

FAQ Domestic violence during the Coronavirus crisis (Covid-19)

Any adult or minor who is a victim of violence has rights that **also apply during the Coronavirus crisis**. The present FAQ identifies these rights and proposes a series of concrete steps to protect and defend oneself.

1. **Am I a victim of violence ?** If you are subjected to insults, humiliation, blackmail, beatings, sexual abuse or even financial pressure, **you are a victim of violence**. If you are « only » **threatened** with such abuse, you are also a **victim**. No violence is justified by emotional or family ties, you can protect yourself from the actions of your spouse/partner, parent or child.
2. **Do the health measures ordered because of Coronavirus affect my rights ?** **No, the Coronavirus situation does not affect the rights of victims of domestic violence**. You can ask for help and report the facts.
3. **Can I go outside my home to make a phone call and ask for help ?** **Yes**, any adult or minor, victim or threatened with violence can take all necessary measures to prevent violence, including going out on the street and asking for help, even during (semi-)confinement.
4. **Are police stations open during the Coronavirus crisis ?** **Yes, the Pâquis and Airport police stations currently remain open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week**. The other police stations are temporarily closed for sanitary reasons. You can also call **112** or **117**.
5. **Where can I take refuge ?** **The emergency shelter Le Pertuis** welcomes all adults in need (Route du Grand-Lancy 159, 1213 Onex). **Le Pertuis remains open during the period of (semi-)confinement and can accommodate you** (www.foj.ch/foyers/le-pertuis/; 022 309 57 28). In case of physical and/or psychological violence of a certain severity or in the event of sexual violence, the LAVI Center will help you organise your stay in a shelter and can temporarily cover the costs of this accommodation if necessary (022 320 01 02 from Monday to Friday from 2 p.m to 5 p.m , www.centrelavi-ge.ch or by e-mail at info@centrelavi-ge.ch).
6. **I need to be treated, what can I do?** You can contact **Genève Médecins on 022 754 54 54**, go to the nearest medical center (these remain open during the period of [semi-]confinement); identify the nearest center by indicating "medical center" on www.google.com/maps, or contact your family doctor.
7. **I am prevented from leaving my home, who can I call in an emergency ?** You can contact **the police** on 112 or 117 or the **cantonal helpline for domestic violence** on 0840 110 110.
8. **I am witnessing domestic violence, how can I help ?** If you **observe** or **hear** domestic violence, you can listen to the victim and send him/her the information in this FAQ. In case of emergency, you can also call the police (112 or 117) to intervene.
9. **To which authority and how can I file a criminal complaint against the aggressor ?** At the **police station** or by **mail to the Public Prosecutor's Office**, Route de Chancy 6B, 1213 Petit-Lancy, 1211 Geneva (with the help of the LAVI Center, see question 5, or a lawyer). It is important to have a medical report / statement of sexual assault established by a medical center (see question 6 above), the HUG gynaecological emergency unit on 022 372 40 49, the HUG UIMPV on 022 372 96 41 or by any other doctor. It is also essential to keep evidence of the violence (photos, screenshots of messages, etc.). It is also possible to report the aggressor to the police on 112 or 117, who will record a handrail (a written record of the acts reported which may serve as evidence).
10. **What will happen to the aggressor and to me if I file a complaint?** **1.** The police collects your complaint and the evidence. It is important to give it as much information as possible. **2.** The police questions the author and any witnesses. The police can also take measures to remove the aggressor or to keep you safe. **3.** The police investigates the facts and sends a report to the Public Prosecutor's Office. **4.** If there is sufficient

Status as of 3 April 2020

evidence, the Public Prosecutor opens proceedings and hears the parties (yourself, the author, witnesses, etc.) again at a hearing. **5.** The Public Prosecutor's Office can directly convict the author; in more serious cases, a court will judge the author. You will, at all times, have the right to be accompanied by a support person of your choice, to refuse to testify, to be assisted by a lawyer and an interpreter, not to be confronted with the aggressor (hearing behind one-way glass, screen) and to be heard by a person of the same sex.

- 11. Once the criminal complaint is filed can I change my mind ? Yes,** it is possible to **suspend the procedure for 6 months** or to **withdraw your complaint definitively**. These questions can be discussed with the LAVI Center (see question 5), a lawyer or a therapist.
- 12. Can I separate from my spouse/partner at any time ? Yes,** to protect yourself and your children from violence **you may request a separation (measures for the protection of the marital union) at any time and unilaterally**. The Tribunals continue to deal with urgent cases. The judge will decide on various measures such as : what maintenance payments will be awarded, who stays in the apartment, who will have custody of the children, who will have visitation rights over the children, If you are not married, only children and financial matters will be decided by the judge. It is important to gather as many documents as possible to explain your situation to the judge (financial, logistical, child-related and mistreatment aspects in particular).
- 13. Is it possible to prevent the aggressor from approaching me, from approaching my home and from contacting me and my relatives ? Yes, the Police can pronounce an urgent removal order for 10 days** and prohibit the aggressor from contacting you and your relatives. In the context of a separation or of an independent procedure, a judge can, on request, pronounce **immediate measures (superprovisional measures)**. These measures will immediately determine who can stay in the apartment and will prohibit the aggressor from approaching you and the home, as well as from contacting you by any means (telephone, email, etc.). The assistance of a lawyer in such procedures is recommended.
- 14. Can I leave the house with my children ? Yes, the duty to protect children** allows you, in circumstances of domestic violence, to leave your home with your children, despite an eventual joint parental responsibility. However, it is essential that you remain on Swiss territory and immediately inform the Service for the Protection of Minors (SPMi) of your departure (022 546 10 00) and/or call a lawyer, so that the legal steps are taken quickly, that the situation is regularised and that you are not blamed afterwards.
- 15. Do I have the right to have a lawyer, who can I contact ? Yes,** the **LAVI Center** (see question 5) and the **associations for assistance to victims** (listed at the end of the FAQ) can provide you with the contact details of a lawyer specialised in domestic violence.
- 16. Who will pay the legal fees and costs of a proceeding ?** The costs of proceedings and the intervention of a lawyer can be covered by **free legal aid**, if your financial situation does not allow you to pay for it. For **criminal proceedings**, the LAVI Center issues vouchers to cover the consultation of a lawyer (see question 5).

Specialized entities in helping victims of domestic violence

ORDRE DES AVOCATS
DE GENÈVE



ORDRE DES AVOCATS
DE GENÈVE JEUNE BARREAU

Emergency numbers	
Police : 112 or 117	Health emergency : 144
Genève Médecins : 022 754 54 54	Cantonal helpline for domestic violence : 0840 110 110
Emergency accomodation	
Le Pertuis Emergency shelter for adults alone or with children, open 365 days a year, 24 hours a day , even during periods of (semi-)confinement. 159, route du Grand-Lancy, 1213 Onex, 022 879 62 14 and www.foj.ch/	
Global support and psychological counselling	
Aide aux victimes de violence en couple (AVVEC) The association offers consultations to victims of domestic violence . The hotline is maintained on Mondays, Tuesday, Thursdays and Fridays from 2 to 5 p.m and on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 to 12 p.m on 022 797 10 10. Test to assess whether you are in a situation of domestic violence, individual interviews and discussion groups at www.avvec.ch/fr or by e-mail info@avvec.ch .	Interdisciplinary Unit of Medicine and Violence Prevention (UIMPV/IUMVPU) Psychiatrists, psychologists and nurses of the Geneva University Hospitals welcome you during the period of (semi-)confinement and can establish medical reports on the psychological state of victims of violence. 75, boulevard de la Cluse, 1205 Genève, 022 372 96 41 Monday to Friday from 9 a.m to 12 p.m and 2 p.m to 5 p.m and www.hug-ge.ch/consultation/violence
Pharos Genève Psychological assistance, social counselling and information service for men who are victims of domestic violence 022 736 13 13 and www.pharos-geneve.ch/pharos/contact/	Dialogai Genève et Le Refuge Genève Associations serving the LGBTQI+ community The Dialogai Association's support line for victims of homophobia and transphobia answers calls at all times on 076 382 55 84. The Refuge Genève hotline answers calls on working days from noon to 8 p.m on 022 906 40 35, or by email at accueil@refuge-geneve.ch . Accomodations solutions are possible.
Legal and social support	
LAVI Center Counselling center for victims of criminal offences of a certain severity. The consultations are maintained by phone during the period of semi-confinement from Monday to Friday between 2 and 5 p.m . The Center can refer you to a lawyer specialising in domestig violence and issue you with a voucher to ensure that the first consultation is free of charge. 022 320 01 02 and www.centrelavi-ge.ch/	F-Information Reception and guidance center to support women and families in their daily lives. F-Information answers questions by phone on Mondays from 2 to 5 p.m, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 12 a.m on 022 740 31 10 or by email femmes@f-information.org Legal hotline on Thursdays from 9.30 to 12 a.m on 022 740 31 11 and www.f-information.org
Sexual violence	
Viol Secours Association helping women, trans* and intersex persons (16 y.o.+) victims of sexual violence. The hotline is maintained on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9.30 a.m to 1 p.m on 022 345 2020 info@viol-secours.ch ans www.viol-secours.ch/site2/index.html	Centre de consultation pour les victimes d'abus sexuels (CTAS) The Counselling Center for Victims of Sexual Abuse advises and guides any person or family personally or indirectly concerned by the theme of sexual aggression against minors. 36, rue Jacques-Dalphin, 1227 Carouge, 022 800 08 50, ctas@bluewin.ch and www.ctas.ch
Support for children and youth	
Service de protection des mineurs (SPMI) The Service for the Protection of Minors is responsible for intervening in the interest of the child in case of abuse. The hotline answers from Monday to Friday from 8 a.m to 12h30 p.m on 022 546 10 00.16-18, boulevard Saint-Georges, 1205 Genève.	
SOS Enfants Genève Psychologist hotline for children and youth. 022 312 11 12 or www.sos-enfants.ch/index_for_mulairecontact.php	Pro Juventute Confidential and free telephone hotline for children and youth 147 (phone et texts) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week or conseils@147.ch
Support for perpetrators	
Face à Face The Association takes care of women, mothers and teenagers, girls and boys between 13 and 20 y.o. with aggressive and/or violent behaviour, as well as families with violent transactions. 022 345 12 15, 078 811 91 17 or www.face-a-face.info/	VIRES Consultations for perpetrators of violence (adults) www.vires.ch/ , 022 328 44 33 and vires@bluewin.ch