



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What should you do if you are, or know someone who is, a victim of domestic violence?

- Call the Police as soon as possible (911). A Suffolk County Police Officer will be dispatched right away and an investigation will commence.
- The police will take photographs of your injuries as evidence.
- Get medical attention for your injuries. Tell the physician how the injuries occurred. Keep copies of all medical records.
- Find a safe shelter if it is not safe for you or your children to stay at home. If you do not have relatives or friends to stay with, call one of the victim service agencies listed on our website under "**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIM SERVICES.**"
- Go to court. You may bring an advocate to either Family or Criminal Court to help you pursue an Order of Protection and/or other appropriate legal remedies. Bring all police and medical records for evidence of the abuse.

What should you expect if you call the police?

- Police officers will respond quickly. Due to the emotionally charged nature of a domestic incident and the frequent presence of additional family members, more than one officer may respond.
- Once on the scene, the officer will separate and interview the involved parties to attempt to resolve or defuse the situation and then determine how to lawfully proceed.
- Applicable reports must be completed. A Domestic Incident Report is required to be completed on every domestic incident. The officer will take photographs of any injuries for evidentiary purposes.
- The officer will take appropriate action based on SCPD's pro-arrest policy and NYS laws. Arrests may be made and victims will be made aware of support services that are available to them. This includes emergency shelter, assistance in pursuing charges and obtaining an Order of Protection.
- Domestic Violence Bureau officers will conduct follow up confidential investigations and provide outreach in applicable cases.

What help is available to you as a victim of domestic violence? Who can I speak with if I am not comfortable talking to the police?

- There are many advocacy groups to assist victims of domestic violence. There is a listing on this website under “**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIM SERVICES**,” which provides a description of each agency and contact information.
- The “**FAMILY OFFENSE ASSISTANCE AND COURT PROCEDURES**” is a document available on this website which provides information regarding Family and Criminal Court procedures and further resource contact information.
- “**How to File for an Order of Protection in Suffolk County Family Court**” is a guide available on this website and is produced by the Suffolk County Crime Victims Center at PFML in partnership with the SCPD. It provides extensive information on the Family Court Order of Protection procedure.