

# Understanding Domestic Abuse & How a Family Lawyer Can Help

You are not alone. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone-regardless of age, gender, or background. A family lawyer can help protect your rights, ensure your safety, and support you in taking the next step forward.

## What Is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse is about control, fear, and power. It doesn't just mean physical violence-it can also be emotional, financial, or psychological. Abuse can happen between partners, ex-partners, spouses, or family members.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines abuse as including:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse (e.g. gaslighting, isolation, verbal attacks)
- Controlling or coercive behaviour (e.g. monitoring movements, restricting who you see)
- Economic abuse (e.g. controlling money, access to work or basic needs)
- Threats, intimidation, or harassment

You do not have to wait for violence to get help.

## How a Family Lawyer Can Help

A lawyer can help you feel safe and supported while securing the protection you need. Here's how:

Protection Orders:

- Non-Molestation Order - Stops the abuser from threatening, contacting, or approaching you.
- Occupation Order - Can remove them from your home or prevent them from returning.

\*These orders can often be applied for urgently and without notice to the other person.\*

Support for You and Your Children:

- Help arranging safe living and parenting arrangements
- Seek emergency protection for children
- Legal advice on contact and custody decisions

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## Financial Guidance:

- Protect your finances and access to money
- Advice on housing rights and who stays in the home
- Support with long-term planning (divorce, financial separation, wills)

## Compassionate Legal Support:

- Confidential advice at your pace
- A safe space to understand your rights
- Liaison with police, support workers, or other agencies where needed

## **You Deserve to Be Safe. You Deserve to Be Heard.**

Speaking to a family lawyer can be the first step toward safety, clarity, and rebuilding your life. You don't have to face this alone.