

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: YOUR RIGHTS

Protection
provided by
the police,
criminal law,
and civil law



BIG KOORDINIERUNG

Ending domestic violence.
Support for women and their children

Englisch

BIG HOTLINE

BIG KOORDINIERUNG

BIG e.V.

BIG PRÄVENTION

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Violence against women takes place predominantly within the supposed protection of their own four walls, i.e. 'at home'.

Every fourth woman in Germany is affected by domestic violence, i.e. physical and/or sexual violence of varying degrees by their current or former partner. This was shown by a representative study conducted by the Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (*Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth*) (2004) in which more than 10,000 women were interviewed. The violence is predominantly carried out by men and, in some cases, results in serious injury.

Men can also be the victims of violence within relationships. However, most acts of violence against men are committed in public and by other men.

In at least every other case, children are witness to the violence committed against their mother. This always has an effect on children and represents a risk to their welfare. When children experience violence it can sometimes have a significantly negative impact on their physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. Under certain circumstances, e.g. serious violence or in the case of very young children, it can also lead to traumatisation. It is therefore extremely important to put an end to the violent situation quickly and initiate comprehensive protective measures for the women and their children.

If you are experiencing domestic violence within your partnership, marriage or family, you have the right to defend yourself. This violence could involve you being or having been abused, beaten, injured, threatened, locked up, kept prisoner, forced to commit sexual acts, raped, molested and stalked, or your children being or having been ill-treated or sexually abused.

By committing acts of physical or sexual violence and stalking, your husband/partner is committing a crime that can be dealt with by the police and the judiciary system (e.g. physical assault, deprivation of liberty or sexual abuse).

This brochure is primarily aimed at people affected by violence, as well as their dependents, neighbours and professionals working in social services, healthcare, youth welfare or authorities.

We wish to inform you about your rights, how you can defend yourself against domestic violence, and how you can protect yourself and your children from further acts of violence.

In the first part of the brochure we inform you about what the police can do to protect you against violence and what measures you can take yourself to ensure your own safety and that of your children.

In the second part you will find explanations of the criminal prosecution procedures, what your role and rights are as a witness in these proceedings, and where you can get further support and advice.

The third part of this brochure provides information about your civil rights options in terms of protecting yourself against further acts of violence by your husband/partner. You will learn, for example, how you can get the court to issue a restraining order or an order stipulating that the offender can no longer use the family home.

What is domestic violence?

'Domestic violence' refers to acts of violence (irrespective of the scene of the crime and whether or not you live together) between people in a relationship that

- is still ongoing
- is in the process of breaking up or
- has already broken up

or between people that

- are related to each other, insofar as these are not crimes against children.

Domestic violence (even observed violence) poses a risk to a child's welfare.*

* Common definition according to the Senatsverwaltung für Inneres und Sport/ Senatsverwaltung für Justiz (Senate Administration for Interior and Sport/Senate Administration for Justice) 10/2001

Police protection

The Berlin police department has experienced officers (male and female) who are trained to deal with cases of domestic violence and sexual crimes. The German police can be contacted free of charge around the clock by dialling **110**.

When you call the police, tell them:

- whether you are in acute danger, and if so by whom and through what;
- whether you have been injured and, if so, by whom and with what.

If the offender is no longer present, tell the police:

- if you are at imminent risk of further violence;
- if he is armed.

The police can then decide whether or not they need to get to you as a matter of extreme urgency.

Until the police arrive, seek refuge in a safe place, e.g. at a neighbour's house, in shops, or lock yourself securely in your own home.

Let the police know where you can be contacted.

Once the police arrive, you will be interviewed separately from the offender and will be given an opportunity to explain your situation. You will be able to leave the crime scene with your children under police protection in order to:

- get you to a safe place (e.g. a women's shelter);
- get you medical care/treatment; or
- have your injuries and any evidence of violence documented.

If you are in acute danger or a crime has already been committed,

- describe to the police in detail what has happened so that the relevant measures can be implemented to protect you and prosecute the perpetrator.
- also tell them about any injuries that are not visible or that have happened in the past.
- where possible, give them the name of any witnesses.
- where possible, hand over the crime weapon to the police.

The police can order the offender to leave the home, confiscate his keys and prohibit him from entering the home again. This removal and ban on re-entering can last for up to 14 days, if there is still a risk that the offender could commit further violence against you and/or your children. In addition, the police can put a restraining order on the offender, prohibiting him from coming near or contacting you and/or your children. This restraining order can also apply for several days and cover other places that you have to visit (e.g. workplace, nursery/school).

The police also have the right to take an offender into temporary custody, if there is no other way of ensuring your safety. Tell the officer(s) in charge where you can be contacted by telephone so that they can let you know when your partner is released.

If you have any other questions concerning your protection, legal options and further support, you can contact the BIG hotline (see cover). If you would like a female member of staff at the BIG hotline to call you, the police can pass on your telephone number to the BIG hotline with your prior consent. It is also advisable (even if no police action has been taken) to apply for civil rights actions in accordance with the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG), e.g. having the shared home assigned to you and more long-term measures such as a restraining order (see section on “Civil rights protection”).

Filing a complaint with the police

The police have a duty to record a complaint. This can be filed (either verbally or in writing) by neighbours, relatives, the police or yourself. The police will take down your personal details. In the event of a particular threat, you have the right to give a different address to your home address at which the police can contact you. This may be the address of your solicitor, a friend, your work, a support organisation, etc.

When you file a complaint, you must describe what has happened to you. The police will give you a leaflet about your rights as an injured party in the criminal proceedings along with the police incident number.

You will then be asked to attend a police hearing, as your statement is vital to the continuation of the police investigation. If you are unable to make this hearing, you can arrange another date at your earliest convenience. Before the hearing, you may wish to seek advice, legal or other. As a rule, you can also choose to be accompanied by a person you trust or by a solicitor. This person may be present at your hearing.

If you are in any way related, engaged, married or related by marriage to the offender, or have a registered civil partnership with this person, you have the right to refuse to testify. This means you can decide at any point not to give testimony.

The files are kept for a number of years. If you decide to testify at a later point in time, the proceedings can then be resumed.

If, after filing a complaint, you are once again subjected to beatings, blackmailed and/or threatened, you should report this immediately to your solicitor, the police, the prosecution service and the court.

Only once the transgressions of your partner or ex-partner have been recognised can you be given support!

Important:

- Report all assaults/threats your husband/partner has carried out to date.
- Inform the above authorities if you fear further acts of violence against yourself, your children and anyone who wishes to help you.
- Name anyone who may have seen or overheard anything.
- Where possible, provide medical certificates relating to injuries, past and present, and their consequences.
- Write down everything you can remember about the incident(s), describing the exact circumstances (date, time, witnesses), and any further threats or assaults. These will help you in subsequent legal proceedings. If you have suffered any injuries, when you file charges you should release your doctor from their obligation to maintain patient confidentiality. The police will provide you with the relevant form for this purpose.

Medical treatment and certificates

If you are injured, you should seek treatment from a doctor that you trust. In the event of acts of domestic or sexual violence, you should go to a hospital or a doctor immediately after the event in order to have your injuries documented (also with photographs, where possible) and to secure any traces of evidence. It is important that you do not wash yourself until after this examination, even if you find this very unpleasant. Other objects, clothing and undergarments that may bear traces of the assault should be put into paper (bags) and handed over to the police. Always have your injuries certified. These certificates are very important as evidence in the event of criminal proceedings. For more information about criminal proceedings, see page 10.

You decide to leave your home.

If you wish to leave your home either by yourself or with your children, you can seek protection and accommodation at a women's shelter or refuge around the clock (see addresses at the end of this brochure). **Make sure that any correspondence can reach you by post!** From your new place of residence you can apply for the right to determine the place of residence (or custody) of your children.

Before you leave home, take your personal belongings with you such as

- your own and your children's passports
- birth/marriage certificates
- your own and your children's health insurance details.

Other important documents you might wish to take include:

- residence permit documents
- rental agreement
- work contract/pension statements
- notifications from the job centre or social services
- custody orders
- bank account documents
- medications
- personal effects for you and your children (clothes, toiletries, toys, school things, diary, etc.)

If you need any further personal items from your home at a later time, the police can accompany you to your home to ensure your protection if you are still in danger.

Registration and information block for your new address

According to the Berlin Registration Act, you must register your new address with your local authority within 14 days. If you are currently in the process of separating from a violent partner, moving into a new home or to a women's shelter and fear further threats and violence, you can apply for a block on information relating to your new address.

How do I get my information blocked?

You can get the relevant form at your women's shelter, sheltered apartment or advice centre. You can also write an informal letter yourself stating your name, the names of your children, dates of birth and your new address. (If you have come from another federal state (Bundesland), you should also apply for an information block on your place of origin as quickly as possible.)

The Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungsangelegenheiten (*State Authority for Citizens and Regulatory Affairs LABO*) must check whether you are legally entitled to an information block, which is why it is important that you clearly state your reasons for needing it. You might want to add, for example, who is threatening you, what that person has threatened to do or has actually done to you, what injuries or damages have already been suffered, over what period of time this was done, exactly what you are afraid of, etc. After the LABO has checked your statement, you may be asked to provide further evidence. This may include medical certificates, witness statements and the incident number for the criminal charge.

If you do not have any evidence of this kind, you can find out more about further procedures from one of the advice centres (see address section). You will be informed about the implementation and duration of the information block (e.g. ½ year, 1 year) in writing. Please note the stated deadline after which the information block will automatically expire. If you wish to extend this deadline, you will need to think about arranging this in advance. It is important that you inform LABO that you are still in danger and who is threatening you.

It is also important that you apply for custody of your children. Otherwise the information block may not be able to be maintained on behalf of your children. Without this, your whereabouts could be revealed.

How does the information block work?

As soon as you have been granted an information block, your new address will only be given out to government authorities (court, youth welfare, etc.) on request. If individuals or companies enquire about your address, you will be informed in writing and asked whether you wish for your address to be passed on or whether this would put you in danger. It is imperative that you reply to this letter within the stated period of time. If you do not wish for your address to be passed on to the person making the enquiry, you must provide reasons why this could put you at risk. It is sometimes advisable for you to contact the enquiring party yourself in order to prevent your address from being passed on. If you do not respond to the letter, LABO will decide whether your address should be passed on or not.

Criminal proceedings

After the police investigation, the documents relating to your case are handed over to the prosecution service. They then review the case to see if they have enough evidence to press charges.

After the preliminary investigations, things generally proceed as follows:

Termination of proceedings

The prosecution will terminate their investigation if they feel there is insufficient evidence for a conviction. You may appeal against this decision. For more information about this, contact one of the advice centres (see address section) that can offer you free legal advice.

Taking legal action/penalty orders

If the prosecution feels there is sufficient evidence for a conviction, they will press charges at the relevant court or apply for a penalty order.

A penalty order means that the offender can be sentenced to pay a fine or serve a prison term on probation in a written out-of-court procedure. The case is then closed. You will not be informed of this, but you can submit an enquiry about

this in writing to the prosecution service. However, as the victim of a crime you can apply to the police to be kept informed about the outcome of the proceedings.

The trial

Firstly, the court decides whether the evidence available is enough to convict the offender and sets a date for the court hearing to which you, as a witness, all other witnesses and the offender will receive a summons.

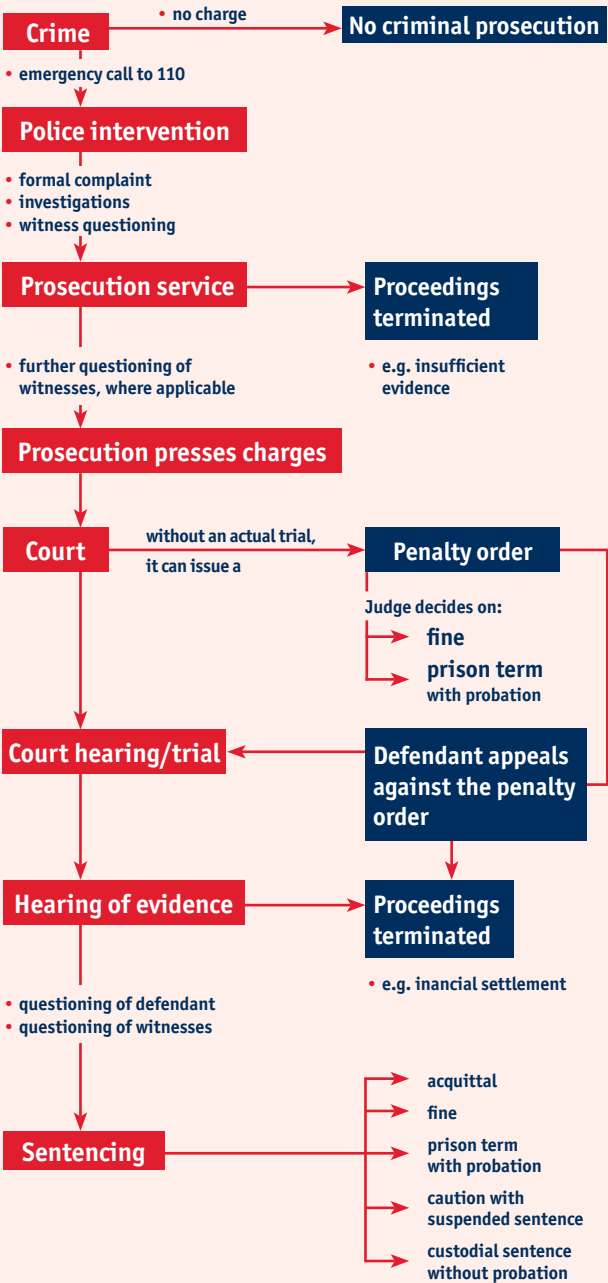
This usually happens within a year of the official complaint being filed. At the court hearing, you will be asked to once again provide a comprehensive testimony, as the court is only allowed to make its decision based on oral testimonies of those involved during the actual trial. The court, the prosecution, as well as the defendant and his lawyer, can ask you further questions. If you choose to exercise your right not to testify, any earlier statements you have made cannot be taken into consideration. If no other evidence is available, this will lead to the offender being acquitted without punishment. Please note: if the defendant is not in custody, he will be able to move about the court building freely. If you are afraid of meeting him, you can choose to wait in a protected witness room until you are called to the stand. Please inform the court beforehand (the telephone number is shown on your summons) and speak to the witness support centre (see address section). The defendant is always present in the courtroom. However, under certain circumstances, he may be ordered to leave the room during your testimony. The court hearing is open to the public (although the public may be partly excluded under certain circumstances). You can choose to be accompanied by one or more confidants. During your testimony, these individuals have to remain seated in the auditorium. However, you can also apply to have them sitting next to you. After the testimonies of the defendant, witnesses and experts, where applicable, the prosecution sums up everything that has been said and proposes a sentence (summation).

If you are being represented by a lawyer, they will now get the chance to explain your perspective on the matter. The defending lawyer and, finally, the defendant himself then have the chance to say something. Afterwards, the court makes its decision (pronounces the sentence). The defendant usually gets either a

- fine,
- a prison term, which may be probationary and/or combined with the condition that he attends an offender seminar, or
- the offender is acquitted of the charge, as the court deems that insufficient evidence was presented to secure a conviction.

Proceedings may also be dismissed during the trial – e.g. in the event of a financial settlement. You may consult a lawyer of your choice for advice or representation at any time. This means, for instance, that your lawyer is entitled to read the court files before the trial and has the right to question all participants during the trial. You will usually have to pay for the lawyer yourself. The lawyer will inform you whether you are entitled to claim legal costs (legal aid) from the authorities. Where applicable, the court may also allow a joint action, granting you extensive rights as a witness and a victim of a criminal offence in the trial against your (former) partner/husband. Most women's advice centres can give you the details of experienced lawyers who also offer free legal advice on site (it is advisable to call beforehand to arrange an appointment). The centres can also answer any general queries relating to the trial (securing legal representation, legal aid, procedures, protective measures, compensation, etc.)

Criminal prosecution – an example



Civil rights protection

If you (and your children) have been the victims of domestic violence or stalking, you can apply to the court for protection or assignment of the family home. This falls under the jurisdiction of the family court. According to the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG), the following can have local jurisdiction:

The court in the district where

- the crime was committed,
- the family home is located, or
- the defendant lives.

In the case of an assignment of the family home in accordance with Sections 1361b, 1568a of the German Civil Code (BGB) or Sections 14, 17 of the Civil Partnerships Law (LpartG), the local jurisdiction shall be decided solely, i.e. this is non-optional, in the following order:

The court

- at which the matrimonial or civil partnership case is being or has been dealt with,
- in the district where the home shared by the married couple or registered civil partners is located,
- in the district where the defendant lives,
- in the district where the claimant lives.

On behalf of your children, you can make the same applications in accordance with Sections 1666 and 1666a of the German Civil Code (BGB), as the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG) does not apply to them. Children aged 14 or over can apply for these themselves and hire an attorney. You can submit applications for a provisional order regardless of whether the main proceedings have begun. In urgent cases, this is the quicker and generally cheaper way to take legal action. The application must be substantiated and a credible case made for the conditions of the order. Credibility is ensured by providing admissible evidence or an affidavit. The law requires evidence to be 'present' so that the evidence can be taken straight away. This means that, when submitting an application or attending an oral hearing, you must bring the evidence, and witnesses in particular, along with you!

You can apply to have your hearing held separately from that of the defendant in order to avoid a dangerous encounter with him during the trial. Sufficient grounds must be provided for this.

You can also apply for the following:

- Indemnity and compensation
- General court orders ensuring your personal protection in acc. with Sections 823, 1004 of the German Civil Code (BGB) (Civil Court)
- Custody (Family Court)
- Suspension of the right of access (Family Court).

In this case, you should consult/seek representation from a lawyer specialising in family law. If you have a low income, you may be entitled to legal aid.

As legal proceedings and judgements can take a very long time, protection orders and other civil rights claims should be asserted through summary proceedings. You can obtain forms that will help you with your application process from women's advice centres or as a download from www.big-koordinierung.de/Schutzantrag/

Protection orders

The court can issue a restraining order against the offender relating to abuse, threats, harassment and contact (including personal proximity) in accordance with Section 1 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG) or Section 1666 of the German Civil Code (BGB) for the sake of the children. This means, for instance, he can be prohibited from contacting you, approaching your workplace or home and your children's nursery or school. The police are informed about orders in accordance with Section 1 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG). If the offender violates a protection order in accordance with Section 1 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG) he is committing an offence. You can call the police and file a complaint (again). Furthermore, you can also apply to the court for them to impose the payment of a fine. In some cases, he might even be taken into custody.

Assignment of the family home

You can apply for your shared home to be assigned to you in accordance with Section 2 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG) . The referral can also be permitted on behalf of your children in accordance with Section 1666 of the German Civil Code. If you are married or live in a civil partnership, you can also apply for assignment of the marital home in accordance with Section 1361b of the German Civil Code (BGB) or for sole use of the property in accordance with Section 14 of the Civil Partnership Act – under the provision that you wish to separate or are already separated from your partner and that the assignment of the shared dwelling is necessary in order to avoid ‘undue hardship’. Along with the assignment of the home to yourself, the offender can also be prohibited from terminating the rental agreement on the property or making it difficult for you to use the property. If you are the sole tenant and are living in a long-term civil (non-marital) partnership with the offender, you can submit an application to your family court demanding that your partner leaves the home. If you have both signed the rental agreement, you should seek the advice of a solicitor as to whether an exclusion of the offender from the rental agreement is enforceable. In any case, however, the court can decide to grant you sole usage of the property for a limited period of time, even if the lease has only been signed by the offender. You also have the option of requesting a restraining order relating to access, abuse, threats, harassment and contact (including personal proximity) in accordance with Section 1 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG) through summary proceedings. Please note that court orders in accordance with the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG), which have been decreed without an oral testimony in the courtroom, must be served by a bailiff. If you are eligible for legal aid, you should also apply for the costs of the initial serving of the order when you apply for the implementation of action in accordance with the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG). The police and youth welfare office are informed about decisions in accordance with Section 2 of the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG).

Custody

Children are always affected by any violence they witness. If you are separating from your partner or requesting legal action for your protection because of abuse by your partner, you can apply to the relevant family court for temporary sole custody/parental care of your children in order to avoid putting them at further risk. You can do this regardless of whether your petition for divorce has been submitted or not. The court may also have an obligation to take action in order to remove children from a dangerous situation. It can, for instance, in accordance with Sections 1666, 1666a of the German Civil Code (BGB), ban the offender from using the home, prohibit contact, take away physical custody, etc.

Right of access

Irrespective of the custody order, the father generally maintains a right of access to his children. If you or your children are at risk of further abuse or the children are in danger of witnessing violence, you can apply to the family court for a temporary or permanent suspension of this right of access. Often the court decides on a compromise by ordering supervised access. This means that visits have to take place in the presence of someone you know or an employee of the youth welfare office or another organisation. Stepfathers (current/former spouses or partners of the mother) also retain a right of access to the child, if the child has lived with them for a long time **and** this access is deemed in the best interest of the child. If the stepfather has been violent towards the child and/or you, you can also apply for this right to be revoked or suspended. Alternatively, you can apply for a court order stipulating supervised access (i.e. visits accompanied by a third party).

Grandparents and siblings also have a right of access to the child under the condition that this access is in the best interest of the child. Measures should be taken to identify the attitude of grandparents, especially the grandparents on the father's side, towards the offender's violence. If they deny or play down the risk resulting from the father's violence in terms of the child's well-being, this could also constitute grounds for revoking or suspending access or demanding supervised access in order to ensure the child's protection.

If the court has issued a restraining order against your violent husband/partner relating to the prohibition of abuse, threats,

harassment and contact (including personal proximity) in accordance with the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG), you should seek advice about whether you should also apply for the suspension of the offender's right of access to your child. If the offender has the right of access to your child, it may be impossible to prevent him from approaching you when he collects or returns the child, or harassing or threatening you again when making arrangements for the child. If a court order regarding the right of access is already in place, you should make the court aware of this when you apply for a protection order and, at the same time, apply for the existing decision to be amended. **More detailed information can be found in the "Supervised access" brochure from BIG e.V.**

Proceedings in matters relating to children

The German Act on Proceedings in Family Matters and in Matters of Voluntary Jurisdiction (FamFG) came into effect on 1 September 2009. It covers the following principles:

Principle of expediting proceedings (Section 155, FamFG):

Matters relating to custody, access, child surrender and risk to child welfare (Sections 1666, 1666a German Civil Code) must take priority over all other family matters and the relevant proceedings must be expedited. This means that a hearing date should be set within one month from the date when proceedings were initiated at the latest. Requests for postponement from those involved can only be accepted in exceptional cases. A credible case must be made in support of the application for postponement!

The parties involved in the proceedings (along with your lawyer where applicable), the youth welfare office and, where applicable, a *guardian ad litem* who has already been appointed must appear in person. However, children under the age of 14 years generally do not. For mothers affected by violence, the fact that this date is so close in time to the actual act of violence may cause particular stress and a joint hearing could present a risk to their safety. You must have very good grounds and make a credible case when applying for a postponement and separate hearing. Make it clear that you are being affected by domestic violence. In court you must point out that any decision about contact could go against the orders in accordance with the German Protection From Violence Act (GewSchG).

Even the summons to a joint discussion at the youth welfare office with the offender could pose a risk for you and may contravene a protection order. The youth welfare office must be heard in this process, and involved upon request. A written statement is no longer required.

Working towards an amicable arrangement (Section 156, FamFG):

In matters relating to parental care, custody, access and child surrender, the court should:

- work towards achieving an amicable arrangement;
- refer you to advisory services, especially in relation to developing an amicable arrangement with regard to parental care/responsibility;
- point out the mediation options.

It may:

- order counselling;
- take an agreement as a comparison and legally approve it.

It must:

- discuss the release of a temporary order in the event of an agreement not being reached.

It should:

regulate or revoke the right of access with a temporary injunction, if counselling or assessment is ordered. In cases of domestic violence, working towards an amicable arrangement is out of the question, as agreements are generally not adhered to. This should be pointed out to the court with reference to the legal reasons provided for Section 156 of the German Act on Proceedings in Family Matters and in Matters of Voluntary Jurisdiction (FamFG).

Indemnity and compensation

Your eligibility for indemnity payments includes the reimbursement of pecuniary damages such as the cost of medical treatment, financial disadvantages associated with loss of earnings, or the cost of replacing torn clothing and damaged property. The eligibility for compensation payments is based on personal gratification and compensation for personal suffering such as injuries, pain and humiliation.

Where can I find what?

Family courts:

Pankow/Weißensee

Covers the following districts:

Mitte (Mitte, Tiergarten, Wedding),
Pankow (Pankow, Weißensee, Prenzlauer Berg),
Reinickendorf

Kissingenstr. 5–6

13189 Berlin-Pankow

Tel.: 9 02 45-0

Information and legal claims office

Ground floor, Room B 2

Schöneberg

Covers the following districts:

Steglitz-Zehlendorf and Schöneberg

Grunewaldstr. 66–67

10823 Berlin-Schöneberg

Tel.: 9 01 59-0

Information and legal claims office, Room 11

Tempelhof-Kreuzberg

Covers all other districts:

Hallesches Ufer 62

10963 Berlin-Kreuzberg

Tel.: 9 01 75-0

Information and legal claims office,

Rooms F020 to F029

The information and legal claims offices at the courts are open:

Monday to Wednesday

8.30am to 3pm

Thursday

8.30am to 6pm

Friday

8.30am to 1pm

The district court in Tempelhof-Kreuzberg also offers an on-call service for family matters and for general civil matters from 9am to 12 noon on Saturdays.

Criminal court:

Tiergarten, Tel.: 90 14-0

Women's shelters:

- Women's shelters offer protected temporary housing for women (and their children) of any nationality.
- You can call a women's shelter any time, day or night.
- The addresses of women's shelters are kept strictly confidential.
- Men are not allowed into women's shelters.
- Accommodation at a women's shelter is free; you provide your own food/supplies for you and your children.
- You receive comprehensive counselling and support in a women's shelter.
- A stay at a women's shelter will not automatically result in divorce, and you will not be reported to the immigration authorities (*Ausländerbehörde*).

2. Autonomes Frauenhaus, Tel.: 37 49 06 22

Hestia-Frauenhaus, Tel.: 559 35 31

4. Autonomes Frauenhaus, Tel.: 9161 18 36

Frauenhaus BORA, Tel.: 986 43 32,
disabled-friendly rooms

Frauenhaus CARITAS, Tel.: 851 10 18
Facilities for the deaf

Interkulturelles Frauenhaus, Tel.: 80 10 80 50

Therapeutische Frauenwohngemeinschaft Bora,
Tel.: 97 99 96 46

Women's advice centres and intervention agencies

offer the following services, by phone or in person, to women suffering domestic violence:

- social and legal advice
- information about police and legal measures
- help with finding a women's shelter or sheltered apartment

- support when dealing with authorities and when looking for an apartment
- legal counsel, group programmes, childcare, etc.

All advice is confidential, free of charge and offered by employees who speak foreign languages and are familiar with sign language. Interpreters can also be provided, where necessary.

Frauenberatungsstelle Tara, Tel.: 787 18 340

Advice provided in German, English, Persian and Turkish

FRAUENRAUM, Tel.: 448 45 28

Advice provided in German and English

Frauenberatung BORA, Tel.: 927 47 07

Advice provided in German, English, French, Persian, Polish and Russian

Frauentreffpunkt, Tel.: 622 22 60

SMS: 0151-567 40 945

Advice provided in German, English, Polish, Spanish and sign language

Interkulturelle Beratungsstelle, Tel.: 80 19 59 80

Advice provided in German, Armenian, English, French, Serbo-Croatian, Persian, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Turkish. Disabled access

Sheltered apartments

Frauenzimmer e. V., Tel.: 787 50 15, wheelchair access

Hestia e. V., Tel.: 440 60 58

Zuff e. V., Tel.: 694 60 67

Frauenort-Augusta, facilities for the deaf

Tel.: 28 59 89 77 and 46 60 02 17

Fax 28 59 89 78 and 46 60 02 18

SMS: 0160-666 37 78

Interkulturelles Wohnprojekt, Tel.: 80 10 80 10

At the following locations, you can obtain further (legal) information and support free of charge:

Specific advice and information services:

LARA, Tel.: 216 88 88 (hotline)

Crisis and advice centre for women who have been raped and sexually molested

Wildwasser e. V., Tel.: 693 91 92

Self-help group and advice for women who have experienced sexual violence in their childhood

FrauenNachtCafé – night-time emergency drop-in centre –

Tel.: 61 62 09 70

Kreuzberg, Friesenstrasse 6,

Opening hours: Fri-Sat: 8pm–2am,

Sat-Sun: 8pm–2am,

Wed-Thu: 8pm–2am

Netzwerk behinderter Frauen in Berlin e. V. (network for disabled women in Berlin),

Tel.: 617 09 167/617 09 168

Ban Ying, Tel.: 440 63 73/74

Coordination and information centre against human trafficking

Al Nadi, Tel.: 852 06 02

Meeting place and advice centre for Arab women

HINBUN, Tel.: 336 66 62

Education and advice centre for Kurdish women

In VIA, Tel.: 85 78 42 69

Mobil: 0177 738 62 76

Advice centre for women from central and Eastern Europe

TIO, Tel.: 612 20 50

Meeting place and information centre for Turkish women

EWA Frauenzentrum, Tel.: 442 55 42

Legal information and general advice

Emergency child protection services

Available day or night

Kindernotdienst, Tel.: 61 00 61

Jugendnotdienst, Tel.: 61 00 62

Mädchennotdienst, Tel.: 61 00 63

The Berlin child protection hotline can also be contacted around the clock via the three emergency numbers above.

Victim and witness protection support:

Opferhilfe, Tel.: 395 28 67

Advice centre for victims of crimes

Victim support at Tiergarten district court and Berlin regional court,

Room B 020/21, Wilsnacker Str. 6, 10557 Berlin

Tel.: 90 14-34 98/90 14-32 06

AHGATA – victim support, Tel.: 440 526 00

Victim support, office for preparation and support for court proceedings.

www.ahgata.de

Weißer Ring, Tel.: 833 70 60

Wildwasser e. V., Tel.: 2 82 44 27

Advice centre for young girls in Berlin-Mitte

Witness support for girls who have been the victim of sexual violence and have decided to press charges.

Tauwetter, drop-in centre for men who were sexually abused as a child

Tel: 6 93 80 07, Tue 5–6pm and Thu 5–7pm

Advice centres for perpetrators of domestic violence:

**Beratung für Männer – gegen Gewalt
(Advice for men – against violence)**

Tel.: 785 98 25, Mobil: 0170/380 18 14

**Berliner Zentrum für Gewaltprävention – BZfG e. V.
(Berlin Centre for the Prevention of Violence)**

Tel.: 95 61 38 38

Advice centres for gays and lesbians:

Lesbenberatung

Tel.: 217 27 53

Maneo

Advice for gays and bisexuals

Tel.: 216 33 36

5pm–7pm daily

Your first point of call for advice in Berlin

BIG HOTLINE



030.611 03 00

Ending domestic violence. Support for women and their children

We offer advice over the phone or come to help you in person, if necessary, and you can call us around the clock. Interpreters can be provided, if necessary.

BIG hotline employees offer advice to women experiencing domestic violence, as well as the people around them. Professionals who, due to their occupational activities, have questions about domestic violence can also contact the BIG hotline. The services offered by employees at the BIG Hotline include crisis intervention, placement in women's shelters and other protected accommodation, and information about police and legal intervention. They also offer mobile intervention: if telephone advice is not sufficient, an employee can provide counselling on site.

The BIG hotline is operated in close collaboration with the following women's advice centres and intervention agencies: Frauentreffpunkt, Frauenraum, Tara, Bora and Interkulturelle Initiative

**Domestic violence is not a private matter!
Seek help for yourself and your children!**

030.611 03 00