

What Can I Do?

- **Develop a Safety Plan** for escape in case of emergency and store it in a safe and secret place. Include: important phone numbers, a packed bag at a friend's house, code words to use to cue friends and family to call the police, etc. (See "Making a Personal Safety Plan" brochure.)
- Alert **friends and family** to the problem.
- Find a **place to stay** outside of the home **that the abuser does not know about.**
- Get an **Order of Protection** if necessary. A Civil Protection Order (CPO) is a court order by a judge, lasting up to one year, designed to protect victims from contact with the abuser. The CPO is delivered by an officer and orders the abuser, by law, to completely cease contact with you. If the abuser breaks this order, they can be put in jail. You can get a CPO at the Domestic Violence Intake Center (DVIC), located in two separate locations in DC.

DC Superior Court

500 Indiana Avenue, NW
Room 4550
Washington, DC

2041 Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue, SE
Room 400
Washington, DC 20020

Online: <https://www.probono.net/dccourts/>



WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP

Police

In an emergency, dial 911

Metropolitan Police Department:

1st District: **(202) 698-0555**

1DSubstation: **(202) 698-0068**

2nd District: **(202) 715-7300**

3rd District: **(202) 673-6815**

4th District: **(202) 715-7400**

4DSubstation: **(202) 576-8222**

5th District: **(202) 698-0150**

6th District: **(202) 698-0880**

6DSubstation: **(202) 698-2088**

7th District: **(202) 698-1500**

National

National Domestic Violence Hotline

(800) 799-SAFE (7233)

Local

Domestic Violence Intake Center

DC Superior Court

500 Indiana Avenue, NW, Room 4550

Washington, DC

NW: **(202) 879-0152**

2041 Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue, SE, Room 400

Washington, DC 20020

(202) 879-1500

Online: <https://www.probono.net/dccourts/>

24-hour shelters, Hotlines and Counseling:

House of Ruth: **(202) 667-7001** x 217

My Sister's Place: **(202) 529-5991**

Financial Assistance

Crime Victims Compensation Program:

(202) 879-4216

Legal Assistance

American University: **(202) 274-4140**

Legan Aid Society: **(202) 628-1161**

www.legalaiddc.org

Bread for the City: **(202) 265-2400**

SAFE: **(202) 879-7857**



Domestic Violence Unit

300 Indiana Ave, N.W., Room 3156

Washington, D.C. 20001

Office: 202-727-7137 | Fax: 202-727-6491

<http://www.mpdc.dc.gov/victimassistance>

Domestic Violence In a LGBTQ+ Relationship

A guide for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, + victims and their friends from the Metropolitan Police Department



A guide to getting educated and getting help.



WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior used to control another person. Domestic Violence is any type of violence, abuse, or threat of violence that one partner in a relationship commits against another. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and verbal abuse.

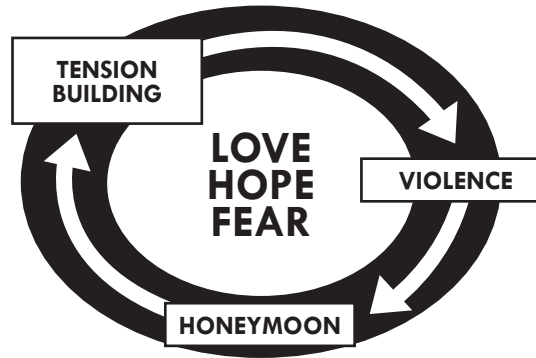
SIGNS OF ABUSE

Does Your Partner

- Break furniture, belongings or other personal effects?
- Throw objects at you?
- Hit, slap, punch, push, shove, strangle or kick you?
- Prevent you from leaving the house, working or seeing close friends and family?
- Criticize, threaten to hurt you or call you names?
- Blame you for his or her abuse of you?
- Blame you for family, marital and financial problems?
- Force you to have sex or perform sexual acts that are undesirable to you?
- Withhold finances, keep you from spending money or constantly question your spending?
- Subject you to reckless driving and other dangerous activities as a means of control?
- Use threats to you and your children as leverage to keep you quiet about the abuse?

If you answered yes to any of these, you may be the victim of Domestic Violence. You should seek help immediately!

The Cycle of Violence



Many people who encounter domestic violence notice a cycle in the abuser's behavior. Below are the key elements of each phase in the cycle.

Phase 1:

- **Tension Building Phase:** During this phase, the abuser is angry, uses yelling, criticism, swearing and angry gestures. Sometimes coercion, threats or minor fights occur. The victim often feels anxious about the situation and building tension.

Phase 2:

- **Violence ("Explosion") Phase:** Major act of violence occurs. This includes verbal abuse, physical and/or sexual attack, and threats to harm.

Phase 3:

- **Honeymoon Phase:** After the explosion, the abuser feels sorry and acts apologetic and loving, often making promises to change, buying gifts, and doing nice things for the victim. While the victim may think this phase will last, the Tension Building Phase will begin again.

How to help a friend who is being abused:

- Listen to them and believe what they are saying.
- Assure them that they do not deserve abuse.
- Encourage them to get help immediately!
- Let them know you support them gather information for them, take them to clinics and shelters and offer to help out in any way possible.

Myths about LGBTQ+ Domestic Violence*

- Domestic violence can't occur when the partners are the same sex.
- Only the "butch" partner can be abusive.
- A physically smaller partner can't abuse his/her larger partner.
- There is nowhere I can go for help.
- It's not violence because s/he only threatens me and puts me down; I've never been hit by my partner.

Facts about LGBTQ+ Domestic Violence*

- Thirty percent of LGBTQ+ couples experience domestic violence.
- Acts of domestic violence occur every 15-18 seconds in the U.S.
- Some LGBTQ+ victims worry that if they seek help, people will find out they're LGBTQ+ or that their relationship is abusive. The truth is, domestic violence service organizations are bound by confidentiality agreements.
- Some domestic violence shelters or police officers may not understand that domestic violence can affect LGBTQ+ couples, but that doesn't mean you don't deserve the same support services. Ask to speak with someone else if you don't think you're being treated properly.

**Source:
http://lesbianlife.about.com/od/lesbianhealth/a/DVfactsMyths_2.htm*

