

January is National Stalking Awareness Month



Stalking is a dangerous crime:

7.5 million people are stalked in one year in the United States.

In Virginia, stalking is defined as *conduct (on more than one occasion) which places a person, or his or her family or household member, in reasonable fear of death, sexual assault, or bodily injury.*¹

Stalking is a unique crime, because stalkers are obsessed with controlling their victims' actions and feelings. Stalkers will frequently threaten and harass, and in many instances will actually physically injure their victims.

Stalking is a crime that can be committed against anyone, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or geographic location.

- 15% of women and 6% of men have experienced stalking at some point during their lifetime.²
- The majority of stalking victims are stalked by someone they know.
- 1 in 8 employed stalking victims lose time from work as a result of their victimization and more than half lose 5 days of work or more.²
- Stalkers often use technology to contact their victims.
- In 2016, a total of 641 arrests were made for stalking in Virginia resulting in 144 convictions, a 30% increase over 2015.³

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BEING STALKED

Trust your instincts.

Victims of stalking often feel pressured by friends or family to downplay the stalker's behavior; but stalking poses a real threat of harm.

Call the police if you feel you are in any immediate danger.

Explain why even some actions that seem harmless—like leaving you a gift—are causing you fear.

Keep a record or log of each contact with the stalker. Also, document any police reports.

Save all e-mails, text messages, photos, and postings on social networking sites as evidence of the stalking behavior.

**If you or someone you know is a victim of stalking, please contact the
Virginia Family Violence & Sexual Assault Hotline**

1-800-838-8238 or www.vadata.org/chat (24-hours/day, toll-free)

For more information about stalking, contact the
Stalking Resource Center at the National Center for Victims of Crime
victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center

¹ Stalking—Code of Virginia §18.2-60.3

² National Stalking Resource Center Fact Sheet 2015

³ Attorney General of Virginia, Office of the Attorney General, 2017 Annual Report: Domestic and Sexual Violence in Virginia

