

## Help and advice from the Violence Protection Centre

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### The Violence Protection Centre supports victims of domestic violence and stalking.

When the police ban someone from entering your flat or house, they immediately inform the Violence Protection Centre. An adviser will contact you and offer support. You can also contact Violence Protection Centre directly,

Gewaltschutzzentrum Tirol – Innsbruck

#### Address:

Maria-Theresien-Strasse 42a, 6020 Innsbruck

Phone: +43 512 571313

Email: [office@gewaltschutzzentrum-tirol.at](mailto:office@gewaltschutzzentrum-tirol.at)

Internet: [www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at](http://www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at)

## Work permit for female immigrants in the case of domestic violence

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Female immigrants are women who have come from another country and want to live in Austria. These women have the right to a work permit in cases of domestic violence. This applies when further cohabitation with the husband is unreasonable because he has threatened or physically attacked her or her underage children.

This is dependent on the condition that the woman, because of her husband's violent behaviour:

- has reported the matter to the police or
- a temporary court injunction is in place or
- the marriage has been dissolved or
- for example, one of the following persons or agencies can confirm that violence has occurred:
  - doctor,
  - hospital or medical centre,
  - women's refuge
  - Youth Welfare Office,
  - a child protection centre

## Help for victims of violence

[www.gewaltfrei-tirol.at](http://www.gewaltfrei-tirol.at)

**Everyone can be a victim of violence, even you.**

**Many acts of violence are perpetrated on people at home, and whether they are rich or poor makes no difference.**

## Violence concerns us all! The law protects everyone from violence.

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The law states: violence in all its forms is illegal!

Forms of violence include, for example:

- physical assault
- abuse
- rape – That means being forced by someone to have sex without your consent.

- being constantly controlled by someone
- being debased and humiliated – That means being verbally insulted and belittled by someone or being mistreated by someone but without physical violence.
- being sworn at

## We can help you!

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Something can always be done to tackle violence.

If you are a victim of violence, you have a right to protection, safety and help. It is important to seek help even if you find it difficult to talk about what has happened.

**Our help and advice is free and confidential.**

If you want, we can also help you anonymously. Anonymously means you do not have to give us your name.

**You can find help and advice in Tyrol at:**

[www.gewaltfrei-tirol.at](http://www.gewaltfrei-tirol.at)

## How can you help victims of violence?

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Finding out about violence in your family or amongst friends can be very difficult for you to deal with.

Encourage the victim to do something to tackle the violence. But do not do anything without the victim's agreement.

Support the victim in taking the next step.

Do not pressurise the victim into doing anything.

Do not plan or do anything that the victim does not want.

Give the victim the address and phone number of advice centres and women's refuges.

The best way to support the victims is by making contact and accompanying them to an advice centre.

**Tips for everyone wanting to help**

- Take everything victims of violence tell you seriously.
- Listen to them.
- Ask what support they would like.
- Tell them what you think or have noticed. But only do this if you are alone with the victim.
- Be sympathetic and show understanding.
- It is possible that the victim will reject your offer of help. But keep offering your support.
- Let them decide what they would like to do. It is really important that you are with them and are offering support. Do not make any decision without the victim's agreement, even if that decision is made with the best of intentions.

- Victims bear no responsibility for the violence, but they often feel guilty and ashamed. Talk about it.
- Do not criticise the victim in any way
- Do not speak badly of the perpetrator.
- Give the victim time.

### **Victims' behaviour is often hard to understand.**

#### **For example:**

- Why do victims not want to talk about the act of violence and prefer to withdraw.
- Why do they not report the perpetrator to the police.

## **Forms of violence**

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When thinking about violence, many people's first thought is physical violence. But there are lots of other forms of violence. We can help you deal with all forms of violence. The following gives you a list and explanation of various forms of violence:

### **Physical violence**

is an attack on another person's physical wellbeing. For example:

- pushing, punching or strangling
- slapping, kicking or throwing objects
- hair pulling, grabbing hold, beating
- burning with cigarettes
- pushing someone's head against a wall
- attempted murder or murder

- Why do they not leave the perpetrator.
- Why do they want to forget or deny the act of violence.

### **If you hear about violence in your neighbourhood,**

call the police.

The police have to intervene and do something.

### **If children are victims of violence,**

call the police — emergency number **133** — or the Children's and Youth Welfare — Phone: **+43 512 508 2642**. You do not have to give your name.

### **Emotional abuse**

is an attack on another person's emotional wellbeing with the aim of damaging that person's self-esteem.

For example:

- insulting or humiliating
- slander — This means that someone tells lies about a person with the intention of hurting that person.
- intentionally ignoring or not speaking to someone
- always belittling someone
- being excessively jealous and always controlling contact with family, friends and colleagues
- shouting at someone repeatedly

### **Social violence**

separates victims from their environment and people they are close to. For example:

- contact with relatives and acquaintances is broken off or impeded
- contact with friends is broken off or impeded

### **Sexual violence**

comprises sexual acts against the victim's will. For example:

- rape or attempted rape
- sexual abuse — This means that sexual acts take place without the victim's consent.
- sexual harassment — This means that someone is always saying he wants to have sex with you and you do not want it.
- sexual intimidation — This means that someone threatens to rape you.

### **financial violence**

makes victims dependent for money on the partner. For example:

- denying access to money
- only getting money by doing what the other person wants

### **Harassment and stalking are also forms of violence.**

Stalking means that someone intentionally and repeatedly follows another person, thereby harassing that person. This violence is often perpetrated by ex-partners when they do not want to accept the termination of a relationship. For example:

- frequent and unwanted phone calls, texts, letters or emails
- unwanted orders in the victim's name
- constantly being observed and followed

## **Victims' rights**

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The Law on Protection from Violence is intended to offer everyone protection from violence. It is also intended to protect people who have already been victims from suffering further violence. In this context victims have a range of rights, listed and explained here:

### **Restraining Order and Exclusion Order**

When you report an act of violence to the police and the police accept that your health, freedom or even your life are endangered, they can then force the perpetrator to leave the house or flat at once.

This is known as a **Restraining Order** placed on the perpetrator by the police. The police can also ban the perpetrator from entering the house or flat. This is known as a **Exclusion Order**. The police immediately take the door key from the perpetrator.

If children under 14 are also in danger, the police can also ban the perpetrator from entering the school, child care facility or after school care centre.

### **Extended court protection**

Should you need extended protection from the perpetrator, you must apply to the court within 2 weeks of the intervention by the police. There you must apply for a "temporary injunction". A temporary court injunction means that the court offers you immediate protection from the perpetrator. The perpetrator may not enter your premises for an extended period and may not harass you in any other way. It does not matter who the flat or house belongs to. Should the perpetrator violate the temporary injunction you must immediately call the police.