

Sheltering at Home During the COVID-19 Crisis: If That Sounds Dangerous for You or Your Loved Ones, You're Not Alone

Sheltering At Home To Slow Spread Of COVID-19. How Does That Impact Safety At Home?

[State](#) and local ordinances have mandated that people stay at home to slow the spread of COVID-19. Social distancing measures mandate that people stay home, close [non-essential businesses](#) and places of work, and ask people to avoid any unnecessary in-person interactions with others not living in their home. While these measures are crucial to slow the spread of COVID-19, they can increase danger for people who are experiencing abuse or violence in their homes.

Is This Happening To Me?

Relationship abuse is not always easy to see. It can come on slowly and subtly in relationships, so that you gradually get more used to increasingly controlling or abusive behaviors. During COVID-19, stress and economic uncertainty are high and along with more time at home abusive behavior can increase. Abuse looks different in every relationship; and any person, regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion or gender can be a victim, although risks can be higher for [individuals of color](#) and [LGBTQ+ individuals](#). Some signs an abusive relationship may increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic include: increasing power over already limited social interactions, control over behaviors including access to resources like doctor appointments and hand sanitizer, verbal put downs, accusations about spreading infection, or physical and/or sexual assault.

What Should I Do Now?

Develop a [safety plan](#). Safety plans are an important and crucial path to safety for anyone who is a victim of domestic violence. This plan can help you start taking steps to protect yourself (and others you care for) while in a relationship, while planning to leave a relationship, and even after leaving.

Adjusting Plans

Your safety plans may need to shift or be adjusted due to COVID-19 and the changes in everyday schedules and services. Plan for situations that might arise with your abuser and what you will do to stay safe. For example, if you can't get to a private place to call a support hotline, consider reaching out to a trusted friend or family member who could make calls on your behalf.

What Resources Are Still Available And Open?

While shelters are deemed an "essential service" and many are still operating, there are several instances when in-person operations may be reduced or shut down. Across California, service providers are continuing to provide 24/7 crisis lines and other services over the phone or internet and victims are encouraged to seek out services when possible.

For any victims and survivors who need support, the National Domestic Violence Hotline is available 24/7. Call 1-800-799-7233 or 1-800-799-7233 for TTY, or if you're unable to speak safely, you can log onto thehotline.org or text LOVEIS to 22522.

Para apoyo en Español las 24 horas, 7 días de la semana llame a 1.800.799.7233 o visite al espanol.thehotline.org/.

If You Need Immediate Help

In an emergency, call 911. In many areas, you can send a text to 911 instead of making a phone call. Check the availability of this option in your region.

Know that you are not alone. Many people are struggling with abuse during COVID-19. There are services out there for you even during this time of social isolation.

Learn more about COVID-19 and ways to protect yourself, loved ones, and your community: Visit [Center for Disease Control and Protection, COVID-19](#)