

Safety Action Plan

- ◆ **File Charges:** If any incident of stalking happens more than once, you should go to the magistrate and request a Stalking Warrant.

If a Stalking Warrant is issued, you may ask for an Emergency Stalking Protective Order at the same time. To extend the protective order go to the General District Court Clerk's Office. If the stalker is a family and household member, or you have children in common, and want to extend the protective order, contact the Court Services Unit at your Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. If the stalker is arrested but released, ask the magistrate that a condition of bond be "No Contact" with you.

- ◆ **Be Alert** and aware of people and what is happening around you.
- ◆ **Vary Routes of Travel:** Change the way you go to work, home and even the grocery store. Park in secure and well lit areas.
- ◆ **Be Aware of Any Vehicle that Follows You:** If someone is following you, drive to a police station, fire department or shopping area and sound the horn to attract attention. Lock doors until help arrives. Carry a cell phone at all times and call police while you are being followed.
- ◆ **Alert Your Work:** Provide them with suspect information. Ask someone to escort you to and from your vehicle.

Safety Action Plan (Continued.)

- ◆ **Tell Everyone** you are surrounded by on a daily basis that you are being stalked. Describe the stalker and ask them to tell you if they see the stalker in the vicinity. If you have a picture, give it to them. Eyewitness reports are critical. Save all phone messages from the stalker.
- ◆ **Visitation:** If you have children by the stalker, arrange visitation through a third party. Do not meet the stalker alone.
- ◆ **Develop a Support System:** Talking to someone who is trained to work with victims and survivors may help alleviate stress. Call your local Domestic Violence Shelter for help, information, and support groups.

Shelters can give you free cell phones that dial 911.



For more information, contact:

The Laurel Center
Hotline: 540-667-6466
Office: 540-667-6160

or
Virginia Family Violence
& Sexual Assault Hotline
1-800-838-8238 (V/TTY)

www.thelaurelcenter.org

Some of the information contained in this brochure was obtained from the VA Department of Criminal Justice Services and the National Stalking Resource Center.

THE
Laurel
CENTER

Intervention for Domestic and Sexual Violence

Stalking

A Guide For Victims

P.O. Box 14
Winchester, VA 22604
540-667-6466 Hotline
540-667-6160 Office
1-866-670-2942
540-667-0138 Fax
TTY Available



*About 1 in 12 women
and 1 in 45 men are stalked
in their lifetimes.*

Stalking Facts

Every State has a Stalking Law.

Stalking is defined as repeated conduct which places a person or his or her family in reasonable fear of death, sexual assault or bodily injury. It is a series of actions that make you feel afraid or in danger.

Stalking is a Crime. A stalker can be someone you know well or not at all. Most have dated or been involved with the people they stalk. It is a crime that can be committed against anyone, regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or geographic location.

Stalking is a unique crime because stalkers are obsessed with controlling their victim's actions and feelings. Stalkers will frequently threaten and harass and in many instances physically injure their victims.

Stalkers are unpredictable and dangerous. No two stalking situations are alike. There are no guarantees that what works for one person will work for another.

Some Things Stalkers Do:

- ◆ Follow you and show up wherever you are.
- ◆ Repeatedly call you on the phone.
- ◆ Break in or damage your home, car or other property.
- ◆ Send unwanted gifts, letters, cards or e-mails.
- ◆ Drive by or hang out around your home, school, or work.
- ◆ Follow your car and watch you from parking lots.
- ◆ Monitor your phone calls or computer use.
- ◆ Threaten to hurt you, your family, friends or pets.
- ◆ Find out about you through friends, family, neighbors, or co-workers.
- ◆ Other actions that control, track or frighten you.

If you have a picture of the stalker, show it to friends, neighbors, co-workers and security at work.

YOU ARE NOT TO BLAME FOR A STALKER'S BEHAVIOR.

*If you are a victim of stalking and need help,
advice, and practical assistance call
The Laurel Center at 540-667-6466.*

If You Are Being Stalked

Call 911 if you are in immediate danger: Trust your instincts. Don't downplay the danger. If you feel you are unsafe, you probably are. Take threats seriously. Danger is generally higher when the stalker talks about suicide or murder, or when a victim tries to leave or end a relationship. Go to a safe place—a police station or a friend's home unknown to the stalker or a public place.

Notify Law Enforcement: Report all incidents to law enforcement. Request that they write an incident report for any situations you report. Ask for the incident report number and get the name of the officers taking your report. **If you know your stalker, you can ask the officer to notify the stalker to stop; that the behavior is causing you fear. Ask the officer to document his contact with the stalker in his report.**

Necessary Documentation: Keep your own log of all stalking events. Record dates, times, locations, witnesses and what the stalker was doing, saying or driving etc. Obtain all witnesses names and contact information. Write a description of each incident and what took place. Record telephone conversations.

Gather Evidence: Physical evidence is a key component to convicting a stalker. Keep all evidence. Do not throw away letters, flowers, gifts or anything that can be physically collected. Take pictures of any destruction of property. If the stalker is sitting outside or driving by the house, go get someone who can witness the event or take a picture.