



5 Quick Tips: Reporting Domestic Violence to Police

1. Bring Evidence

Bring any evidence you have to the police station or show it to the police officer. Evidence can include your story of what happened, the story of any witnesses that saw or heard what happened, medical evidence, phone messages, text messages, emails, photographs of damage or injuries, Facebook posts or messages. If you don't have any additional evidence, your evidence is your story, which is enough.

2. Bring a Support Person

You can take a friend or support person with you when you report. If you need to you can talk to a local domestic violence worker or support service for help with reporting.

3. Make a Statement

Ask for a formal typed statement to be taken. Usually a general duties officer will take your statement, and they become the Officer in Charge (OIC) of your report. If you want a female officer to take your statement you can ask for one. You can also ask to make a statement directly to a Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO). Making a statement helps the police with their investigation of the violence. If there has been a history of domestic violence make sure you tell the police officer and include it in your statement. You will have to sign the statement once it is finished. If you do not agree with something in the statement or it is not complete, ask for it to be corrected otherwise do not sign it!

4. Get an Event Number

The police should give you an 'event number' and the name of the Officer in Charge (OIC) when you make a report. An event number ensures that the report goes onto the NSW Police computer system and is recorded.

5. Follow up by speaking to the DVLO

If you are not happy with the response that you get from the police officer that you talk to, or if the Police have taken out an AVO for you and you want further information about the AVO and court process, you can ask to speak to a Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO). In some areas the DVLO works part-time. You can ask for the DVLO to contact you later if you need them.

There are also other Liaison Officers such as the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Ethnic Community Liaison Officer and the Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officer that you can ask to speak to if you think your needs have not been met.

If you are still having trouble, or not getting a good response, ask to speak to the Duty Officer or the Shift Supervisor.



I reported domestic violence but the police did not apply for an AVO.

What can I do?

Try the police again

Go back to the police, either by yourself or with a support person. You may go to a domestic violence support service for help, tell them what happened and they may be able to help you by going with you to the police station again. If you did not tell the police about the history of abuse, that may have affected their decision so make sure you tell the police of ALL incidents of abuse and violence that occurred during the relationship.

The law requires police to take action in some situations. Go back to the police and ask them to act for you or explain to you why they are not acting!

Apply for a private AVO

You can apply for an AVO privately by going to the Courthouse and talking to the Registrar. You will have to make an appointment to see the Registrar where you tell him or her about the abuse that you have experienced and why you have fears.

Making an application for a private AVO will mean that the police will not be representing you in court. You will either have to represent yourself or get a solicitor to represent you.

At some courts there is a duty solicitor who can represent you on the first court date and later court dates for free. Contact the Women's Domestic Violence Advocacy Service and ask if there will be a duty solicitor at court to represent you for free. A private solicitor may be able to represent you if you are eligible for a grant of Legal Aid.

You should get legal advice before making a private application for an AVO.

I am a defendant in a Police AVO application but I am a victim of domestic violence. What can I do?

Get legal advice

It is important that you get legal advice before your court date so you can decide if you want to agree or not agree to the AVO application against you.

You can get free legal advice from a Community Legal Centre in NSW, Legal Aid, LawAccess or by calling the Domestic Violence Legal Advice Line.

Tell the solicitor about any abuse or violence you have experienced in the past by the perpetrator. Also tell them about any abuse or violence that has happened since the AVO application was made against you.

Abuse can include receiving any harassing text messages, voice messages, Facebook or Twitter posts. Make sure you keep any harassing messages you receive as they can help you in court.

It is advisable to get a solicitor to represent you in court. Contact the Women's Domestic Violence Advocacy Service and ask if there will be a duty solicitor at court to represent you for free.



Report domestic violence and apply for an AVO

Even if there is an AVO against you, you can report domestic violence to the Police. You can also ask the Police for an AVO for your protection.

If you have already reported domestic violence to the Police but an AVO is made against you, you can write to the Police and ask for the AVO to be withdrawn. Tell the Police that you are the victim of domestic violence and that you need an AVO for your protection.

If the Police will not help you or you would prefer not to go to the police, you can go to the Courthouse and talk to the Registrar and tell him or her about the violence and ask for an AVO to be applied for your protection. This is called a private AVO application.

Where to get legal help

Legal Aid NSW: www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

LawAccess: 1300 888 829

Community Legal Centres: www.clcnsw.org.au; 02 9212 7333

Domestic Violence Legal Advice Line:

T: 02 8745 6999 / 1800 810 784

Mondays: 1:30pm–4:30pm

Tuesdays: 9:30am–12:30pm

Thursdays: 1:30pm–4:30pm

Fridays: 9:30am–12:30pm

The Domestic Violence Legal Advice Line provides free confidential legal information, advice and referrals for women in NSW with a focus on domestic violence and Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders.

Please note: this factsheet contains general information only. It does not constitute legal advice. If you need legal advice please contact a solicitor.