

Stop violence!

Domestic violence and stalking in the Canton of Aargau

Domestic violence is more common than most people realise. It is defined as violence occurring between persons in a current or former relationship, for example in a marriage, partnership or family, or among relatives. It includes all forms of psychological, verbal, physical or sexualised violence or stalking. The term stalking is used when a person intentionally and repeatedly harasses, accosts or follows another person.

Domestic violence and stalking are prohibited and punishable in Switzerland. Attempts at justification, such as violence in the name of "honour", trivialisation, alcohol, stress or provocation, are not accepted.

To protect people affected by violence, the police have a number of options at their disposal. For example, they can order a person who acts or threatens to act violently to leave the home and forbid him or her to return for a maximum of 20 days. The police can also prohibit contact and any approach to the person affected by violence. In addition to the police, the district court (Bezirksgericht) also has the power to impose protective measures.

Every human being has the right to live a life without violence. If you are affected by domestic violence and have trouble talking about it or getting help, do it regardless: In any acute dangerous situation, call the police emergency number 117, file a complaint with the cantonal police (Kantonspolizei) or contact the Aargau victim counselling service (Opferberatung Aargau). If you are not safe at home, you and your children can stay at a women's shelter (Frauenhaus) or a men's/fathers' shelter (ZwüscheHalt).

Are you afraid of losing control or do you sometimes feel like you don't know what to do with your anger? Violence is not a solution! Talk to someone you trust and get help, for example from the domestic violence support centre (Anlaufstelle gegen häusliche Gewalt).

We often forget that witnessing domestic violence is very distressing for children and affects their lives deeply. Seemingly harmless forms of violence can have serious consequences for their development. Children also have the right to live a life without violence.

Helpful contacts concerning domestic violence issues can be found at www.ag.ch/häuslichegewalt.