

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: YOUR RIGHTS

Protection options  
by the police, criminal  
law, and civil law



**BIG** KOORDINIERUNG

Ending domestic violence. Support for women and their children

Englisch

**BIG** e.V.

Bei häuslicher Gewalt - Hilfe für Frauen und ihre Kinder

**BIG** KOORDINIERUNG

**BIG** HOTLINE

**BIG** PRÄVENTION

**BIG** e.V.

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Senatsverwaltung  
für Gesundheit, Pflege  
und Gleichstellung

**be**  **Berlin**

## Violence against women primarily occurs within the supposed protection of their own four walls - that is, at home.

Nearly every fourth woman in Germany aged 15 and over is affected by violence. In other words, she experiences physical, emotional and/or sexual violence in varying degrees of intensity by her (ex-)partner or another individual. These statistics are the outcome of a study conducted by the Europäischen Menschenrechtsagentur (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights) (2014) in which approximately 1,500 women in Germany were interviewed. This type of violence is predominantly carried out by men, which in some cases leads to serious injuries and can even result in death in the worst case scenario. In 2015, 131 women in Germany lost their lives from partner violence (BKA Study 2016)

Domestic violence is carried out in various forms within relationships. It can also impact men in relationships with either women or men, as well as in relationships between women\*.

In 60 percent of the cases of domestic violence, children also reside in the household. Violence that is witnessed or even personally experienced can **significantly** impair the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of children and thus endanger a **child's well-being**.

\*the following information from the brochure concerns violence primarily experienced by women from men.

Under certain circumstances, for instance, in serious violence or in the case of very small children, it can cause sustained traumatic injuries. Therefore, violence must be quickly put to an end and comprehensive protective measures immediately taken for women and children.

### **Are you experiencing domestic violence in your partnership, marriage or family?**

- Are you being insulted, abused and humiliated?
- Are you subject to extreme jealousy and are under constant control?
- Are you not allowed to make your own decisions and is your money being taken away?
- Are you being mistreated, beaten, harmed, threatened or imprisoned?
- Are you forced to engage in sexual behavior or being raped?
- Are you being harassed, threatened and followed (stalked)?

### **IF SO, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO DEFEND YOURSELF!**

The above-mentioned acts are punishable and are prosecuted by police as well as the judiciary system (e. g. as bodily harm, deprivation of liberty, crimes against sexual self-determination).

## **Do you want to help those who are affected?**

- Have you observed violence in your familial, social or professional environment?
- Has a friend, relative, roommate, client or patient confided an instance of violence by a partner or ex-partner?
- Do you counsel clients whom you suspect are subject to domestic violence?

In this brochure we are also including you as a family member, neighbour, colleague or professional in the social and health care sector, in youth welfare or in public authorities.

Whether you are the one affected or a supporter:

**In this brochure we inform you about the rights with which women can defend themselves from domestic violence as well as protect their children from further acts of violence.**

In **Part 1** of the brochure you will find an overview regarding police intervention options for protecting the affected and against violence. We provide measures that affected women can take for their own safety and the safety of their children (pp. 6–13).

In **Part 2** we explain the criminal prosecution procedures, your role and rights as a witness in this process, and where you can get further assistance and counselling (pp. 14–17).

**Part 3** of this brochure outlines your civil law options in relation to protection from further acts of violence. We will show you how to obtain a restraining order as well as a no-contact order from the court, or an order stipulating that the offender can no longer use the family home (pp. 18–24).

## What is domestic violence?

“Domestic violence” is described (independent of the crime scene) as violent acts between individuals in a relationship,

- which is ongoing,
- which is in the process of breaking up or
- has already broken up

or

- who are related to one another insofar as the acts are not crimes against children.

Domestic violence (even observed violence) poses a threat to a child’s welfare.\*

\*collective definition according to the Senatsverwaltung für Inneres und Sport/Senatsverwaltung für Justiz (Senate Administration for Interior and Sport/Senate Administration for Justice) 10/2001

## Police protection

The Berlin police department has experienced and trained male and female officers on its force for cases of domestic violence and sexual offenses.

**Police can be contacted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, free of charge by dialing 110**

**When you call the police: inform them,**

- whether you are in severe danger at the moment (is the offender still present?)
- by whom or how are you being endangered, e. g. by a knife, by physical violence such as punching)

**If the offender is no longer present or close at hand, inform the police,**

- whether you are at immediate risk of further violence,
- or if the perpetrator is armed.

The police will then ascertain whether or not it is a matter of extreme urgency and rush to your assistance.

While waiting for the police, find a safe place, e. g. at a neighbour's, in stores, or lock yourself securely in your own home.

Let the police know where you can be contacted.

**When the police arrive, you will be questioned separately from the violent offender and will be given the opportunity to explain your situation. If you are in an acutely dangerous situation or if a crime has already been committed,**

- tell the police in detail what has occurred so that they can take appropriate measures to protect you and to prosecute the offender
- in addition, report any non-visible or past injuries,
- name witnesses, if possible.
- surrender the instrument to the police, if possible.

**You can leave the scene of the crime under police protection in order to**

- get to safety (e. g. in a women's shelter),
- receive medical treatment or
- document injuries and evidence of the violence.

**It is possible to expel the offender**

The police can remove the offender from the residence, confiscate his keys and prohibit him from entering the residence again. This removal and ban on re-entering the premises can have a duration for up to 14 days, if there still exists a risk the offender could commit further violence against you and/or your children.

### **A restraining order for the offender is an option**

In addition, the police are allowed to prohibit the offender from approaching you and/or your children as well as contacting you. This prohibitive measure can also be applicable for several days and cover any places you must frequent (e. g. workplace, daycare/school).

### **Detention of the offender is an option**

Police can also exercise the option to temporarily detain the perpetrator if the acute threat cannot be otherwise averted. Inform officers where you can be reached by telephone in order to be advised when your partner will be released.

### **Do you have further questions?**

For additional questions regarding your protection or support for affected women and legal options, you can contact the (BIG Hotline).

**BIG Hotline – Tel.: (030) 611 03 00**

You can access the BIG Hotline 8am to 11pm as well on weekends and holidays by the above-mentioned telephone number.

If you would prefer the BIG Hotline staff call you, the police can forward your telephone number to the BIG Hotline upon your consent. You can also request longer-term civil measures according to the Violence Prevention Act even if no police action has taken place, e. g. assignment of the family residence to you as well as a longer term restraining order and contact ban (see p. 18 “Civil protection options”).

### **You are allowed to file a complaint with the police.**

The police have a duty to record complaints. Complaints can be filed either verbally or in writing by neighbours, family members, the police or yourself. The police will record your personal details. In the event of particular threat, you are entitled to provide an alternate address at which you can be contacted by the police. This may be the address of a solicitor, a friend, your workplace, a support organisation or similar facility.



In the complaint filed, report what happened to you. You will be given a “leaflet regarding your rights as an injured party in the criminal proceedings” along with the police incident number.

You will then be requested to attend a police hearing, since your statement is vital to the progression of the police investigation. If you are unable to attend this hearing, you can arrange an alternate day at your earliest convenience. Prior to the hearing you may seek advice from a counselor or solicitor. It is also possible, as a rule, to either be accompanied by someone you trust, a psychosocial support (see below) or a solicitor. This individual may be present at your hearing.

### **Psychosocial support**

You are legally entitled to psychosocial support under certain conditions. This is a particular form of support for victims during criminal proceedings which does not include legal advice, nor does it serve to clarify the offense. This duty is administered by a lawyer. The function of psychosocial counselling is to support you as a contact person throughout the entire criminal proceedings and to reduce your individual stresses. In some circumstances, the psychosocial counselor is permitted to accompany you to the hearing and be present during the primary hearing.

You are legally **entitled to a cost-free assignment of psychosocial support**, if you

- were the victim of severe violence or sexual offense,
- you cannot sufficiently defend your interests
- have a particular need for protection
- are underage.

You should inform yourself about the options in your specific case at a counselling centre.

## **You have the right to refuse to give evidence**

If you are related, engaged or married to the perpetrator or impregnated by the offender or are in a civil union with the offender, you have the right to refuse to give evidence. In other words, you can decide at any time not to testify. The file will be stored for a few years. If you decide to testify at a later date, the proceedings can then be resumed.

If you are again subjected to beatings, blackmail and/or are threatened after filing a complaint, you should report this activity immediately to your solicitor, the police, the prosecution service and the court. **You can only receive support once the abuse from your (ex-) partner is acknowledged!**

## **Important information**

- Report all assaults/threats your husband/partner has exercised to date.
- Inform the authorities if you fear further acts of violence against yourself, your children or others who want to help you.
- Name anyone who may have seen or overheard anything regarding the incident.
- If possible, provide medical certificates relating to present (and past) injuries, and their consequences.
- Write down everything you can remember about the incident(s). Describe the exact circumstances (date, time, witnesses), and any further threats or acts of violence. Your documentation will help you in subsequent legal proceedings.
- If you are sustaining injuries, your doctor is to be relieved of the obligation to maintain medical confidentiality at the time of filing the complaint. The police will supply the relevant form for this purpose.

## Medical treatment and medical certificates

**If you are injured**, you ought to seek treatment by a doctor you can trust. In the instance of domestic violence, your injuries can be examined free of charge by a medical examiner in the Charité outpatient clinic and documented in court. You must make an appointment for this purpose (see p. 30/Address section)

**In the instance of sexual violence/crimes** you should immediately go to a hospital or doctor after the fact in order to document the injuries (as well as with photographs, if possible) and to secure traces of evidence. **It is important to not wash yourself until after this examination, even if you find this very unpleasant.** Other objects, clothing and laundry, which carry traces of the act of violence should be wrapped in paper (bags) and surrendered to the police. Have your injuries certified in every instance. These certificates are very significant as evidence and in criminal proceedings. For more information about criminal proceedings (see p. 14)

## You decide to leave your home

If you leave your home alone or with your children, you can obtain protection anytime and accommodation in a women's shelter or in a sheltered apartment. (see the addresses at the end of this brochure).

### **Ensure any correspondence can reach you by post!**

If you are leaving your home with your children and do not have sole custody or right of residence, you must apply to the relevant family court once you have moved out (see p. 21)

## Important items to take with you when you leave your home

- your own and your child/children's identification or passport
- birth certificate/marriage certificate
- your own and your children's health insurance cards
- resident permit documentation
- rental agreement
- work contract/pension notices
- notifications from a job centre or social services
- custody orders
- account documentation

- medication
- your and your children's personal effects (clothing, toiletries, toys, school supplies, diary...)

If you require any other personal items from your home at a later date, the police will accompany you to your home to ensure your protection if you are still in danger.

## **Registration and information block for your new home**

According to the Berlin Registration Act, you must register your new address with the local authority within 14 days.

**If you register at a women's shelter or sheltered apartment,** the registration office will automatically set up what is known as a conditional blocking notice. This means the registration office may only provide information from the register of residents to people who wish to find out their place of residence if this does not endanger you and your children.

**If you register at a friend's or relative's home,** you must apply for an information block on your own. You must give detailed reasons for the block information request.

### **How does the information block work?**

Before the registration office provides information about your new address to other individuals, it will ask you for it. You will then have to justify that you are threatened with imminent danger by informing a register of residents information service.

You must provide all the reasons in detail for opposing the forwarding of your address to the persons or places concerned. For this purpose, you are obligated – insofar as possible – provide suitable evidence, such as medical reports, police notifications, orders to protect against violence, etc.

For example, you must explain that you are threatened by a particular individual, have already been injured by this individual, or fear injury by the individual.

## Application for non-disclosure

You can make the informal application with the appropriate authorities, the Landesamt für Bürger und Ordnungsangelegenheiten (LABO) (State Office for Residents' and Regulatory Affairs). If you require support in this situation, you can obtain information from a counselling centre (see Address section).

You can obtain the appropriate form at a women's shelter, sheltered apartment or counselling centre. **You can also write your own informal application.** On the application you must provide your name, the names of your children, dates of birth and your new address. If you are from another federal state, you should apply for an information block in your home town as soon as possible, since the Berlin information block is not applicable there.

You will be informed regarding the information block and its duration (e. g. half a year, one year) in writing. Make note of the deadline provided, since the information block will automatically expire on that date. Therefore, it is advisable to prepare in advance if you need to request an extension. It is necessary to inform the Landesamt für Bürger und Ordnungsangelegenheiten (LABO) (State Office for Residents' and Regulatory Affairs), that you are still in danger.

**It is also necessary to apply for the right of residence for your children**, so that the information block also applies to them and to avoid the offender from finding your place of residence.

For joint children you can only request an information block if you have sole custody and right of residence (see p. 21 for more details).

## The criminal procedure

After the police investigation the documents for your complaint will be given to the public prosecutor's office, which will examine whether the conditions for the preferral of charges are met.

The preliminary investigations usually proceed as follows:

### **Enactment/termination of proceedings**

The prosecution will terminate the proceedings if it deems the evidence for a conviction is insufficient. You have the option to appeal against the decision. For more information, contact one of the advice centres that can offer you free legal advice. (see Address section)

### **Taking legal action/penalty order**

If the public prosecutor's office or public prosecutor's office is satisfied with the evidence, it will file charges with the relevant court or apply for a criminal order to be issued.

A penalty order entails that the offender can be sentenced to a fine or imprisonment on probation in a written out-of-court procedure. The case is subsequently closed. You will not be informed of this outcome, but can submit an enquiry about the case in writing to the prosecution service. However, as the crime victim you can apply to the police and be kept informed about the outcome of the proceedings.

### **Course of court proceedings**

The court decides whether it will allow the accusation and then sets a date for the court hearing. You and other witnesses as well as the offender will then receive a summons.

The court hearing usually occurs within a year once the official complaint has been filed. At the court hearing, you will be asked again to provide a comprehensive testimony, since the court is only allowed to make its decision based on the oral testimonies of those involved during the actual trial. The court, the prosecution, as well as the defendant and his/her lawyer, can ask you additional questions.

If you choose to exercise your right not to testify, any earlier statements you have made cannot be taken into consideration by the court. If no other evidence is on hand, this will lead to the offender's acquittal without punishment. Please note: If the defendant is not in custody, he can move freely in the courthouse. If you are afraid to encounter him, you can wait in a protected witness room until you make your testimony. Please inform the court beforehand (the telephone number is shown on your summons) and refer to the witness support centre (see Address section) The defendant is always present in the courtroom. However, he can be excluded from your interrogation under certain conditions.

### **Support and advice during court proceedings**

**The court hearing is open to the public** Nevertheless, the public can be partially excluded under certain circumstances. You can be accompanied by a psychosocial support counsellor, for example, (see p. 9) or by a person you trust.

At any time you can seek advice from a solicitor of your choice and commission the solicitor to represent you. Your solicitor can read the files and accompany you to a hearing. As a rule, you must solely bear the associated costs. The solicitor can advise you for this purpose.

After the testimonies from the defendant, witnesses and experts, and if necessary the experts, the prosecution will sum up everything that has been said and proposes a sentence (summation). If you have legal representation, your lawyer can now present your point of view. At that point, the defending lawyer and finally, the defendant himself, have the opportunity to speak.

Afterwards, the court will make its decision (verdict), in which the defendant

- is sentenced to a fine or
- sentenced to a prison term, which may be suspended, or
- be obligated to attend an offender seminar, or
- be acquitted if the evidence for a conviction is insufficient.

Proceedings may also be dismissed during the trial – e. g. in the instance of a financial settlement.

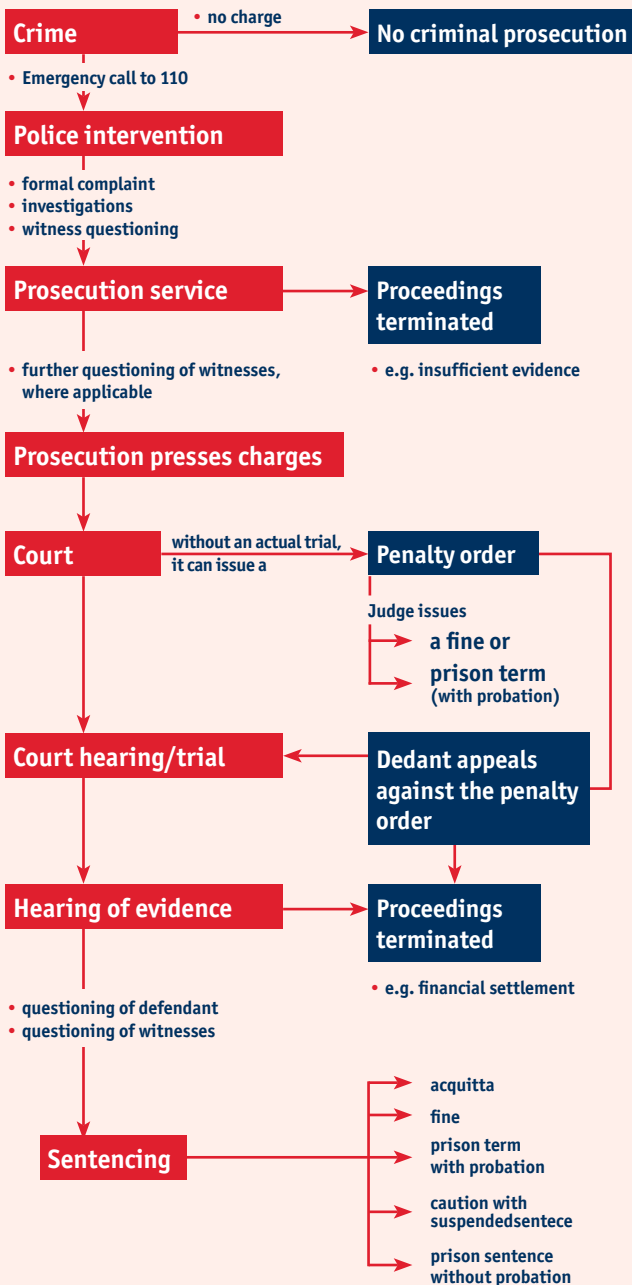
## Admission as joint plaintiff

For certain criminal offenses the Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates that you, as an injured party, can participate in the criminal proceedings as a joint plaintiff. In these cases, you are entitled to additional rights as a victim and witness, e. g. a right to ask questions in the trial against your spouse or partner.

If the court allows the accessory prosecution, you may also apply for legal aid. Most women's advice centres can provide details of experienced lawyers who also offer free legal advice on site (it is advisable to call beforehand to arrange an appointment). The centres can also answer any general questions relating to the trial (assignment of a solicitor, legal aid, court procedures, protection, compensation in notes from the criminal process...).



# Criminal procedure – an example



## Civil rights protection

If you (and your children) have been the victims of domestic violence or stalking, you can apply to the court for protection or allocation of the family home. This falls under the jurisdiction of the family court. You have the option to choose the court responsible for protective orders:

### The court in the district in which

- the crime was committed,
- the family home is located or
- where the defendant resides.

In the instance of an assignment of the family home in accordance with Sections 1361b, 1568a of the German Civil Code (BGB) or Sections 14, 17 of the Civil Partnerships Law (LpartG), the local jurisdiction is non-optional and is determined in the following order:

### The court,

- at which the matrimonial or civil partnership is or was pending,
- in the district where the family home of the married couple or civil partners is located,
- in the district where the defendant (offender) lives,
- in the district where the claimant (person affected) lives.

You may apply for a temporary injunction for their protection or to continue to reside in the shared home yourself.

This measure can be taken regardless of whether main proceedings have begun.

If you are threatened or in acute danger – that is, you are in an emergency situation – this is the quicker and generally less costly way to take legal action. The application must be substantiated and a credible case made to meet the conditions of the order. The court demands ‘present’ evidence in order so that a hearing to immediately begin a hearing of evidence.

This evidence could include a medical certificate or an affidavit.

You can apply to have your hearing held separately from the defendant's in order to avoid a dangerous encounter with him during the trial. Sufficient grounds must be provided for this application.

### **Child protection**

According to the law, no applications can be made for children under the German Protection from Violence Act. However, there are other applications you can make (as per Sections 1666 and 1666a of the German Civil Code) (BGB): Children age 14 and older can apply for these applications themselves and hire a lawyer.

You can also apply for the following:

- Indemnity and compensation (civil court)
- General court orders that guarantee your personal protection as per Sections 823, 1004 of the German Civil Code (BGB) (Civil Court)
- Custody (Family Court)
- Suspension of the right of access (Family Court).

In this case, you should consult/seek representation from a lawyer specialising in family law. You may be entitled to legal aid if you have a low income.

**Since the judicial proceedings and decisions referred to here may take a very long time, protective orders and other civil claims ought to be enforced in urgent proceedings.**

You can obtain forms from women's advice centres to help you with your application process or download them at: [www.big-koordinierung.de/Schutzantrag/](http://www.big-koordinierung.de/Schutzantrag/)

### **Protection orders**

The court can issue a restraining order against the offender relating to abuse, threats, harassment and contact in accordance with Section 1 of the German Protection from Violence Act (GewSchG). For children, Section 1666 of the German Civil Code (BGB) is applicable. For example, he can be prohibited from contacting you, approaching your workplace or home and your children's daycare or school. Police are informed about these orders in accordance with

Section 1 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG). If the offender violates a protection order in accordance with Section 1 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG) he is committing an offence. In this case, you can call (again) the police and file a complaint. You can also apply to the court to impose the payment of a fine. In some instances, he might even be taken into custody.

## **Assignment of the family home**

You can apply to have your **shared home to be assigned to you** in accordance with Section 2 of the German Protection from Violence Act (GewSchG). The referral can also be permitted on behalf of your children as per Section 1666 of the German Civil Code. If you are married or live in a civil partnership, you can also apply for assignment of the conjugal home in accordance with Section 1361b of the German Civil Code (BGB) or for sole use of the property in accordance with Section 14 of the Civil Partnership Act, under the provision that you wish to separately or are already separated from your partner and that the assignment of the shared dwelling is necessary in order to avoid 'undue hardship'. In addition to the assignment of the home to yourself, the offender can also be prohibited from terminating the rental agreement on the property or making it difficult for you to use the property.

**If you are the sole tenant and are living in a (non-marital) long-term civil partnership** with the offender, you can submit an application to your family court demanding your partner to leave the home. If both of you have signed the rental agreement, you should seek the advice of a solicitor to determine whether an exclusion of the offender from the rental agreement is enforceable. However, the court can decide to grant you sole usage of the property for a limited time period, even if the lease has only been signed by the offender.

You also have the option to request a **restraining order** in terms of **access, abuse, threats, harassment and contact** (including personal proximity) in accordance with Section 1 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG) through summary proceedings. Please note that court orders in accordance with the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG) decreed without an oral testimony

in the courtroom must be served by a bailiff. If you are entitled to receive legal aid, you should also apply for cost coverage of the initial serving of your order. The police and youth welfare office are informed regarding decisions in accordance with Section 2 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG).

## Custody

Children are always affected by the violence they witness. If you are separating from your partner or requesting legal action for your protection due to abuse by your partner, you can apply to the relevant family court for temporary sole custody/parental care of your children to avoid further endangerment of their well-being. This measure can be taken regardless of whether your petition for divorce has been submitted or not. The court may also have an obligation to take measures for protecting children. For example, in accordance with Sections 1666, 1666a of the German Civil Code (BGB), it can prohibit the offender from using the home, impose a contact ban, or withdraw the right of residence, etc.

## Right of access

Regardless of the custody order, the father ordinarily maintains a right of access to his children. If you or your children are at risk of further abuse or the children are endangered by witnessing violence, you can apply to the family court for a temporary or permanent suspension or exclusion of the right of access.

The court often orders what is known as **supervised access**, which means that visits must take place in the presence of someone you know or an employee of the youth welfare office or another organisation. Stepfathers (the mother's current/former spouses or partners) also retain a right of access to the child if the child has lived with them for a longer period of time and this access serves the child's best interests. If the stepfather has been violent towards the child and/or you, you can also apply for this right of access to be revoked or suspended. Alternatively, you can also apply for the court order stipulating supervised contact (visits accompanied by a third person).

Grandparents and siblings likewise have a right of access to the child on the condition that this access is in the best

interest of the child. Measures should be taken to identify the attitude of grandparents – the paternal grandparents in particular – towards the offender’s violence.

If they deny or downplay the risk resulting from the father’s violence concerning the child’s well-being, this could also constitute grounds for revoking or suspending access or for demanding supervised access in order to ensure the child’s protection.

You can also make an application for the suspension of the offender’s contact with your child at the same time as the protective order. Otherwise, it may be impossible to prevent the offender from approaching you when he collects or returns the child, or from harassing or threatening you again when making arrangements for the child. If a court order regarding the right of access is already in progress, you should inform the court when you apply for a protection order and at the same time, apply for the existing decision to be amended. **More detailed information can be found in the “Supervised access” brochure from BIG e.V.**

## **Proceedings in matters relating to children**

The German Act on Proceedings in Family Matters and in Matters of Voluntary Jurisdiction (FamFG) took effect on 1 September 2009.

The following principles are applicable:

### **Principle of expediting proceedings (Section 155 FamFG)**

Matters relating to custody, access, child surrender and risk to child welfare (Sections 1666, 1666a German Civil Code) must take priority over all other family matters and the relevant proceedings expedited. This means that a hearing date should be set no later than within one month from the date the proceedings were initiated. Requests for postponement from those involved can only be accepted in exceptional cases. A credible case must be made to support the application for postponement.

The parties involved in the proceedings (along with your lawyer where applicable), the youth welfare office and, where applicable, a guardian ad litem who has already been appointed must appear in person. The court usually also listens to the children involved.

For mothers affected by violence, the fact that this date is so close after the actual act of violence may be particularly stressful, thus a joint hearing could pose a threat to their safety. You must have solid grounds and make a credible case when applying for a postponement and separate hearing. Make it very clear that you are affected by domestic violence. You must point out that any decision regarding contact in court could be contrary to the orders in accordance with the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG). Even the summons to a joint discussion at the youth welfare office with the offender could pose a threat to you and may contravene a protection order.

### **Working towards an amicable arrangement (Section 156, FamFG)**

In matters relating to parental care, custody, access and child surrender,

#### **the court should**

- work towards achieving an amicable arrangement (e.g. the parents agree)
- refer you to advisory services, especially in relation to developing an amicable arrangement with regard to parental care/responsibility
- inform you of mediation options.

#### **The court may,**

- order counselling
- use an agreement as a comparison and legally approve it.

#### **The court must**

- discuss the release of a temporary order in the event an agreement is not reached.

Regulate or revoke the right of access with a temporary injunction, if counselling or assessment is ordered. In cases of domestic violence, it is not possible to work towards an

agreement, since there is no guarantee that the offender will comply with the agreements. This should be pointed out to the court with reference to the legal reasons provided for Section 156 of the German Act on Proceedings in Family Matters and in Matters of Voluntary Jurisdiction (FamFG) .

### **Indemnity and compensation**

Your claim for compensation includes the reimbursement of financial losses such as medical expenses, financial disadvantages in the event of loss of earnings, or costs for replacement of torn clothing and damaged items. The eligibility for compensation payments is based on personal satisfaction and compensation for personal suffering such as injuries, pain and humiliation.



## Where can I find what?

### Family courts:

#### Pankow/Weißensee

##### Responsible for the following districts:

Mitte (Mitte, Tiergarten, Wedding),  
Pankow (Pankow, Weißensee, Prenzlauer Berg),  
Reinickendorf Kissingenstr. 5–6

13189 Berlin-Pankow

Tel.: (030) 9 02 45-0

Information and legal claims office, Ground floor, Room B 2,  
Hours of service Mon.–Fri. 9:00–13:00,  
Thurs. 15:00–18:00 (for professionals only)

#### Schöneberg

##### Responsible for the following districts:

Steglitz-Zehlendorf and Schöneberg Grunewaldstr. 66–67  
10823 Berlin-Schöneberg

Tel.: (030) 9 01 59-0

Information and legal claims office, Ground floor, Room 11  
Hours of service Mon.–Fri. 9:00–13:00,  
Thurs. 15:00–18:00 (for professionals only)

#### Köpenick

##### Responsible for Treptow/Köpenick

Mandrellaplatz 6

12555 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 9 02 47-0

Information and legal claims office, Ground floor, Room 112  
Hours of service Mon.–Fri. 9:00–13:00,  
Thurs. 15:00–18:00 (for professionals only)

#### Tempelhof-Kreuzberg

##### Responsible for all other districts:

Hallesches Ufer 62

10963 Berlin-Kreuzberg

Tel.: (030) 9 01 75-0

Information and legal claims office in Rooms F020 to F029,  
Hours of service Mon.–Wed. 8:30–15:00,  
Thurs. 14:00–18:00,  
Fri. 8:30–13:00

## **Criminal court**

Tiergarten, Tel.: (030) 90 01 14-0

## **Women's shelters:**

- Women's shelters offer protected temporary housing for women (and their children) of any nationality.
- You can call a women's shelter at any time, day or night.
- The addresses of women's shelters are kept anonymous.
- Men are not allowed access into women's shelters.
- Accommodation in the women's shelter is free; you provide your own food/supplies for you and your children.
- You receive comprehensive counselling and support in a women's shelter.
- A stay at a women's shelter will not automatically result in divorce, and you will not be reported to the immigration authorities (Ausländerbehörde).

**2. Autonomes Frauenhaus**, Tel.: (030) 37 49 06 22

**Hestia-Frauenhaus**, Tel.: (030) 559 35 31

**Frauenhaus Cocon**, Tel.: (030) 91 61 18 36

**Frauenhaus BORA**, Tel.: (030) 986 43 32,  
disabled access

**Frauenhaus CARITAS**, Tel.: (030) 851 10 18  
facilities for the hearing impaired

**Interkulturelles Frauenhaus**, Tel.: (030) 80 10 80 50

## **Women's advice centres and intervention agencies**

offer the following services by phone or in person to women affected by domestic violence:

- social and legal advice
- information about police and legal measures
- assistance in finding a women's shelter or sheltered apartment

- support when dealing with authorities and in the search for an apartment
- offer legal counsel, group programmes, partial childcare, etc.

Consultations are confidential, free of charge and are offered by staff with knowledge of foreign languages as well as sign language skills and, if necessary, by language professionals.

**Frauenberatungsstelle TARA**, Tel.: (030) 787 18 340  
Advice also provided in Persian, Turkish and Afghan (Dari)

**FRAUENRAUM**, Tel.: (030) 448 45 28  
Advice also provided in English

**Frauenberatung BORA**, Tel.: (030) 927 47 07 Advice also provided in English and French

**Frauentreffpunkt**, Tel.: (030) 622 22 60  
SMS: 0151-567 40 945  
Advice also provided in English and Polish, as well as sign language

**Interkulturelles Beratungsstelle**, Tel.: (030) 80 19 59  
Advice also provided in Armenian, English, Persian, and all Yugoslavian languages. Disabled access

## Sheltered apartments

**Frauenzimmer e. V.**, Tel.: (030) 787 50 15,  
wheelchair access

**Hestia e. V.**, Tel.: (030) 440 60 58

**Zuff e. V.**, Tel.: (030) 694 60 67 + (030) 787 18 340

**Frauenort-Augusta**, facilities for the deaf  
Tel.: (030) 28 59 89 77 and (30) 46 60 02 17  
Fax (030) 28 59 89 78 and (030) 46 60 02 17  
SMS: 0160-666 37 78

**Interkulturelles Wohnprojekt**, Tel.: 80 10 80 10

The following locations offer further (legal) information and support free of charge:

## **Specific advice and information services:**

**LARA**, Specialised facility for sexual violence against

women Tel.: (030) 216 88 88 (Hotline)

Crisis and advice centre for women who have been raped and sexually molested

**Wildwasser e. V.**, Tel.: (030) 693 91 92 Self-help group and advice for women who have experienced sexual violence in childhood

### **FrauenNachtCafé – night-time emergency drop-in centre –**

Tel.: (030) 61 62 09 70

12055 Berlin, Mareschstraße 14

Hours of service: Fri. to Sat.: 20:00–2:00

Sat. to Sun.: 20:00–2:00

Wed. to Thurs.: 19:00–1:00

### **Netzwerk behinderter Frauen in Berlin e. V. (network for disabled women in Berlin)**

Tel.: (030) 617 09 167/(030) 617 09 168/169

**Ban Ying**, Tel.: (030) 440 63 73/74

Coordination and information centre against human trafficking

**Al Nadi**, Tel.: (030) 852 06 02

Meeting place and advice centre for Arab women

**HINBUN**, Tel.: (030) 336 66 62

Educational and advice centre for Kurdish women

**In VIA**, Tel.: (030) 66633487

Mobil: 0177 738 62 76

Counselling centre for women affected by human trafficking

**TIO**, Tel.: (030) 624 10 11

Meeting place and information centre for Turkish women

**EWA Frauenzentrum**, Tel.: (030) 442 55 42  
Legal information and general advice

## **Emergency child protection services**

Available day and night

**Kinderschutz Hotline**, Tel.: (030) 61 00 66

**Kindernotdienst**, Tel.: (030) 61 00 61

**Jugendnotdienst**, Tel.: (030) 61 00 62

**Mädchennotdienst**, Tel.: (030) 61 00 63

## **Victim and witness protection support:**

**Opferhilfe**, Tel.: (030) 395 28 67 Advice for victims of crimes

**Victim support at Tiergarten district court and Berlin regional court,**

Tel.: (030) 90 14-34 98/90 14-32 06

**Weißer Ring**, Tel.: (030) 833 70 60

**Wildwasser e. V.**, Tel.: (030) 2 82 44 27 Advice centre for young girls in Berlin-Mitte. Witness support for girls who have been victims of sexual violence and have decided to press charges.

**Tauwetter, drop-in centre for men who were sexually abused as children**

Tel.: (030) 693 80 07, Tues. 16:00–18:00, Wed. 10:00–13:00 and Thurs. 17:00–19:00

## **Advice centres for perpetrators of domestic violence:**

**Beratung für Männer – gegen Gewalt  
(Advice for men – against violence)**

Tel.: (030) 785 98 25, Mobile: 0170/380 18 14

**Berliner Zentrum für Gewaltprävention – BZfG e. V.**

(Berlin Centre for the Prevention of Violence)

Tel.: (030) 95 61 38 38

## **Advice centres for gays and lesbians:**

### **Lesbenberatung (Advice for lesbians)**

Tel.: (030) 217 27 53

### **Maneo**

#### **Advice for gays and bisexuals**

Tel.: (030) 216 33 36

17:00 to 19:00 daily

## **Additional counselling services:**

### **Stop Stalking**

Albrechtstr. 8

12165 Berlin

Tel.: 030 22 19 22 000

info@stop-stalking-berlin.de

### **Paargewalt gemeinsam beenden**

#### **(End couple violence together)**

#### **Caritas Familienberatung Mitte**

Große Hamburger Str. 18

10115 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 66 633 470

Familienberatung.mitte@caritas-berlin.de

### **Counseling and protection for children and their families after the end of violence**

#### **Kind im Blick**

Briesestr. 15

12053 Berlin

Tel.: 0151 14 64 87 55

### **Gewaltschutzambulanz Charité**

Birkenstr. 62,

Hs. N 10559 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 450 570 270

Fax: (030) 450 7 570 270

gewaltschutz-ambulanz@charite.de

www.gewaltschutz-ambulanz.charite.de



## Central initial consultation by phone in Berlin

**BIG** HOTLINE



030.611 03 00

Bei häuslicher Gewalt · Hilfe für Frauen und ihre Kinder

is available daily - even on weekends and holidays –  
**8am to 11pm**. Translators commissioned on demand.

BIG hotline employees offer advice to women experiencing domestic violence, as well as the people around them. Professionals who have questions about domestic violence due to their occupational activities can also contact the BIG hotline. Services offered by employees at the BIG Hotline include crisis intervention, placement in women's shelters and other protected accommodation, as well as information about police and legal intervention. In addition, they also provide information concerning police and legal options. They also provide extra service known as mobile intervention: if advice by telephone is not sufficient, an employee can provide counselling on site.

The BIG hotline operates in close collaboration with the following women's advice centres and intervention agencies: Frauentreffpunkt, Frauenraum, Tara, Bora und Interkulturelle Initiative

**Domestic violence is not a private matter!  
Get help for yourself and your children!**

**030.611 03 00**