



Domestic Violence

Abuse is about power and control. When survivors are forced to stay in the home or in close proximity to their abuser more frequently, an abuser can use any tool to exert control over their victim, including a national health concern such as COVID-19. In a time where companies may be encouraging that their employees work remotely, and the CDC is encouraging "social distancing," an abuser may take advantage of an already stressful situation to gain more control.

Here are a few examples of how COVID-19 could uniquely impact intimate partner violence survivors:

- Abusive partners may withhold necessary items, such as hand sanitizer or disinfectants.
- Abusive partners may share misinformation about the pandemic to control or frighten survivors, or to prevent them from seeking appropriate medical attention if they have symptoms.
- Abusive partners may withhold insurance cards, threaten to cancel insurance, or prevent survivors from seeking medical attention if they need it.
- An abusive partner may feel more justified and escalate their isolation tactics.

If any of the above sound like they may be happening to you or someone you love, here are a few suggestions for survivors that may make this uncertain time feel a little bit safer:

Create a safety plan.

- A safety plan is a personalized, practical plan that includes ways to remain safe while in a relationship, planning to leave, or after you leave. The Hotline will safety plan with victims, friends, family members, and anyone who is concerned about their own safety or the safety of someone else.
- You and your partner may be told by either or both of your employers to work remotely to limit social interaction. Having a safety plan laid out can help you to protect yourself during this stressful time.
- Because there may be limited shelter availability due to COVID-19, consider alternatives such as staying with family or friends, staying in motels, or sleeping in your vehicle. Be extra mindful of good hygiene practices if you're leaving as well – wash your hands regularly, avoid touching your face, minimize contact with surfaces that other people have had contact with, etc.

Practice self-care.

- COVID-19 is causing uncertainty for many people, but getting through this time while experiencing abuse can feel really overwhelming. Taking time for your health and wellness can make a big difference in how you feel.
- If you're a friend or family member of someone experiencing abuse, you are likely not able to visit them in person right now. Seeing someone you care about being hurt is stressful. Remind yourself that you can't make decisions for someone else, but you can encourage your loved one to think about their wellbeing, safety plan and practice self-care while they are in their home.

Reach out for help.

- While people are encouraged to stay at home, you may feel isolated from your friends and family. Even if you are isolated, try to maintain social connections online or over the phone, if it is safe to do so, and try to stick to your daily routines as much as possible.
- For any victims and survivors who need support, The Hotline is available, 24/7. **Call 1-800-799-7233 or 1-800-799-7233 for TTY**, or if you're unable to speak safely, you can log onto thehotline.org or text LOVEIS to 22522.

You are not alone.

- Local resource- **Domestic Violence Network** - 317-872-1086, dvnconnect.org
- **National Sexual Assault Hotline** is 24/7 – 800-656-4673 - Chat line also available at https://hotline.rainn.org/online?_ga=2.1272049.1121455869.1584120887-1734706098.1584120887
- **National Parent Helplines** Monday-Friday 12PM-9AM **1-855-4272736**
- **Beacon of Hope Crisis Center** provides support and education to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Those in need can call **317-731-6140**, email info@beaconofhopeindy.org or send messages on social media platforms. Learn more at beaconofhopeindy.org.
- **The Julian Center**, located at 2011 N. Meridian St., offers a safe haven for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. To learn more about supportive services or to contact the 24-7 crisis line, call **317-920-9320**. Learn more at juliancenter.org.
- **Families First:** Counselors will work with you and family members to create a safety plan, help you with stress management and communication, and talk about the signs of addictive relationships and violence. Call 317-634-6341 and ask to speak with a program assistant for domestic violence services. Learn more at familiesfirstindiana.org.
- **Indiana 211:** Hoosiers can call **211** or **866-211-9966** to be connected with resources and advocates near them 24/7. Learn more at in211.communityos.org.
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline:** The hotline has representatives available to speak to victims and survivors 24/7. Call **1-800-799-7233** or log on to speak to someone. If you're unable to speak safely, log on to thehotline.org or text LOVEIS to 22522.

Creating Safety Plans

- More information on safety plans here! <https://www.thehotline.org/help/path-to-safety/>
- An interactive guide to creating a safety plan here! https://www.loveisrespect.org/for-yourself/safety-planning/interactive-safety-plan/#gf_1