

Dealing with Intimate Partner Abuse During COVID

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Intimate Partner Violence Defined

Physical violence, sexual violence, stalking or psychological harm by a present or former spouse or partner.





Who is impacted ?

- Intimate partner violence can occur in heterosexuals or same-sex couples, and sex may or may not be involved in the dynamic.



The Silent Victims



Statistics.....

- **1 in 4 women** have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner at some point in their life.
- **1 in 7 men.**

And then COVID 19.....

Safer at Home?

- **Stay-At-Home policies create enormous danger for many survivors of domestic violence**
 - I. Usual “relief valves” are not available
 - II. Abuser is out of work/telecommutes, home all day
 - III. Survivor is out of work/telecommutes, new opportunities for abuser to exert control



Safer at home ?

- Threats of/accusations about infection
- Abuser demands survivor not use PPE or sanitizing protocols
- Abuser accuses survivor of not taking appropriate care to avoid infection
- Threats about cutting off access to health insurance or medical care (COVID-19 related or separate from)
- Abuser's frustration leads to heightened abuse



Law Enforcement

- Some law enforcement agencies are taking police reports over the phone rather than coming in person, raising questions about how enforcement of violations of the protection orders will be handled
- E.g., if the abuser is purchasing firearms during the COVID-19 pandemic or hiding firearms in undisclosed locations, it may be harder to get in person law enforcement assistance
 - Firearms removal programs may be less resourced during COVID-19 emergency or suspended due to need to shift LE resources to other emergency responses
- Some communities will not contact law enforcement

Court Systems

- Court hours may be limited, along with survivor's fear of going to court for help due to infection
- Survivors may not know how to get modifications in existing orders or provisions in new orders that will provide more safety around firearms at home
- Making sure court orders include firearms removal orders for local law enforcement
- Protection orders may lapse when stay-at-home orders in place



How Can Providers Help?

- Shelter
- Financial resources
- Escape (SAFETY IS PRIORITY)



National Domestic Violence Hotline

- 24/7 national advocacy and referral services
- Immediate safety planning
- Self-care resources
- Survivor-focused information on DV and COVID-19
- Phone: 800-799-SAFE (7233)
- Chat: www.thehotline.org • Text: LOVEIS to 22522
- <https://www.thehotline.org/2020/03/13/staying-safeduring-covid-19/>

National Immigration Law Center

- Regularly updated information on immigrant's rights during COVID-19 crisis:
 - Workplace
 - Access to Health Care & COVID-19 testing
 - Immigrant workers' rights
 - Immigration concerns & rights • Webinar trainings •
- <https://www.nilc.org/>

REFERENCES

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