

**DO NOT  
blame your partner  
for your abuse.**

**Get help today**



# **Domestic Violence**

## **Information**

### **Booklet**

**for**

**Men**

### **What if a Domestic Violence Order is taken out against me?**

An application for a Domestic Violence Order (DVO) can be made to protect a person (called the aggrieved) from you (called the respondent). This application can be made by the aggrieved or by the police on behalf of the aggrieved.

You will be served with a copy of the DVO application. The application briefly explains the reasons why the complaint has been made and lists the conditions the court will be asked to make to protect the aggrieved.

### **Do I have to go to Court?**

Yes, you need to respond to the application so that the Court can decide whether or not to make a DVO against you. If you fail to appear, the court may make an order in your absence.

### **What happens at Court?**

Friends of the court will direct you to the Centacare (SCOPE) practitioner who will provide you with information about the court process. Referrals for further assistance will also be provided.

In the courtroom you will be given the opportunity to respond to the application by choosing one of the following options:

1. **CONSENT to the order**—this is agreeing to have the order made against you and to what is in the order.
2. **CONSENT without admissions**—this is agreeing to the order but saying that you don't agree with the statements that have been written in the application. In this case the Order will be issued.
3. **ADJOURNMENT**—if you ask for an adjournment the magistrate may allow you some time to seek legal advice, usually two weeks. A temporary order may be made until the hearing date.
4. **CONTEST the order**—this means that you do not agree to the making of a DVO against you. A date will be made for a hearing mention and then for a hearing. A temporary order may be made until the hearing date.

### **What if I contest the order being made?**

If you contest the making of a DVO the magistrate will set your matter down for a hearing. A hearing can take up to a day and both you and the aggrieved will be put on the witness stand and cross examined. Evidence such as witnesses, letters, emails, SMS text messages can be produced.

### **Important Information:**

If Police have taken an application against you on behalf of the aggrieved the Police are the applicant; the aggrieved cannot revoke the application. If you are unhappy with the conditions sought in the police application, you will need to speak with the police prosecutor.

### **What can I do?**

Changing abusive behaviours is a long and difficult process, but we believe that people can change. It will take a lot of hard work but it can happen. As long as you take full responsibility for your actions and you commit yourself to changing, it can happen with the right kind of help.

### **Where can I get help?**

**Centacare CFCS**  
**Changing Gears** - A behavioural change group for men  
21 Cornmeal Parade,  
Maroochydore QLD 4558  
**Ph: 07 5430 9300 Fax: 07 5430 9399**

**DV Connect Mensline** **1800 600 636**  
9am to midnight, 7 days—counselling, support, information & referral across QLD.

**Mensline Australia** **1300 789 978**  
24 hour, 7 day support, information and referral

**Suncoast Community Legal Service** **07 5443 7827**  
7 Ocean St,  
Maroochydore QLD 4558  
Fax: 07 5451 1221

**Legal Aid** **1300 651 188**

## Emotional Effects

- Fear, anger, distrust, anxiety
- Becoming jumpy/unable to relax
- Low self esteem
- Loss of childhood
- Psychological problems
- Blaming themselves

## As an effect of living with violence, your child's behaviour might change in the following ways:

- Models themselves on your violent behaviour
- Becomes violent to their mum
- Bullies other children or is bullied at school
- Expects / accepts abuse
- Is bullied at school
- Steals or breaks the law in other ways
- Drinks alcohol, takes drugs
- Gets into trouble, finds school challenging, misses time from school

## Other issues your child may experience:

- Being brought into arguments
- Being used as a messenger between parents
- Seeing their mother is distressed, depressed, angry and frightened
- Being isolated from grandparents or mum's friends
- Being told to leave the house or stay out to avoid the violence
- Being told to be good or quiet when you are around to avoid "triggering" your anger
- Seeing mum tired and worn out
- Being asked to keep secrets
- Believing that some of the arguments are about them
- Being questioned by child protection services
- Having to comfort mum
- Having to call the police or get help

## Some things to think about:

- The impact of abuse doesn't stop when you do
- Your children will be harmed by your abuse even if they don't witness it
- You may be telling yourself "It's not that bad"
- How bad will it need to get before you do something about it?

## Will I have a criminal record?

A DVO is a civil proceeding. If an order is made against you there will be no criminal record i.e. it will NOT appear on any employment or any criminal history check. It will affect your ability to own or use weapons.

## WHAT IS DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Most people in a healthy relationship disagree about things from time to time. In a healthy relationship both parties are able to put forward their opinions, points of view or concerns, and feel comfortable discussing them together. It is normal for voices to become raised in a heated discussion, so long as a level of respect and equality is present between both parties.

Domestic violence is abusive and violent behaviour used by one person to control and dominate another person within a domestic relationship.

*(Definition from: The Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 1989 Legislation).*

In an unhealthy relationship the situation can be very different. Domestic and family violence may occur if one person in the relationship uses violence or abuse to gain power and control over the other. This may be achieved through fear and intimidation as the person being threatened feels too frightened to argue back or too scared to disagree and express their opinion.

## FORMS OF DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE...

Domestic violence can occur in many forms and is not restricted to any particular community, social class, age, cultural background or geographical areas. It can include:

**Physical abuse** such as pushing, shoving, slapping, hitting, punching, biting or pinching; threatening to hurt her, her relatives, friends or work colleagues in some way. Or damaging property, harming pets in order to frighten and intimidate her.

**Sexual abuse** such as forcing her to have sex or take part in sexual acts when she doesn't want to.

**Social abuse** such as controlling where she goes, not letting her see or have contact with her friends or family.

**Financial abuse** such as taking control of the money, not giving her enough money to survive on, forcing her to hand over your money, or not letting her have a say in how it is spent.

**Emotional abuse** such as making her feel worthless, criticising her personality, her looks, the way she dresses, constantly putting her down, yelling, shouting, name-calling, and swearing at her.

**Spiritual abuse** such as forcing her to attend religious activities against her wishes, prohibiting her from participating in the religious or cultural practices of her choice.

**Stalking** such as constantly following her by foot or car, constantly calling her by phone, text messages and emails, or staying outside her house or workplace.  
**(Stalking is a criminal offence in Queensland).**

## **ARE YOU HURTING THE ONE/S YOU LOVE?**

- *“Sometimes when we argue and I shout at my partner she is scared of me.”*
- *“I slapped her once and I promised myself it would never happen again—but I hit her again....”*
- *“I get angry with her and I totally lose it....”*

Do you recognise yourself in any of these statements? Are you concerned that your behaviour towards your partner is costing you your relationship? Are you worried your children are witnessing too many arguments between you and your partner?

Read the following list of abusive behaviours and think carefully about your relationship:

- Have you ever hit, pushed, grabbed, threatened, frightened or intimidated your partner?
- Is your partner afraid of you?
- Are your children afraid of you?
- Are you concerned that your behaviour is harming your relationship?
- Have you broken promises about changing your behaviour?
- Have you ever punched a wall, banged a table, or broken something during a disagreement?
- Have you ever grabbed your partner during a disagreement, attempted to stop her from leaving, locked her out, or restrained her in any way?
- Do you pressure your partner to do things your way, even when you know your partner doesn't want to?
- Has your partner ever said “you're always trying to control me..”?
- Do you use names, put downs or swearing to control your partner?
- Do you put the blame onto your partner for things you are responsible for?
- Have you found yourself 'keeping score' of the wrongs your partner has done to you in order to hold those things against her?
- Have you ever blamed your abusive actions on alcohol, other drugs and stress or family problems?
- Have you ever been accused of mistreating your children?
- Are you concerned that your children are being emotionally or psychologically harmed because of the way you treat your partner?
- Has your partner complained about jealous or possessive behaviour on your part? When you do something that hurts your partner, do you just say “I'm sorry” and then expect acceptance of your apology without making any change in how you were hurtful?

## **EFFECTS OF ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR ON RELATIONSHIPS**

You've probably noticed that your relationship is suffering as a result of your behaviour. It sounds obvious, but it's impossible for anyone to feel the same about you if they're being abused; however hard they might try to pretend things are okay. Although all relationships are different, what tends to happen is that the person being abused ends up:

- Walking on eggshells, terrified of when the abuse might start up again
- Trying to pacify you or agreeing with you to try and stop you getting abusive again
- Being quiet and not sharing things with you
- Bottling things up
- Lying to protect themselves (and children)
- Losing all sexual feelings

Your behaviour is likely to have a serious effect on your partner's health such as:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Feeling exhausted
- Having panic attacks
- Feeling physically tense
- Feeling stressed, vulnerable, depressed, ashamed, drained, terrified, confused, nervous, hurt, unloved, worthless, destroyed, scared or humiliated

## **THE EFFECTS OF ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR ON CHILDREN**

You may have children of your own or be a stepfather to your partner's children. A lot of people tell themselves that children aren't really aware of the domestic violence that is going on in their family. But studies show that in households where there is domestic violence, in 9 out of 10 cases the children are in the same or next room.

### **Physical Effects**

- Being physically hurt in the 'cross-fire'
- Having injuries; trying to protect their brothers/sisters/mother
- Sleep deprivation
- Hearing or seeing the violence and abuse
- Being woken up or kept awake by your arguing
- Seeing bruises or smashed furniture the next day
- Loss of concentration
- Bed wetting
- Developing eating disorders
- Having panic attacks
- Stress and tension