



OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA

*Working together for a safer community
La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe*

Partner Assault



Partner Assault Section
613-236-1222, ext. 5407

ottawapolice.ca



Partner Assault is a Crime

It's against the law for a person to assault another person. It doesn't matter who is doing the assaulting — a spouse, a current or past partner, a member of the opposite sex or same sex, or any person you have been intimate with — no one deserves to be abused. Remember, it's not your fault, and you are not responsible for the other person's conduct. **Police and others in the community can help.**

Although both women and men can be victims of partner abuse, most of the time, this type of violence involves men abusing women. **Calling the police is a positive step** toward stopping violence. Police are responsible for enforcing the law and deal directly with *Criminal Code* offences. A *Criminal Code* offence can be as simple as a slap or as serious as a homicide. Other types of offences include sexual assault, threatening death or bodily harm, forcible confinement, harassment/stalking, abduction, break-and-enter and property-related offences.

The Partner Assault Section serves the community by:

- investigating partner assaults and domestic conflict;
- investigating custody and access orders, as well as parental abductions; and
- conducting criminal harassment investigations relating to partner abuse.

Once Police are Called

You may have called police. Often, it might be a concerned family member or neighbour that called police. In any case, police will respond and conduct an investigation.

A police officer will:

- explain the report and investigation process,
- give you a file number for the “occurrence report,”
- if needed, a trained officer will take pictures of your injuries,
- help you leave or take you to a shelter,
- give you their names, badge numbers and contact information, and
- if needed, contact the Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Services (VCARS) program or other services on your behalf.

If you fear for your safety, tell the police officer.

It's not up to you to press charges. If there are reasonable grounds to believe an offence has been committed, the police are required by law to lay criminal charges. If the abuser is at the scene, the abuser will be arrested and charged. If not, police will try to locate and arrest them.

Even if police don't lay a charge, they will complete a report. If no charge is laid, you can choose to file a Private Complaint. This involves going before a justice of the peace at the court house (located at 161 Elgin Street in Ottawa) to request that a charge be laid on your behalf. You will be required to provide the police occurrence report number to the Justice of the Peace on duty.

The Children's Aid Society of Ottawa is notified when the persons involved in a domestic violence incident have or share children.

When Charges are Laid

The Victim/Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) will become involved soon after the police lay the charges. Staff will make contact and provide you with information about the criminal court process and your specific case. You can also contact them first if you have any questions regarding the court system (see the Community Resource List).

If you have any questions, or require further assistance regarding the investigation of your case, you can contact the Investigator assigned to your case. **Please advise police if you change your address or phone number** (to be able to inform you of any developments related to the charges or occurrence).

As well, the Ottawa Police Service's Victim Crisis Unit (VCU) may be helpful. The VCU is staffed by counsellors who provide crisis counselling, assessment and referral to persons who are victims of crime, tragic circumstances or critical incidents.

Legal Orders

There are some specific legal actions that may help you stop further violence. These include:

Peace bond — a peace bond is a signed promise, in writing, to keep the peace and be of good behaviour. If you are afraid that your partner will hurt you or your children, the family property, or pets, you can apply for a peace bond. To start the process, you must ask for a peace bond from a Justice of the Peace, and explain why you need it. The peace bond will not give your partner a criminal record as long as he/she does not break any of the conditions. Peace bonds are only in effect for *up to one year*.

Restraining order — the purpose of a restraining order is to prevent your partner from harassing you or your children. You can get a restraining order through the family court system (these orders are not part of the criminal law system).

Exclusive possession order — If you are legally married, the family court might decide that you have a right to stay in the house or apartment where you have lived with your partner, and that he/she must leave. This is known as “exclusive possession of the matrimonial home.” Your lawyer must file an application in court to request an order for exclusive possession.

Talk with experts to decide which order will be best for you. **A police officer can arrest anyone who violates a peace bond, a restraining order, or an order for exclusive possession.** Call the police immediately if your partner or ex-partner violates an order or if you’re afraid he or she will.

Child Custody Disputes

Often, the police are called to enforce court orders dealing with parents’ rights of access to their children. Even though there may be an order in place allowing for visitation, **the law does not give police the power to intervene and use force to enforce the order.** If one party refuses to grant access to children, then you need to go back to the court that issued the order concerning access. The court may then direct the police to find and deliver a child to the person named in the order. Police are only able to respond to incidents where access is denied and to keep the peace.

Partner Assault Section Hours of Service

Everyday 7 AM to 3 AM

Community Resource List

Police

Life-threatening emergency or crime in progress	911
Other emergencies	613-230-6211
Partner Assault Section	613-236-1222, ext. 5407
Community Police Centres and all other enquiries	613-236-1222
TTY	613-232-1123
Victim Crisis Unit	613-236-1222, ext. 5822

Legal

Community Legal Services	613-241-7008
Family Law Information Centre	613-239-1274
Family Law Office	613-569-7448
Ottawa Court House	
Civil Court Office	613-239-1054
Family Court	613-239-1274
Victim/Witness Assistance Program	613-239-1229
University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic	613-562-5600

Crisis Lines

The Assaulted Women's Helpline	1-866-863-0511
Help Line for Abused Women (available 24/7)	613-745-4818,
TTY	613-741-3556
Kids Help Phone	1-800-668-6868
	or 1-800-267-7946
Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre	613-562-2333
Sexual Assault Support Centre	613-234-2266
TTY	613-725-1657
Distress Center of Ottawa and Region	613-238-3311

Femme-écoute	1-877-679-2229
Tel-Aide Outaouais	613-741-6433
Services pour femmes battues	613-745-3665
	<i>(Voice and TTY)</i>
Femaide Ligne de soutien	1-877-FEMAIDE (1-877-336-2433)
Children's Aid Society of Ottawa	613-747-7800
Ottawa Victim Services	613-238-2762
The Ottawa Hospital – Civic Campus Emergency	
Sexual Assault & Partner Abuse Care Program	613-761-4366,
TTY	613-761-4140

Shelters

A Police Officer can accompany a woman to safety at the following shelters:

Chrysalis House	613-591-5901
Interval House	613-234-5181
TTY	613-234-5393
Lanark County Interval House	613-257-5960
La Présence	613-241-8297
Maison d'amitié	613-747-0020
ATS	613-747-9116
Nelson House	613-225-3129
TTY	613-225-4653
Cornerstone / Le Pilier (for women)	613-237-4669
The Shepherds of Good Hope (for men)	613-789-8210
The Ottawa Mission (for men)	613-234-1144

Community Resources

Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre (available 24/7)	613-745-4818
Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre (Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)	613-591-3686
Nepean Community Resource Centre	613-596-5626
Pinecrest-Queensway Health and Community Services	613-820-4922
Family Services à la famille Ottawa	613-725-3601
Somerset West Community Health Centre	613-238-8210
Immigrant Women Services Ottawa	613-729-3145
Carlington Community and Health Services	613-722-4000
Jewish Family Services of Ottawa	613-722-2225
Catholic Family Services Ottawa	613-233-8478

Counseling for those who abuse

If your behaviour is hurting your partner, you are encouraged to contact the following counseling programs:

New Directions	613-233-8478
Pink Triangle Services (for the GLBT community)	613-563-4818

Pink Triangle Services offers free and private/pay counselling services.

Visit their Web site for more information at www.pinktriangle.org.