kind of letter is most effective if you can prove the stalker received it and the police get a copy. While this strategy may work in some cases, be careful not to reveal more information to the stalker than is necessary. Contact an attorney or discuss this option with your local domestic violence advocate if you have more questions.

How can filing a criminal complaint help keep me safer?

If you are being stalked and a criminal complaint is filed, you may be eligible for a victim/witness protective order. This is a type of order that prosecutors may request for victims and witnesses in any criminal case, including stalking cases. A victim/witness protective order will allow police to arrest the stalker more quickly. The court may order the stalker to stay away from your home, work, school or even your neighborhood altogether.

The requirements for a criminal victim/witness protective order are:

- A criminal complaint must be filed;
- The district attorney must request the protection from the court; and
- The court must find there is substantial evidence that the victim/witness has been or is likely to be intimidated.

Stalking victims should know that victim/witness protective orders are sometimes hard to get and the protection they give the victim only lasts until the criminal case is decided.

If criminal charges are not filed or if the prosecutor doesn't ask the court to issue a victim/witness protective order, you still have other options:

- A Protection From Abuse order; and
- A Defiant Trespass Letter

How do I change my identity or keep my address confidential?

Relocating or changing your identity sometimes are necessary steps, in order to stay safe. Pennsylvania has a program to help victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking hide a new home, work or school address from their perpetrators.

For information about:

- The Pennsylvania Address Confidentiality Program (ACP), contact ACP at (800) 563-6399
- The legal process for identity change, contact your local domestic violence program (listed on the back of this brochure)

Who can I talk to about stalking?

If you are a victim of domestic violence and stalking, you can discuss it confidentially with a domestic violence advocate. See the list on the back cover of this brochure for county domestic violence resources or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 799-7233.

