

What is Stalking? Is it Happening to You?

Stalking is following someone in a way that causes the victim to feel afraid. It can cause serious emotional distress. Here are some examples of stalking behavior:

- Following someone on foot or by car
- Watching someone at work, home, or school
- Sending unwanted emails or text messages
- Making unwanted telephone calls
- Leaving unwanted cards, flowers, or gifts

Stalking can happen to anyone. Stalking often happens when a person tries to leave a relationship.

Many stalking victims think they did something to deserve it. This is not true.

Data shows that stalking often happens when you are leaving an abusive partner. According to the Stalking Resource Center:

- 59% of women victims are stalked by someone from their past
- 30% of victims are stalked by someone from their past

Stalking is a crime in Pennsylvania. There are two basic parts to the crime.

- The stalker must complete at least two acts of unwanted stalking behavior. It does **not matter when they happened**.
- The victim must have a **reasonable fear** of serious injury or **a lot of emotional distress**.

A Protection From Abuse Order (PFA) can be an important tool for stalking victims. It allows the police to arrest the stalker, even if they did not see the stalking. The process for getting a PFA is different in every county. A domestic violence advocate can tell you more about PFA's and how to protect yourself from a stalker.