

The Domestic Violence Unit

The Santa Barbara County District Attorney's office vertically prosecutes domestic violence cases. Under vertical prosecution victims of domestic violence benefit from working with a trained team that includes the prosecutor, investigator and a victim advocate from the time the charges are filed through sentencing. Our team is committed to victim and community

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HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

District Attorney's Office Victim/Witness

Assistance	
Santa Barbara	568-2400
Santa Maria	346-7529
Lompoc	737-7910

Domestic Violence Solutions 24 Hours

Crisis Line	
Santa Barbara	964-5245
Santa Maria	925-2160
Lompoc	736-0965

Family Law Court Services

Santa Barbara	568-3133
Santa Maria	346-1476

Legal Aid Foundation

Santa Barbara	963-6754
Santa Maria	922-9909
Lompoc	736-6582

Department of Social Services (CalWorks, Medical, Food Stamps)

Santa Barbara	681-4401
Santa Maria	346-7135
Lompoc	737-7080

Website:

www.countyofsb.org/da/

Victim Advocate:

Phone:

Case #:

**Santa Barbara County
District Attorney's Office**

HELP for DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS



RESPECT

SUPPORT

ADVOCACY

*Santa Barbara County
District Attorney's Office*

Domestic Violence can impact many aspects of a person's life. It is a crime that knows no cultural, racial, ethnic or economic boundaries. The abuse can affect not only the victim but also the children, loved ones and co-workers. Domestic Violence can have long lasting physical, emotional and financial effects.

No one deserves to be abused. It is not your fault. Help is available through many local resources including the District Attorney's Office Victim/Witness Assistance Program.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

From a legal perspective "Domestic Violence" means abuse committed against:

- a spouse or former spouse
- a fiancée or former fiancée
- a current or former boyfriend/girl friend
- cohabitant or former cohabitant (live in boyfriend/girlfriend)
- a person with whom you have had a child

Abuse means intentionally or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury, or placing another person in fear of serious bodily injury.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I CALL LAW ENFORCEMENT?

After Law Enforcement completes their investigation, the report is sent to the District Attorney's Domestic Violence Unit for review. The assigned attorney will determine if there is sufficient evidence to file criminal charges. Pretrial services may contact you if the offender is in jail. Their officers make recommendations to the court based upon the risk of releasing the accused from jail.

HOW CAN I DROP CHARGES?

Although the District Attorney's Office is interested in your input, a victim does not have the responsibility to either "press" or "drop" criminal charges. The District Attorney assigned to the case will review the law enforcement report to decide whether there is sufficient evidence to file criminal charges. If you have input you would like to provide to the District Attorney's Office, contact the Victim/Witness Assistance Program and an advocate can assist you.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER CRIMINAL CHARGES ARE FILED?

It may take some time for a case to proceed through the criminal process. The District Attorney's Victim/Witness Assistance Program's Victim Advocates are available to provide an explanation of the criminal justice process and provide you with regular case updates.

HOW DO I GO TO GET A RESTRAINING ORDER?

Upon contact with law enforcement you may request an Emergency Protective Order (EPO) that is good for 5 business days from date of issuance. In order to obtain an extended order you may contact the District Attorney's Office Victim/Witness Assistance Program. If Criminal charges have been filed the assigned Victim Advocate can request an order through the criminal court. If charges have not been filed, your assigned Victim Advocate can refer you to other local resources to obtain one. Refer to "**Helpful Phone Numbers**" on the back of this brochure.

MY SPOUSE IS THREATENING TO TAKE MY CHILDREN AWAY, WHAT CAN I DO?

There are affordable legal resources available to parents who are in a violent relationship and are concerned about immigration consequences, custody, visitation and child support. Family Court services staff is available to assist and make appropriate referrals. Please refer to "**Helpful Phone Numbers**" on the back of the brochure.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I HAVE BEEN THREATENED?

Leaving an abusive relationship can be very dangerous. Professional help is available. Report any threatening behavior to law enforcement. Have one more plan to keep you and your children safe. Here are some ideas:

In a place known only to you (home of a neighbor, a friend or family member) keep the following:

- A spare set of car keys
- Money
- Hotline's phone numbers (see **Helpful Phone Numbers**)
- Copies of any important personal papers (restraining order, birth certificates, social security cards, etc.)

I NEED ASSISTANCE RELOCATING, CAN YOU HELP ME?

In some cases the California Victim Compensation Program may financially assist with crime related expenses including but not limited to relocation expenses up to \$2,000 per household. Your Victim/Witness Assistance Program Advocate can help you determine if you are eligible and/or obtain emergency assistance. For victims who do not feel safe in their home, contact Domestic Violence Solutions through their 24 hour crisis line.