

UNDERSTANDING STALKING

ARE YOU BEING STALKED?

Stalking is a series of actions that make you feel afraid, distressed or in danger.

Stalking is serious, often violent, and can escalate over time.

Are you...

- Always looking over your shoulder?
- Confused about how someone always seems to know where you are?
- Unsure when that person will show up again?
- Nervous about checking your e-mail or phone because it might be him/her/them again?
- Scared of what that person might do next?

You may be a victim of stalking.

“Going to work, attending your kids activities, going out for the evening... these things seem routine. For me, they’re terrifying because I never know what he will do or when he will show up.”

—Stalking Survivor

Stalking victims often feel scared, angry, annoyed, isolated and/or confused.



WHO ARE STALKERS?

Most stalkers target people they know.

Many stalkers commit this crime against people who they've dated/been romantically involved with. Stalkers may also be acquaintances, family members and/or strangers.

Nearly 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men will be stalked in their lifetimes.

While most stalking victims are female and the majority of perpetrators are male, anyone can be a victim or perpetrator of stalking.

Stalking is a crime in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories.

WHAT DO STALKERS DO?

Most stalkers use multiple tactics to scare their victims. These behaviors may include (but are not limited to):

- **Unwanted contact** through repeated calls (including hang-ups), texts, e-mails or messages.
- **Following** you.
- Sending **unwanted gifts** or letters.
- **Tracking you** using technology (like GPS, apps or hidden cameras)
- **Showing up** or **waiting for you** at your home, work or school.
- **Damaging** your property.
- **Spreading rumors** about you – in person or online.
- **Posting or sharing or threatening** to post or share intimate photographs of you.
- **Harassing** your co-workers, family or friends.



- **Gathering information** about you by using the internet or going through your trash.
- **Hacking your accounts**, changing your passwords or impersonating you online.
- **Threatening** to hurt you or those close to you – family, friends, pets.
- Other actions that **control, track, or frighten you**.

The stalking is not your fault and you cannot control the stalker's behaviors.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO BE SAFE?

It can be helpful to think of strategies to help keep yourself and loved ones safe. You may want to:

- Call **9-1-1** if you're in imminent danger or have been threatened.
- **Trust your instincts.** If you think that you're in danger, you probably are.
- Connect with a **local victim service provider** who can help you explore options and make a detailed safety plan. Not sure where to go? Call the hotlines listed under "Resources."

The stalking is not your fault and you cannot control the stalker's behaviors.

- **Document** everything that happens – keep a record or log. See stalkingawareness.org/what-to-do-if-you-are-being-stalked/ for a sample log.
- **Tell people you trust** about the situation. See if your school, workplace, or building security can help with your safety plans.
- Consider getting a **court order** to keep the stalker away from you. Contact your local domestic violence/sexual assault agency or family court for more information.
- Learn more **safety strategies** at stalkingawareness.org.

RESOURCES

If you do not know how to reach your local service provider, or for additional assistance, you can contact the following hotlines:

Victim Connect

victimconnect.org/

855-4-VICTIM (855-484-2846)

National Sexual Assault Hotline

RAINN.org

800.656.HOPE (4673)

National Domestic Violence Hotline

thehotline.org

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

SPARC

Learn more at StalkingAwareness.org