

BATTERED

*What can
I do?*

A SURVIVAL MANUAL

Maryland
MW
Commission
on Women

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Relevant Maryland Statutes

Child Custody and Visitation.....	Family Law Article Title 9
Child Support.....	Family Law Article Title 12
Criminal Law.....	Article 27
Divorce.....	Family Law Article Title 7
Domestic Violence.....	Family Law Article Title 4, Section 5
Forcible Entry & Detainer.....	Real Property Article
Peace Order Proceeding.....	Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, Section 3

This booklet is intended only to provide you with general information about the laws affecting victims of domestic violence. Readers should not rely on the information in this booklet as current, as Maryland's laws change from time to time. This booklet is not intended to provide you with legal advice and should not be relied upon as legal advice. Individuals with specific legal questions or a pending legal action are strongly encouraged to contact an attorney for legal advice.

I. Overview of Domestic Violence

This booklet is designed to help those who want to be free from domestic violence. It explains what legal protection is available in Maryland for victims of abuse and how to get that protection.

Domestic violence is a crime, but many victims feel that their spouse or partner has the right to abuse them or that they must live with violence. The first step to confronting an abusive relationship is to recognize that such violence is unacceptable. Maryland law provides both criminal and civil means for victims of abuse to get protection.

Ad In addition to an overview of your legal protections, including the legal petitions that abused or battered people may file to gain relief from the courts, this booklet provides in its appendix a list of domestic violence programs throughout the State of Maryland. Where a particular law is referred to, it will come from the Family Law Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland unless otherwise specified. Most public libraries include the Annotated Code of Maryland in their collections. A list of law libraries that have the Annotated Code of Maryland and are accessible to the public is in the back of this booklet. Your county's circuit court library may also be open to the public.

What is Abuse?

Domestic violence consists of a wide range of behaviors, some of which are criminal and all of which are unacceptable. Some behaviors may not be criminal, although they are part of an abuser's controlling behavior.

Abusive actions that are not physically violent may include:

- degrading comments;
- controlling access to family resources;
- controlling the victim's time and activities.

These abusive behaviors can accompany physical violence or lead to it.

Pc Abusive actions that are physically violent include acts that are defined as "abuse" under Section 4-501. Those acts include:

- any act that causes serious bodily harm;
- any act that places a person in fear of imminent serious

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- bodily harm;
 - assault in any degree;
 - rape or sexual offense; or
 - false imprisonment.

"Abuse" includes pushing, hitting, punching, choking, and other forms of assault, a legal term for an unwelcome physical contact that entails some injury or offensive touching. It also covers assault, which includes verbal threats of physical abuse, made with the apparent ability to carry out the threats.

What kinds of relationships are covered by the law?

Under Section 4-501(h), only certain people can obtain relief from an abusive person. You may obtain an ex parte order or a protective order if you are:

- the current or former spouse of the person abusing you;
- a person who has had a sexual relationship with the abuser and lived with the abuser for at least 90 days within the past year;
- related to the abuser by blood, marriage, or adoption;
- a parent, stepparent, child, or stepchild of the abuser, and has lived with the abuser for at least 90 days within the past year;
- a physically or mentally disabled adult; or
- a person who has a child in common with the abuser, regardless of whether you have ever been married to the abuser.

Under the Peace Order proceeding, found at Section 3-1501 of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article of the Maryland Code, however, other individuals may petition the court for relief from abuse. The individuals eligible for relief under the Peace Order Proceeding include people who have dated but have never lived together and have no children.

The legal remedies for abuse are described more fully below.

Remember that battering and abusive behavior can occur at any time during your relationship. It may continue throughout the entire period that you are with your abuser. It may become more frequent or more

severe as time passes. Therefore, it is imperative that you, the domestic violence victim, take action to protect yourself. **Some studies demonstrate, however, that abuse continues and may even escalate when victims take steps to protect themselves from abusers. It is very important to plan for your safety.** You may also need emotional or financial support or shelter. A list of agencies and organizations that may help you is found at the end of this booklet. You should contact them. You should also seek legal help through the courts in order to obtain protection from further domestic violence. There are several ways of obtaining protection through the legal system.

II. Legal Remedies for Abuse

What you should do immediately after an incident of abuse

1. Call the Police - As soon as you can get to a telephone and when it is safe for you to do so, call your local police department or 911, the emergency telephone number, to report the incident. Give the officer who is taking the report as much information about this assault as possible. For example, if your abuser struck you in the eye and then threatened to kill you, you should say that. Ask the police department to write a report of the incident. The officer should give you a police report number, which is helpful for filing criminal charges. If you are not offered a police report number, ask for it. Unless the police arrest the abuser, it is generally your responsibility to file criminal charges against the abuser. Directions for filing criminal charges are listed below.

The police can arrest the abuser without a warrant if the officer has probable cause to believe that a felony, such as assault with intent to murder, has occurred. A felony is a serious crime such as attempted murder or rape. For example, if your abuser stabbed you with a knife, that may be enough for the officer to arrest the abuser without a warrant for assault with intent to murder.

A misdemeanor is a less serious crime that is usually punishable with a fine or a short prison term. A police officer may make an arrest for a misdemeanor offense without a warrant for attacks between people who are married or living together that occur in the officer's presence or for incidents reported within 48 hours and where the officer has probable cause to believe that:

-
- the abuser battered the victim
 - there is evidence of physical injury
 - unless the abuser is immediately apprehended the abuser may not be apprehended, or may cause injury to the victim or his/her property or anyone else's property, or the abuser may tamper with, dispose of or destroy evidence.
 - See Article 27, Section 594B

Under Section 4-511, a police officer responding to an act of domestic violence can remove a firearm from the scene if the officer has probable cause to believe that an act of domestic violence occurred and the officer has observed the firearm on the scene.

You have a right to obtain, without a subpoena, a copy of any incident report filed by a police officer for you. The officer is required to provide you with a written notice of your rights and options. This includes the telephone numbers of local domestic violence programs. If you do not receive this information, ask for it.

2. Seek Medical Care - You should seek medical attention at a hospital emergency room or from a personal physician. Obtain a copy of the medical report. If possible, you should have someone take pictures of any visible marks, bruises, or injuries that the abuser made, and pictures of any physical damage to the home resulting from the violent incident.

3. Leave the home - If it is unsafe to remain living in your home, you should seek shelter with a friend, relative, or at a domestic violence program. A list of shelters for victims of domestic violence appears at the end of this booklet. The police are required to accompany you to the family home so that you can remove personal clothing and items as well as items for any child in your care.

If you must leave the home, you should take any minor children, since the abuser may use the children to coerce you to return. It is also to your advantage to take the children with you so that custody does not become an issue later. If there is a custody order in effect that gives custody to your abuser, you should consult an attorney.

In case you need to leave the home quickly, you should keep important documents such as social security cards, legal papers, food stamps, medical records, deeds, lease agreements and telephone numbers in a

safe, secure and accessible place. There are agencies in the end of this booklet that can work with you to develop a "safety plan" that will go into effect in a crisis situation.

In addition to ensuring your own safety, you should try to obtain evidence that can be used against your abuser. For example, you should save any items that your abuser broke or weapons that your abuser used against you. Such items may prove useful to the prosecution in a criminal trial. Take pictures of your injuries. You should also try to gather the names and addresses of any witnesses to the abuser's illegal behavior. You should provide this information to the State's Attorney's Office if that office is pursuing criminal charges against your abuser so it can issue subpoenas against the witnesses.



Filing Criminal Charges

If you have been physically abused or threatened, you may file criminal charges against the abuser. Charges for assault, telephone misuse, destruction of property, trespass, and harassment are typical misdemeanor charges. If a weapon is used, an abuser may be charged with a felony such as assault with intent to murder. If the abuser tries to force you to have sex, you may file charges for sexual assault. There are different levels of sexual assault, which can be found in Article 27 of the Maryland Code.

Steps for filing Criminal Charges

1. Obtain a police report - If a report was not made at the scene of the crime, you can go to the police station in the district where the crime occurred and ask the police to write an incident report. You should be very clear in explaining the violence (i.e. where the abuser hit you, how many times you were hit, and were you hit with an open or closed hand or was a weapon used?) You should also make sure you ask for a copy of this incident report.

2. Take the police report to the Court Commissioner located at the police station, or in some cases, in the courthouse - Fill out a statement of charges, giving the Commissioner detailed facts of the incident and any other evidence of the crime. On the form, write a list of the events that occurred in the order that they occurred. The Commissioner may then issue either a **summons**, which simply orders the abuser to appear in a court on a certain date, or a **warrant** for the



abuser's arrest if there is a finding of probable cause. Once the Commissioner has issued charges, you will be notified when to appear in court. This information will be listed on the copy of the statement of charges provided to you. The Commissioner may also decline to issue charges. If this occurs, you should ask the Commissioner to explain why he or she refused to issue charges.

Filing criminal charges against your abuser does not guarantee your safety. If the commissioner issues a summons against your abuser, there are no conditions imposed on the abuser to protect you from abuse and the abuser remains free until your court hearing. If the commissioner issues a warrant for your abuser's arrest, the abuser may attempt to contact you prior to the abuser's arrest. Even after your abuser is arrested, the abuser may not remain in custody. You should be aware that your abuser might react violently to your decision to file criminal charges. You may want to contact the agencies at the back of this booklet for additional information on how to protect yourself.

When proceeding with a criminal action, it is not necessary to have an attorney, because the State's Attorney will prosecute the case against your abuser. You should cooperate with the State's Attorney and provide him or her with information about all evidence in your possession. Turn over such evidence when the State's Attorney asks you for the evidence. Once the criminal legal procedure has begun, you should follow through with the complaint. Remember - you have the right to be free from abuse and following through with criminal charges is often one of the most effective deterrents against future violence.

One roadblock that may come up in your attempt to prosecute your abuser criminally is that the abuser may file criminal charges against you. This is not uncommon. The abuser may think he or she can intimidate you into dropping your charges. If your abuser files criminal charges against you, contact the Office of the Public Defender if you are low-income, or a private criminal defense attorney.

As a victim-witness in a criminal case, the court should provide you with a **victim's services coordinator**, who will help you through the criminal justice process. Information regarding victim's services is located at the end of this booklet in the appendix.

Marital Rape

If a husband rapes his spouse, he may only be prosecuted under certain circumstances. He may be prosecuted if he and his spouse have lived separate and apart without having sexual relations and there is a written separation agreement, or if he and his spouse have lived separate and apart without sexual relations without a separation agreement for at least three months immediately before the sexual offense. If the parties are living together, a husband may be prosecuted for rape of his spouse only if he uses force against her will and without her consent. See Article 27, Section 464D of the Maryland Criminal Code for more information on the marital rape exemption.



Filing Civil Actions

Order for Protection against Domestic Violence

In addition to filing criminal charges, you may file for an Order of Protection against Domestic Violence. You may be entitled to such an order if you have a relationship with the abuser that is covered by the law.

Under Section 4-501(h), you are eligible for the protection order if you are:

- the current or former spouse of the abuser;
- a person who has or had a sexual relationship with the abuser and lived with the abuser for at least 90 days within the past year;
- related to the abuser by blood, marriage, or adoption;
- a parent, stepparent, child, or stepchild of the abuser who has lived with the abuser for at least 90 days within the past year;
- a physically or mentally disabled adult ; or
- a person who has a child in common with the abuser.

How to Obtain an Order of Protection:

There are two steps to this process, both of which require hearings before a judge: the **Ex Parte Hearing** and the **Protective Order Hearing**.

1. Ex Parte Hearing and Order

The term "Ex Parte" means "without the party", which in this case means without the abuser being present.

Ex Parte Petition

To get an Ex Parte Order, you must go to the clerk's office at the Civil District Court or the Circuit Court and fill out a Petition for Protection Against Domestic Violence in order to demonstrate that you were abused and why you need protection. On this form, you should explain precisely what happened during the violent incident and you should also include past incidents of domestic violence. This process costs about \$10.00, but the abused person is not responsible for the fee.

You should also explain the type of relief that you want, or what you want the court to order. In an Ex Parte order and pursuant to Section 4-505(a)(2), the court may:

- order the abuser to stop further abuse or threats of abuse;
- order the abuser to stop contacting, attempting to contact, or harassing you;
- order the abuser not to enter your residence;
- order the abuser to leave the home immediately if you and your abuser live together and award temporary use and possession of the home to you. If you are not married to the abuser, your name must appear on the lease or deed to the home, or you must have lived there with the abuser for at least 90 days within the last year to be eligible for this relief;
- order the abuser to stay away from your place of employment, school, or temporary residence, or the home of other family members
- award temporary custody of a minor child to you or the abuser.

Ex Parte Hearing

The clerk will give the Ex Parte petition to the judge and a hearing will be held, almost always on the same day you filed the Ex Parte petition. Generally, the abuser is not present at this hearing. You will be given the opportunity to tell the judge about the abuse you suffered. You should provide the judge with all the information you can about your case. If the judge finds that there are reasonable grounds to

believe that you have been abused, you will receive the Ex Parte Order. At the same time the judge issues the Ex Parte Order, he or she will schedule a date for the Protective Order Hearing. The date and time will be noted on the copy of the Ex Parte Order. You must return for the Protective Order Hearing in order for the relief to continue. The Ex Parte Order lasts only until the Protective Order hearing, which usually takes place about seven days later.

The clerk will provide a copy of the Ex Parte Order to the law enforcement agency that delivers it to the abuser. In most jurisdictions, this will be the local police department or the sheriff's office. You must provide the court with all addresses at which the abuser is likely to be found. The Ex Parte Order takes effect when the abuser receives it. During the time the Ex Parte Order is in effect, generally for seven days or less, the abuser must stay away from you and should not contact you at all before the Protective Order hearing. If the abuser does make contact, you should alert the police immediately. If the abuser violates conditions of the Ex Parte Order (not including those conditions pertaining to custody), the abuser may be found guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine and/or jail sentence. The Ex Parte Order may be extended up to thirty days by the judge if the abuser is not served with the order.

2. Protective Order Hearing

Approximately seven days after the Ex Parte Order is issued, a second hearing, the Protective Order Hearing, is held before a judge. You - the victim - must attend this hearing. Your abuser will receive notice of the hearing and is likely to attend. The abuser may wish to consent to the entry of a Protective Order; in that case, no hearing will be necessary. In most cases, a hearing is required because the abuser will want to argue that there are no grounds for the Protective Order. If a hearing is required, you and the abuser each have an opportunity to tell your story to the judge. If the abuser does not appear at the hearing after being served with notice of the hearing, the judge may find the abuser has defaulted and you may be granted the Protective Order. If the abuser does not appear, you should ask the judge to enter a default judgment in your favor.

When you and the abuser appear for the hearing, the judge will take sworn testimony from both of you and make a decision whether or not to grant the Protective Order. This decision will be based on evidence,

the judge's assessment of the credibility of the people testifying, and other factors. You should be sure to take any witnesses who saw the abuse, pictures of injuries, medical reports, and any other supporting evidence, such as copies of police reports, that will help your case against the abuser.

If the judge finds by clear and convincing evidence that abuse has occurred, the judge should issue the Protective Order. Under Section 4-506(d), the Protective Order may order:

- the abuser to stop further abuse or threats of abuse;
- the abuser to stop contacting, attempting to contact, or harassing you;
- the abuser not to enter your residence;
- the abuser to leave the home immediately and award temporary use and possession of the home to you if you and the abuser are living together at the time of the abuse. If you are not married to the abuser, your name must appear on the lease or deed to the home, or you must have lived there with the abuser for at least 90 days within the last year to be eligible for this relief;
- the abuser to stay away from your place of employment, school, or temporary residence, or the home of other family;
- award temporary custody of a minor child to you or the abuser;
- temporary visitation with a minor children, unless you or your child's safety is at risk. You must make the judge aware of this safety issue;
- the abuser to pay Emergency Family Maintenance to help any minor children you have in common with the abuser, and if you are married to the abuser, to help support you; this may include an Earnings Withholding Order;
- that you have sole use of the car to get to work or to care for children you have in common with the abuser if you own a car with the abuser;
- the abuser or you to participate in counseling programs;
- the abuser to surrender any firearm in his/her possession;
- the abuser to stay away from a place where child care is provided to the child or the petitioner.

The judge can authorize that the Protective Order last for up to twelve months. According to Section 4-507(a)(2), at the end of that time, the Order may be extended for another six months for good cause. Another hearing must be held if you want the Protective Order extended.

If your abuser violates the Protective Order, you should contact the police immediately and file criminal charges. Some ways the abuser can violate the Protective Order include abusing, contacting, or harassing you, or by entering your home. Under Section 4-509(b), your local police department shall arrest the abuser without a warrant if they have probable cause to believe the abuser has violated the Protective Order.

A If your abuser violates the Protective Order, you may choose to file a Civil Petition for Contempt at the court where you received your Protective Order for violations such as nonpayment of Emergency Family Maintenance. You may not, however, file criminal charges and a Civil Petition for Contempt for the same incident. When the violation of the protective order involves harassment or abuse, it is advisable to file criminal charges. If a judge finds that your abuser violated the Protective Order, the judge may order that your abuser pay a fine and/or serve time in jail.

If you are married to your abuser, your abuser may pressure you not to testify in either a civil or criminal case and to exercise what is known as "spousal privilege" or "marital communications privilege." This doctrine makes most private communications between the spouses during the marriage privileged at the option of the witness-spouse. However, if your abuser/spouse violates the Protective Order and the action goes to trial, you may still be compelled to testify against the abuser if the charge involves assault. If there has been abuse of a child under eighteen, you may also be compelled to testify.

Peace Order Proceeding

A new proceeding to protect victims of violence who are not eligible for relief under the Ex Parte and Protective Order process described above became law on October 1, 1999. The Peace Order, which is part of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article of the Maryland Code, Section 3, Subtitle 15, allows individuals such as dating partners, neighbors, or former friends of an abuser to petition the court for emergency protection from abuse. If you have fled to Maryland

from another state to escape your abuser, you can petition for a Peace Order to keep your abuser away from you. This new law can be applied to abusers who are stalkers, regardless of whether they are known to their victims, who target another person for harassment or abuse.

In order to obtain a Peace Order, the petitioner must allege and prove that the person who has abused him or her has committed one of nine specified acts within thirty days before the filing of the Peace Order petition. In addition, the petitioner must prove that the specified act is likely to occur again. Those acts include an act that causes serious bodily harm, or that places the petitioner in fear of imminent serious bodily harm, assault, rape or sexual offense, false imprisonment, harassment, stalking, trespass, and malicious destruction of property.

A person seeking a Peace Order can apply to the District Court and must file a petition under oath. A Peace Order may be granted for up to six months. The only type of relief that can be obtained through the Peace Order is court-imposed instructions to the abuser to stop committing the abusive act and to stay away from the petitioner, his or her residence, school, and place of employment. For more information on the Peace Order, contact one of the organizations listed at the end of this manual.

III. Related Legal Issues and Remedies

Petition for Forcible Entry and Detainer

As a victim of domestic violence, you may also seek protection from your abuser by filing a Petition for Forcible Entry and Detainer to evict your abuser from your home. This proceeding can be used if the abuser has no legal right to live at your dwelling. This is true where the abused person owns or leases the dwelling alone or with someone other than the abuser. The abuser must not contribute to the rent or mortgage payments. This type of relief is generally used by unmarried people. However, a married person could use this petition if he or she has: **1)** moved to a new home which was never previously the marital home and; **2)** was a place the victim has not agreed to allow the spouse to live and; **3)** was a place where the abuser never contributed to rent or mortgage payments.

To use this relief, you must file a petition in either the District or

Circuit Court, and a hearing will be scheduled. The abused person should show the lease or the title to the property and any rent checks or receipts as evidence during the hearing. If the judge issues an order, the abuser has a right to appeal within ten days of the judgment. If the abuser does not appeal, you should contact the police or the sheriff in your jurisdiction to help you remove the abuser's belongings from the property.

Custody

Because children are often caught in the middle of a domestic violence situation, obtaining legal custody of the minor child or children is crucial to protecting them and the battered person. Until there is an

 Order by the court that gives one parent temporary or permanent custody, both parents, regardless of their marital status, have equal rights to their children. This means that both parents have the right to have the children in their physical possession and the police may not remove the children from one parent's possession. A battered person can obtain temporary custody of the children pursuant to an Ex Parte or a Protective Order. Such an Order gives the battered person primary rights over the children, and this custody arrangement shall be maintained unless and until a new Order of the court is issued. A person without any court-ordered custody should seek legal assistance before attempting to gain legal custody.

The court applies the "best interests of the child" standard to determine who should have custody of the children. Some of the factors the judge will consider include the fitness of the parents, the character and reputation of the parties, the desire of the natural parents and any agreements between them, and the potential for maintaining natural family relations.

In a custody or visitation case, the court, under Section 9-101.1, shall consider as a factor bearing on the welfare and best interests of the child, evidence of abuse by a party against the other parent of the party's child, the party's spouse, or any child residing within the party's household, including other children.

Divorce

 If you are married to your abuser, you may wish to consider taking steps to end your marriage. Obtaining a divorce - either limited (legal

separation) or absolute (final divorce) - may decrease domestic violence by separating you, the battered person, from your abuser, your spouse. By initiating divorce proceedings, you may also be able to obtain use and possession of the family home if you obtain custody of the children. Some studies demonstrate, however, that abuse continues and may even escalate during the time the battered person is separating from or divorcing his or her abuser. This means that while getting a divorce can help end a violent relationship, it may not be effective as the sole method used to end the physical abuse.

Under Maryland law, a person may obtain an absolute divorce on the grounds of cruel treatment or "excessively vicious conduct" towards the complaining party. There must be no reasonable expectation of reconciliation. These grounds do not require a waiting period before you can proceed. A person who is in an abusive relationship may be able to obtain an absolute divorce on either ground. An Ex Parte Order or a Protective Order is not admissible as evidence in the divorce proceeding. There are other grounds for divorce, such as adultery or constructive desertion, which may enable you to secure a divorce.

VI. Conclusion

Domestic violence in a relationship is one of the most painful experiences we may encounter in our lives. The fact that you are reading this book means that you recognize that no one deserves to be abused and that you are ready to make a change for the better in your life.

You have rights as an abused person and there are organizations that exist to help you exercise those rights. If you need additional information, please contact one of the agencies listed in the back of this booklet.

Domestic Violence Programs and Resources

Allegany County

Family Crisis Resource Center
138 N. Mechanic Street
Cumberland, MD 21502

(301) 759-9246 – Administration
(301) 759 9244 – Hotline

Anne Arundel County

YWCA Domestic Violence Program

1517 Ritchie Highway, Suite 101
Arnold, MD 21012

(410) 757-8300 – Direct line
(410) 974-0084 – Baltimore line
(410) 222-6800 – **Hotline**

Baltimore City

House of Ruth
2201 Argonne Drive
Baltimore, MD 21218
(410) 889-0840 – Administration
(410) 889-7884 – Hotline

CHANA

The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore
101 W. Mt. Royal Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21201
(410) 234-0030 – Administration
(410) 234-0023 or (1-800) 991-0023 – **Hotline**

Protective Order Advocacy and Representation Project (POARP)

Baltimore City Circuit Court
111 N. Calvert Street, Room 100
Baltimore, MD 21202
(410) 783-0377 – Legal Services
(410) 625-2766 – Fax

Domestic Violence Legal Clinic
District Court of Maryland
501 E. Fayette Street, Room 105
(410) 385-2263 – Legal Services
(410) 385-8974 – Fax

Baltimore County

Family Crisis Center
P.O. Box 3909

Baltimore, MD 21222
(410) 285-4357 – Administration
(410) 285-7496 – Shelter
(410) 828-6390 – Hotline

Domestic Violence Program
Family and Children's Services
3104 Timanus Ln., Suite 206
Baltimore, MD 21244
(410) 281-1334
Turnaround, Inc.
6229 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21212
(410) 377-8111 – Administration
(410) 837-7000 – Baltimore Line
(410) 828-6390 – **Hotline**

Calvert County

Abused Persons Program
Calvert County Health Department
P.O. Box 980
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
(410) 535-5400 – Main Health Dept. *or* (301) 855-1553
(410) 269-1051—Baltimore line
(410) 535-1121 – **Hotline**
(410) 855-1075 – **Metro Hotline**

Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot Counties

For All Seasons, Inc.
6 W. Dover Street
Easton, MD 21601
(410) 822-1018 *or* (1-800) 310-7273 – Administration
(410) 820-5600 – Hotline

Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence, Inc.
P.O. Box 5
Denton, MD 21629
(410) 479-1149 – Administration
(1-800) 927-4673 – **Hotline**

Carroll County

Domestic Violence Program
Family and Children's Services
22 N. Court Street
Westminster, MD 21157
(410) 876-1233 – Main Office
(410) 857-0077 – Hotline

Cecil County

Domestic Violence/Rape Crisis Program
P.O. Box 2137
Elkton, Maryland 21922
(410) 996-0333 – Hotline/**Administration**
(410) 996-0820 – Fax

Charles County

Community Crisis and Referral Center, Inc.
Center for Abused Persons
2670 Crain Highway, Suite 303
Waldorf, MD 20601
(301) 645-8994 – Administration
(301) 843-1110 – D.C. Line
(301) 645-3336 – 24 Hr. Crisis Line

Frederick County

Heartly House
P.O. Box 857
Frederick, MD 21705-0857
(301) 662-8800 – Hotline

Garrett County

Dove Center - Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Resource Center
12978 Garrett Highway, Suite 201
Oakland, MD 21550
(301) 334-6255 Administration
(301) 245-4525 Fax
(301) 334-9000 – Hotline

Harford County

Sexual Assault/Spouse Abuse Resource Center
21 W. Courtland Street
Bel Air, MD 21014
(410) 836-8431 – Administration
(410) 879-3486 – Baltimore Line
(410) 838-9484 – Fax
(410) 879-8430 – Hotline

Howard County

STTAR Center (Sexual Trauma Treatment, Advocacy, & Recovery Center)
10015 Old Columbia Rd., Suite G 118
Columbia, MD 21046
(410) 290-6432 – Administration
(410) 997-3292 – Hotline

Domestic Violence Center of Howard County
8950 Route 108, Suite 116
Columbia, MD 21045
(410) 997-0304 or (1-800) 752-0191 — Administration
(410) 997-2272 – Hotline

Montgomery County

Abused Persons Program
1301 Piccard Drive
Suite 1400, 1st Floor
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 986-5510 – Shelter
(240) 777-4210 – Administration
(301) 315-4673 – Hotline **and Walk-In Center**

Domestic Violence Assistance
Montgomery County Circuit Court
50 Maryland Avenue, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850
(240) 777-9077 – Legal Services
(240) 777-9085 – Fax

Prince George's County

Family Crisis Center
3601 Taylor Street
Brentwood, MD 20722
(301) 779-2100 – Administration
(301) 864-7140 – PG Homeless Shelter
(301) 864-9101 – Hotline
Domestic Violence Legal Clinic
Hyattsville Courthouse
4990 Rhode Island Avenue, 2nd Floor
Hyattsville, MD 20781
(301) 985-3588

Domestic Violence Legal Clinic
Upper Marlboro Courthouse
14735 Main Street, Room 155
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
(301) 952-4303 – Legal Services
(301) 574-3782 – Fax

St. Mary's County

Walden/Sierra, Inc.
23130 Moakley Street
Leonardtown, MD 20650
(301) 997-1300 – Administration
(301) 862-4880 (Fax)
(301) 863-6661 – Hotline

St. Mary's Women's Center
20945 Great Mills Road, Suite 106
Lexington Park, MD 20653
(301) 862-3636 – Legal Services
(301) 862-2585 – Fax

Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties

Life Crisis Center, Inc.
P.O. Box 387
Salisbury, Maryland 21803
(410)-548-9496 – Fax
(410) 749-4357 or (410) 641-4357 – Hotline

Washington County

Citizens Assisting & Sheltering the Abused (CASA)

116 W. Baltimore Street

Hagerstown, MD 21740

(301) 739-4990 – Administration

(301) 739-6717 – Fax

(301) 739-8975 – Hotline

Additional Resources on Domestic Violence

Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV)

6911 Laurel Bowie Road

Suite 309

Bowie, MD 20715

(301) 352-4574 – Administration

(301) 809-0422 – Fax

(1-800) MD-HELPS (634-3577) — Hotline

Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA)

1517 Gov. Ritchie Highway

Suite 207

Arnold, MD 21012

(410) 974-4507 – Administration

(410) 757-4770 – Fax

(1-800) 983-RAPE (7273) – Hotline

Immigration Legal Services

Catholic Charities

430 S. Broadway

Baltimore, Maryland 21231-2409

(410) 534-8015 – Administration

(410) 675-1451 – Fax

Law Libraries

In addition to those libraries listed below, call your local circuit court library

to find out if it is open to the public. Your public library may also carry the Annotated Code of Maryland and other helpful publications.

University of Maryland School of Law
Baltimore, MD

Call for location information

(410) 706-2373

Library Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.;

Saturday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

University of Baltimore School of Law

1415 Maryland Avenue Baltimore

(410) 837-4554

Library Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 12 a.m.;

Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.

The Baltimore County Circuit Court

County Courts Building,

401 Bosley Avenue,

Towson, Maryland 21204

(410) 887-3086

Library Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.;

Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Montgomery County Circuit Court

50 Maryland Avenue, 2nd Floor

Rockville, Maryland 20850

(240) 777-9120

Library Hours: Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The People's Law Library

www.peoples-law.com

The Maryland Commission for Women

The Maryland Commission for Women is a state agency that identifies problems, defines issues, and recommends policies and solutions that would change those practices that prevent the full participation of women in today's society.

For further information, call: (410) 767-7137
Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc. is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to promoting equal rights under the law. The Women's Law Center operates a variety of innovative projects for Marylanders, including family law programs such as the Protective Order Advocacy and Representation Project in the Circuit Courts of Baltimore City and Montgomery County (in partnership with the House of Ruth), the Legal Forms Helpline, and the Family Law Hotline.

The Family Law Hotline, 1-800-845-8550, operates on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The Legal Forms Helpline, 1-800-818-9888, operates every day except Monday – call for hours of operation.

For further information, call 410-321-8761,
Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.