

Criminal Harassment – Stalking

All stalking is dangerous behaviour however, there are times when the danger may be at its highest:

- The first three months after you leave a relationship
- Dates or anniversaries related to you or your relationship with the person stalking you
- When the person stalking you thinks you are seeing someone new
- When the person stalking you receives a No Contact Order or Peace Bond

Pay attention to your instincts, including your gut feelings, doubts, anxieties, suspicions and fears. Don't discount them, focus on planning for your safety.

Things to consider regarding safety:

- ☐ If you are in a relationship with the person who is stalking you and you want to end the relationship, develop a safety plan that may address potential responses by your (ex) partner.
- ☐ Avoid all contact with the stalker, direct or indirect, and do not respond once you have told them NO.
- ☐ Consider changing your phone number, blocking the number, changing privacy settings and passwords on your phone.
- ☐ Change and vary your routines to make it more difficult for the stalker to follow you.
- ☐ When going out, consider having a plan/schedule with friends that includes check ins to let them know you are okay and a plan if they don't hear from you. I.e. They could contact police, or your emergency contact, or arrange to check on you.
- ☐ Consider having essential items ready to go to help leave quickly (ID, money, clothing, banking, restraining orders, custody orders, medicine, and items for children if applicable).
- ☐ Inform your closest friends and family, as the stalker may target them. Have them document all contact.
- ☐ Tell people you trust what is happening to you and the danger you feel (neighbour, friend) and potentially use them as a safe place to go.
- ☐ Surround yourself with friends who understand the cycle of violence, the impact on you, respect your choices, and are an ongoing support to you.
- ☐ Address your safety at your workplace- tell co-worker/employer, do not share schedule, remove personal belongings from workspace, don't accept packages you didn't order.
- ☐ Show a picture of your stalker and know their license plate/car model to help others know who they are looking for to help you stay safe (i.e. workplace, campus security, apartment, neighbour)
- ☐ If financially able, consider installing a security system and upgrade safety features (doors, lights, windows), and/or getting a PO Box for mail to be directed to.

- ☐ While out in the community, remain alert and avoid/reduce distractions such as wearing headphones, or keeping your head down, etc.
- ☐ While using public transit, wait in well-lit populated areas, sit near someone, know the transit schedule, ask to be dropped off closer to your destination.
- ☐ If you require immediate assistance, yell FIRE to invoke immediate attention.
- ☐ Call 911 if the stalker threatens to kill themselves or you. Seek out emotional support to address your feelings about these threats.
- ☐ Increase safety of your car- keep doors locked, windows up, consider a locking gas cap, inspect your car before getting in, know where local police, fire and gas stations are, have keys ready, watch for if you are being followed.
- ☐ If you have children with the person stalking you, consider using a third party for access exchanges.
- ☐ Tell others the importance of keeping your personal information secret. Remember you have the right to be choosy about who you give personal information to and who has access to you (e.g. social media)
- ☐ In Canada, it is a crime for someone to share nude photos without your permission, regardless of your age. If your photos are shared without permission or if you are being threatened regarding the pictures, consider contacting police.
- ☐ Screenshot any contact by the stalker and keep all messages left for you. If possible, share all the saved items with a friend to hold for you in case the stalker accesses your phone to delete evidence.
- ☐ Learn if your cellular and/or home phone provider offers special calling features on your phone, such as *67 to block your number for outgoing calls, and *57 to trace last call to your phone.
- ☐ If possible, review and maximize security settings on all your social media accounts. Turn off GPS or any tracking features on your phone, and don't use 'Check In' on social media. Remember, if GPS is on and you share pictures on social media, the geo location will be attached to the picture.

For a short video made from a survivor of stalking, visit <https://outsideoftheshadows.ca>

For more detailed information about stalking and the "Love or Obsession: A Guide for Women Being Stalked" handbook, visit <https://www.metrac.org/resource-category/stalking/>

Documenting what is happening is very important, including how the behaviour makes you feel (i.e. not safe, restricted). Even if you don't use this information for police, it will help you notice patterns of behaviour. This information is also helpful should a charge need to be laid in the future.

Use the following tracking sheet to help you document the actions of the stalker.

Date & Time	Location	Description of Incident	Evidence	Attending Officer & Occurrence #	Witnesses (Name, number)	Impact on You and Specific fear
2/5/14 10pm	Outside of my house	Left house to get groceries and found him in the bushes looking into living room window	None	Yes, #5571 Officer Whatzhisface	None- will talk with neighbours to confirm	I am afraid to walk out of my house. I am worried he is watching me at night. Am afraid of being attacked. Angry that I'm a prisoner in my own house.

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