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LawTalk Blog



Domestic violence and keeping safe during COVID-19

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Last week, we published a blog on [when social isolation becomes dangerous: domestic violence during COVID-19](#).

With the government's direction to self-isolate at home as much as possible, there is a strong concern that domestic violence incidences will continue to increase.

What does abuse look like during COVID-19?

In a general sense, family or domestic violence can include physical, financial, emotional, psychological, social, religious or sexual abuse.

Taking into account the new circumstances we are all faced with, [domestic violence resource centers](#) have reported that violence in light of COVID-19 can look like:

1. Restricting physical movement both outside and inside of the home and withholding necessary items such as food, medicine, hand sanitizer or cleaning products;
2. Restricting or prevent victims and children from seeking appropriate medical attention if they have symptoms, or hiding their Medicare card;

3. Controlling how money is spent and using the pandemic as an excuse to gain or increase control over one party's finances;
4. Providing misinformation on the pandemic to control or frighten someone and using the pandemic as an excuse for their violent behavior;
5. Monitoring a person's technology use including text messages, phone calls or social media;
6. Trying to reconcile a relationship and re-enter the home of a victim by reporting that the perpetrator will support the victim and help with the children during the pandemic.

How you can keep safe from domestic violence during COVID-19

The most important thing to know is that despite government restrictions, there is still help available for victims of domestic and family violence.

If you are in immediate risk of danger, you must call South Australian Police on 000.

If you are not in immediate risk of danger but still have concerns for you or your children's safety, you can contact the following services for support:

1. Women's Safety Service Domestic Violence Crisis Line on 1800 800 098 for crisis support and information on safety planning;
2. Men's Referral Service on 1300 766 491;
3. 1800 RESPECT on 1800 737 732;
4. Lifeline on 13 11 14

Practical tips to protect you or someone you know from Domestic Violence

In addition to the tips we listed from the Domestic Violence Action Centre in our last blog and contacting specialist support services, if you or someone you know may be going through these issues you can also:

1. Reach out and talk about what is going on and offer support where it is safe to do so. Try to make phone calls whilst the perpetrator is out of the house as much as possible. If you are a friend or family member calling to check in, try to start your phone call with 'is it safe to speak right now?' in case the perpetrator is within earshot;

2. Keep notes or a diary in a safe place of incidences of family violence (including date and time) so that if you have to report to Police or go to court in the future, you have notes that can assist you in the legal process;
3. Take copies of important documents such as birth and marriage certificates and financial documents and keep them in a safe place or provide them to a family member or friend for safe keeping should you have to leave the relationship quickly.
4. Get legal advice on your entitlements to property or care arrangements for children as soon as possible.

Andersons Solicitors are here to help if you require assistance in [family law matters](#) during COVID-19. [Contact](#) Andersons Solicitors today.

This blog post was written by [Daniella Cutufia](#) and settled by [Ryan Thomas](#).

Please note, this Blog is posted in Adelaide, South Australia by Andersons Solicitors. It relates to Australian Federal and South Australian legislation. Andersons Solicitors is a medium sized law firm servicing metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia across all areas of law for individuals and businesses.