



**Your options
and rights**
— if someone
is stalking you,
hassling you or
just won't leave
you alone

A stalking-response guide from
Aotearoa Free from Stalking
2nd edition, May 2026



Te Wāhi Wāhine o
Tāmaki Makaurau
AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE

This resource has been shaped with input from people and organisations who work alongside those experiencing stalking and family violence. Their feedback, insights, and lived experience have helped ensure the information reflects the realities faced by many communities.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the project's Wāhine Māori Lived Experience Advisory Group and organisations who generously shared their expertise and feedback throughout this process. We'd like to especially thank the National Thursdays In Black Rōpū, Deborah Mackenzie (Backbone Collective), Holly Carrington (SHINE and National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges), Dr Paulette Benton-Greig (AUT Law School), Rachel Simon-Kumar, MNZM (University of Auckland School of Population Health), and Sandra Dickson and the team at Hohou te Rongo Kahukura. Chapman Tripp assisted with legal updates for the 2nd edition (pro bono).

Their guidance has strengthened this resource and helped make it more inclusive, practical, and culturally responsive. All mistakes remain our own.

Aotearoa Free From Stalking is an Auckland Women's Centre project, inspired and informed by the Coalition for the Safety of Women & Children, an umbrella of 20 violence-prevention organisations. Team members for the first edition: Leonie Morris (project lead), Layba Zubair (community organiser; coordinator/writer of this resource), Veronica Cusack (Wāhine Māori Lived Experience Advisory Group coordinator), and Janet McAllister (communications advisor).

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awc.org.nz/stalking-response-guide

Our Commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi

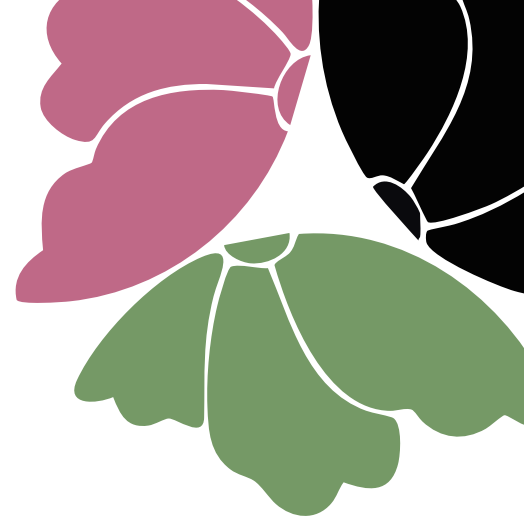
Auckland Women's Centre is committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi: we recognise Māori as tangata whenua, and we also acknowledge Te Tiriti as a vision of inclusivity, a foundation for a more just and equitable society for all.

A Kaupapa Māori resource for stalking victim-survivors with text by Tū Tama Wahine o Taranaki is now available at awc.org.nz/stalking-response-guide

As the Aotearoa Free from Stalking team, we tautoko and actively work towards:

- **Article 1 Kawanatanga: (Partnership)** working with Māori to produce resources grounded in Kaupapa Māori values and leadership.
- **Article 2 Hapū Rangatiratanga: (Protection)** respecting hapū tino rangatiratanga as Tangata Tiriti in allyship, by supporting Māori-for-whakapapa-Māori approaches to safety, wellbeing and healing.
- **Article 3 Oritetanga: (Equity)** working to ensure all in Aotearoa, especially wāhine Māori and women, have equitable access to safety, justice, freedom from violence, institutional and systemic racism, deprivation of liberty, and alienation from resources.
- **Oral Article Wairuatanga: (Religious Freedom)** we acknowledge and affirm cultural practices and religious freedoms in Aotearoa.

Through this resource, we aim to contribute to an Aotearoa where wāhine Māori, women and everyone can go about their lives, free from stalking and associated fear and harm.



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Introduction

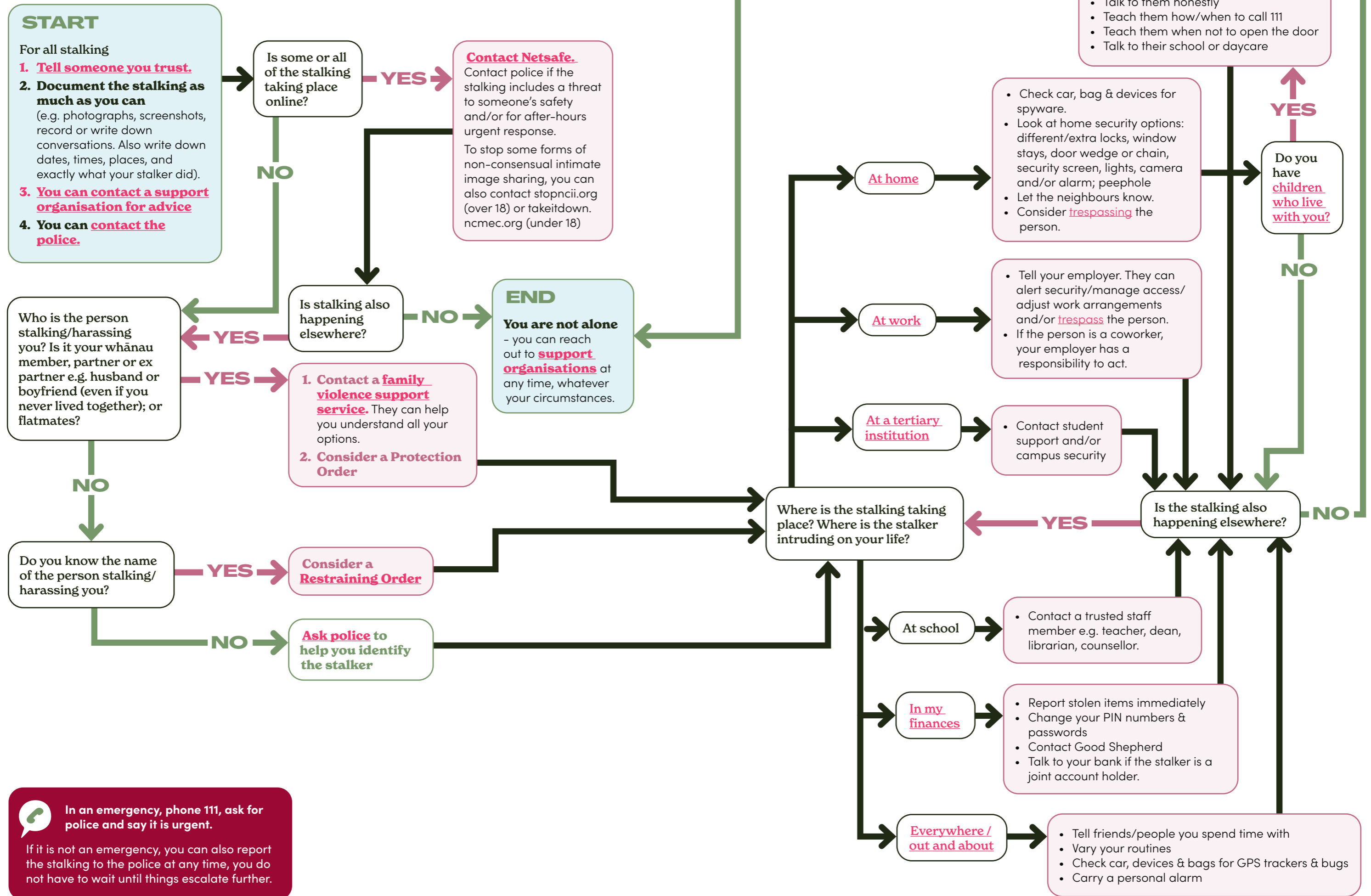
By definition, stalking is something the person being targeted does not want – it's imposed on them, and the stalker's behaviour is outside of the targeted person's control.

It's when someone's actions – such as repeated contact, approaches, messages, following, or harassment – are imposed on another person against their will. These behaviours can be ongoing, and may come from someone you know (like a current or former partner, romantic entanglement, friend, family member, or colleague) or from someone you've never met. Stalkers can be persistent, and their behaviour can escalate – for example, increasing in frequency and/or leading to serious physical violence. For the person targeted, it can be confusing, exhausting, overwhelming and/or frightening. It can feel isolating. It is important that unwanted behaviour is taken seriously and that you seek support if you have concerns – or even if you're not sure.

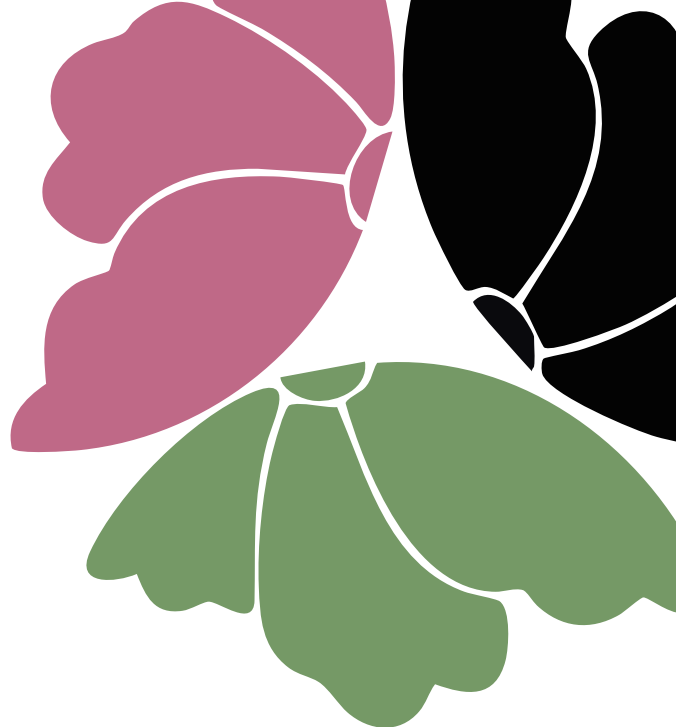
Stalking can look different across cultures and communities. Family and whānau dynamics, cultural expectations, hierarchies in workplaces, educational settings, and/or faith-based communities, or collective living arrangements can shape how stalking shows up and how it's understood – and the approaches which may assist with – or get in the way of – protection. However it looks for you, your safety and wellbeing matter, and you deserve support that respects your heritage, social and cultural context, values, beliefs and circumstances.

It is important to remember that the responsibility lies with the stalker, not with you. This guide is for anyone who is experiencing stalking or worried about someone's behaviour towards them, and for friends/whānau who are supporting someone in this situation. People may not always name the behaviour as "stalking" – they may specify a type of stalking, such as harassing or following or tracking, or they may call it "bothering" or "hassling"... **basically, if someone won't leave you alone, and you don't like it, this guide is for you.**

Stalking response options in a nutshell



In an emergency, phone 111, ask for police and say it is urgent.
If it is not an emergency, you can also report the stalking to the police at any time, you do not have to wait until things escalate further.



We offer some information, guidance, and support – to help you understand what stalking is, your rights and options, ideas for getting safer, and where you can find people who *should* listen and help protect you. For a Kaupapa Māori guide for whānau Māori experiencing stalking & coercive control, created by Tu Tama Wahine o Taranaki, see awc.org.nz/stalking-response-guide

If you think you might be in urgent danger, dial 111 for police. Tell the operator it's urgent and that you are in danger, so they know to send help immediately.

We acknowledge that not all ideas and approaches will work in every situation. At times, official responses may not work in the ways they should. We hope that this resource can help inform you to decide your approach for your situation and to understand how certain processes might work for you. We offer general information to the best of our knowledge – but there are gaps – both in our knowledge, and in services currently available.

Everyone has the right to live free from fear, control, and stalking harm. This means you shouldn't have to put up with stalking, and – although this doesn't always happen – services and agencies have a responsibility to help keep you safe. It's absolutely unjust that there is not (yet) always an immediate and strong response to stalking that ensures safety for the victim and accountability for the perpetrator. You deserve to be safe, to live with dignity and to have the freedom to make your own decisions, and choose what to do, where to go and who to interact with on a daily basis.

We want you to know you are not alone, there is support available, and there are people working to fix the system so that the response to stalking is better and faster. By taking the (sometimes daunting) step of seeking support, you are helping to protect not only yourself but also other potential targets, and the community as a whole. Thank you. Taking the time to learn about your rights and the options available to you is a useful step. Seeking help is an act of reclaiming your mana and protecting your future.

Your wellbeing, your quality of life and your future matter.



What is stalking?

Stalking is when someone repeatedly intrudes on your life without your permission. It is about a pattern of behaviours – no matter who is doing it – that make you scared, upset, anxious or distressed. Some stalking behaviours may be crimes in and of themselves – threats to hurt you, or physical violence or sharing intimate images of you without your consent. On the other hand, some stalking behaviours can seem small to outsiders on their own, but if they happen again and again they can become scary and overwhelming. Usually the more it happens and the longer it goes on, the more of an impact it has on the person being stalked.

The person using stalking behaviour may know you well – like a partner or an ex-partner – or they may be someone who only knows you a little, like a workmate or a schoolmate, or someone from your church or club. Or it may be someone you've only met once, or someone who has never even spoken to you.

Sometimes, stalking behaviour can sometimes be dismissed or seen as part of a “normal” part of culture and family, by whānau, relatives or friends. But feeling watched, pressured, scared, or unsafe is a real concern, and never acceptable, no matter who you are or who is stalking you. We all have the right to safety and respect.

Stalking behaviours can include:

- **Following & surveillance:** The person watches or monitors you, using cameras, drones, spying apps, or just following you around (in person or via GPS on your phone/car). Social media and dating apps such as Grindr can also be used for this. Apps like Snapchat and Instagram can show your location or activity, such as when you're online or where a photo was taken. Someone might use these features to see where you are, to "coincidentally" appear in the same place, or to keep tabs on who you're with. They might also use fake or secondary accounts to watch your stories or posts without your knowledge or to set up meetings you would not consent to if you knew who they were.
- **Loitering:** They hang around and watch you at places you go (like outside your home, or outside, in or around your work, school or favourite spots).
- **Property invasion:** They enter your property, break into, vandalise or tamper with your home, car or possessions.
- **Threatening:** They make threats (spoken, written or online) of violence, harm or death against you or against people or pets you care about.
- **Harassing calls/messages:** They call, text, email or message you repeatedly (often at odd hours or nonstop), even if you block them; or they harass others close to you.
- **Unwanted 'gifts':** They send or leave unwanted notes, flowers or other things which disturb you at your home or work or other places you go, or with others you are close to.
- **Damaging your reputation with lies, rumours and false reports:** They spread false or damaging stories about you online, to your friends/family, your workplace, or in the community; they may make fake complaints or accusations to police, social workers or others to get you in trouble, such as sabotaging your job or studies or reputation generally, humiliating you and making you more isolated.
- **Online abuse:** They use technology or digital spaces – like social media, messaging apps, email, or gaming platforms – to harm, control, or intimidate you. This might include sending abusive or threatening messages, spreading rumours, sharing private images or information, hacking your accounts, or creating fake profiles to embarrass or humiliate you.
- **Online stalking:** They repeatedly contact, follow, or monitor you online in ways that make you feel unsafe or under surveillance. This can include sending multiple unwanted messages, tracking your location or online activity, using fake accounts or spyware to keep tabs on you, and/or threatening to share private material. Disturbing your peace: They may knock on your door or windows at night, mess with lights, or otherwise disturb your sleep and privacy.
- **Doxing:** They post your personal and identifying information (like address, workplace or photos) publicly without consent. This might include sharing information about your gender or sexuality without your consent, or 'outing' you to make you unsafe.
- **Image-based sexual abuse or "revenge porn":** they share private and intimate photos or videos of you without consent. This can include deepfakes and AI generated content.
- **Harassment lawsuits:** They misuse the legal system to bother you, which may be called vexatious litigation.
- **Exploiting vulnerabilities:** They use something about you (like a disability or a family situation) to scare or hurt you.
- **Proxy stalking:** They get other people (friends, strangers or even children) to watch, contact or harass you on their behalf, OR they do any of the above stalking actions to your children, your close friends or family members or other people that are important to you or supporting you, such as your lawyer, counsellor or advocate.

The stalking behaviours can be divided into four broad categories:



The four domains of intimate partner stalking patterns. Adapted from Relentless, not Romantic: Intimate Partner Stalking in Aotearoa New Zealand (2019) National Collective Of Independent Women’s Refuge Inc Ngā Whare Whakaruruhau o Aotearoa

As part of their stalking behaviour, stalkers will sometimes try to excuse their behaviour by saying:

You “owe” them something
– for example, romantic faithfulness, attention or information about your own activities. But **the person stalking you has no right to you** or your time. They have no right to try and make you pay attention to them or make you behave in certain ways.


You’re “crazy” and they’re “doing nothing wrong”.
But, as you are bothered by their intrusions in your life, **they are doing something wrong.**

They “love you.” But their (declared) feelings are not a reason for them to ‘get away’ with distressing behaviour. And **stalking is not a sign of love**, it is a sign that someone is trying to control, intimidate or scare you.

They’re “checking up on you”. But you don’t need or want them to check up on you, and **it is not their right to decide** to do this.

However it happens, and whatever they say, these behaviours are about power and control, and they are never your fault. The person targeting you is responsible for their own behaviour. Nobody chooses to be stalked. By definition.

The rest of this resource has information about legal and other support options and ideas that may be helpful for you to consider.

- 
- **If you are in immediate danger, dial 111 for police.**
 - **Tell the operator it is urgent and that you are in danger and need police to come.**
 - **It is the responsibility of the police to respond immediately and prioritise your safety. Even if you are not sure whether it counts as an emergency, you can call 111 and explain what is happening and say it feels urgent.**
 - **Trust your instincts. If you feel you are in danger, it’s better to act on your gut feeling than ignore it.**

Getting support



Help and support from other people can make a huge difference to your wellbeing, and make it easier to get safer from stalking.

Who do I go to?

Trust your instincts about what feels right for you to do and who to ask for support.

Free confidential information and support: If you need help, information, advice, or just a listening ear, you can ring one of the helplines listed at the [end of this resource](#) such as Women's Refuge, Safe to Talk or Victim Support. These helplines should be able to help you find the best local service to meet your needs, for in-person support if that's something you want, and may include a Kaupapa Māori, Pacific, or Rainbow service, for example.

Family violence safety: If you are being stalked as part of a family violence situation, your first point of contact should be Women's Refuge or SHINE or a specialist family violence service, as they are experts in safety planning and protection.

Personal support crew: Reach out to someone who:

- you trust
- is likely to listen, and take your concerns seriously, and
- will respect your right to decide what steps to take.

This could be a friend, family member, workmate, teacher, church leader or member, kaumātua, kuia, or someone from a community group, doctor, counsellor, social worker, marae, hapū, or iwi – or someone else.

If someone doesn't take you seriously, even after explanation, reach out to another person, someone else you trust. If nobody feels like the right choice (or if nobody responds the way you need them to) you might want to contact a support service / helpline ([listed at the end of this resource](#)) that understands stalking and can help you feel heard and safe.

You may wish to connect with an organisation who may be able to connect you with culturally appropriate support – for example, a Māori or Pacific health or social service provider. If you are concerned about confidentiality, you might prefer to seek help from organisations outside your community. That's absolutely okay too.

What do I say?

Even when talking to someone you trust, it can sometimes be hard to name or challenge behaviour that feels invasive or controlling; for example, when the unwanted behaviour comes from someone you're expected to trust or defer to within family, cultural, work, education or faith communities. You might feel pressure to stay quiet, to "keep the peace", or to avoid bringing shame to your whānau or community. And in any situation when you talk about being stalked, you may receive many different reactions. Not everyone will immediately understand what you're experiencing. Some people might minimise it, make excuses for the other person, or tell you that you're overreacting. In all these situations, as in others, **your feelings of fear, confusion, and/or discomfort about the stalking are valid.**

Here are some words you can use which may help your trusted person understand – or you can simply pass this text on for them to read:



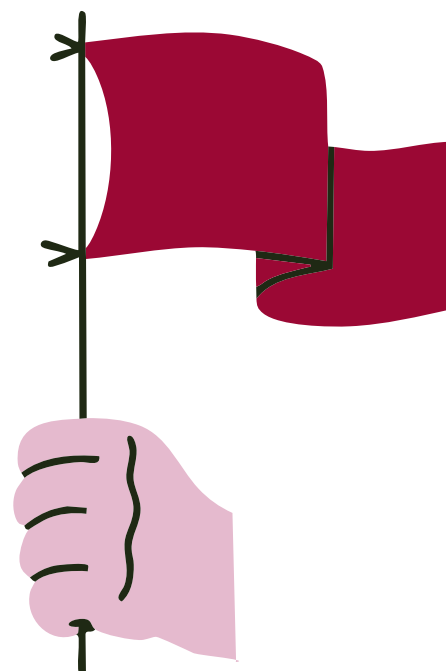
I am being stalked. That means I am the target of a pattern of unwanted behaviour. This stalking is [delete as appropriate] intimidating, threatening, distressing and/or dangerous. It is making me feel distressed, worried and/or scared. I am letting you know, because I trust you. Research shows stalking can have a serious and negative effect on people's lives, and it must be taken seriously. Behaviour that looks superficial or harmless to outsiders can be carefully chosen to be threatening to its target. Stalkers often behave and present extremely differently to outsiders than they do to their targets, and they can be extremely persistent – in other words, they may not stop intruding on someone's life just because they've been asked to. Please help me work out my options to find protection from the stalking.



Supporting someone else who is being stalked

If a friend or family member or someone else you know is being stalked, your support can make a big difference.

- It's really important to listen without judgment and believe what they say. You might say, "That sounds really scary. I'm so sorry you're going through this." Such validation can help them feel less alone and build their confidence – which is vital to reducing the effect of the stalking on their wellbeing, and can help them find useful protections.
- If they are describing concerning "red flag" behaviour but not identifying it as stalking, you can use [the descriptions in this guide](#) to help them decide whether the information in this guide may be relevant and useful.
- Ask how you can help and offer practical help that they may need – being someone they can call e.g. if the stalker is nearby, accompanying them if it's best they're not alone on the street or carpark or driveway, supporting them in hui about the stalking (e.g. with the police and/or their employer), helping with childcare or transport or a safe place to stay or finances, or keeping a record/log of each stalking incident.
- **Encourage them to make their own decisions about what courses of action seem best.** Stalking can feel like a loss of autonomy – the ability to control one's own life and make one's own decisions. You can help them regain some independence, sense of identity and control.
- With their permission, you could research and discuss their options with them. You can also offer to call Women's Refuge, SHINE and/or Victim Support or other helplines on their behalf for advice, and/or offer to go with them to appointments and take notes or keep records, gather information for them or just keep them company. When someone is scared, stressed, anxious, and/or not sleeping well, it can be even harder to remember and keep track of things.
- Give them time over weeks, months and years – however long they need – to voice their feelings and concerns. Keep checking in regularly – if you haven't heard from them, that does not mean everything is ok.
- And also offer them respite – distraction, entertainment and grounding activities. Make sure this is not the only thing you offer – the person being stalked needs to know you know that protection and safety are important
- Remember to take care of yourself, too; helping someone under threat can be stressful.
- If you are an employer, see SHINE's [DVFREE Workplace Guidelines](#) for ideas and responsibilities.



Crime Stoppers: If you wish to let the police know about someone who is stalking someone else (rather than yourself) but want to stay anonymous, you can call Crime Stoppers (0800 555 111) to give information. They will pass on details to the police without giving away your identity. This can help police build a picture of what's happening or identify patterns of behaviour. However, if you are the person being stalked or you're in danger, it's better to contact police directly so they can take protective action sooner. See [Reporting stalking to the police](#).

Your legal rights and options

If you're experiencing stalking, there are legal tools that may help to increase your safety and hold the person accountable. Each legal option has its own benefits and limits, and they may not always feel simple or straightforward – so it's okay to take time, and get advice. Talking to a trusted support person, advocate, or lawyer who understands stalking can help you decide which steps feel right for you.

“Orders” which may provide legal protection:

There are several types of legal orders that may help protect you from stalking. These include **Protection Orders**, **Restraining Orders**, and **Harmful Digital Communications Orders**. We also explain **Trespass Notices** and **Police Safety Orders** below. [See summary pg 24.](#)

Applying for any of these orders involves writing an affidavit – a statement that describes what has happened, how it has affected you, and why you need protection, that you swear is true – and completing some court forms. You can apply without a lawyer, but it is often helpful to have a lawyer or support service guide you through the process. The next section explains where you can find legal help, even if you are not eligible for legal aid.

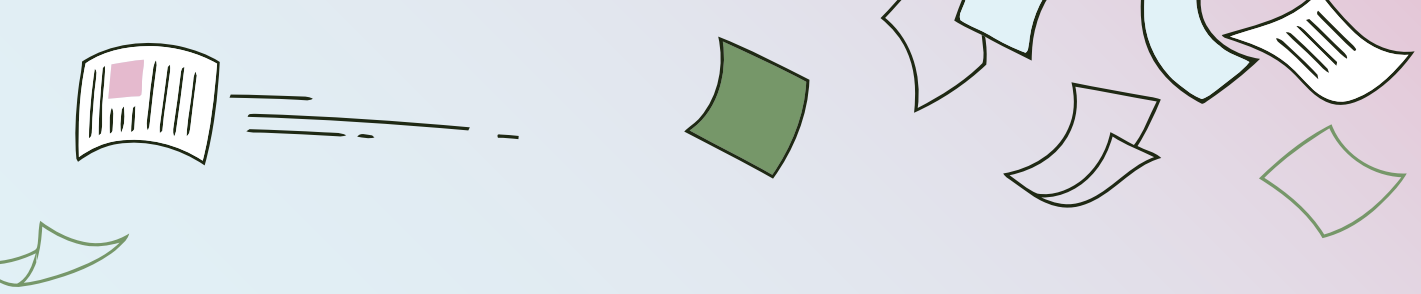
Having an order served on the person stalking you may convince them to stop. It can also make it easier for police to act if the person breaches the order. However, in some cases, taking legal action may increase your risk (the stalker may react with further distressing and/or threatening behaviour), so it is important to get advice and plan for your safety before applying. You are the best judge of whether this step will help or not. If you are unsure, you can call one of the helplines listed later in this guide to talk through the pros and cons.

Protection Orders

If the person stalking you is a partner, ex-partner, flatmate, family member, or anyone you have had a close personal relationship with, you can apply to the Family Court for a **Protection Order**. This order prohibits that person from following, threatening, or harming you. They are also not to contact you, unless you have agreed to specific types of contact first (eg via email). It can also protect your children or anyone else named in the order, and it can require the person to surrender any weapons to the police. (But note that if the child is under 16, and there is an existing parenting order in place, the Protection Order will not automatically be legally prioritised over the parenting order: the parenting order will still remain in force unless replaced, discharged or varied.)¹

A Protection Order can be an important tool for safety, but its effectiveness depends on the person following the order and on police enforcing it. Women's Refuge or SHINE or another specialist family violence service can help you think through these considerations before applying.

¹ Backbone Collective (2025) [Child-led Protection Orders: An information resource for victim-survivors](#)



If you need immediate protection, you can apply for a temporary (without-notice) Protection Order, which means the other person will not be told about it until it has been granted. Once the order becomes final, it stays in place indefinitely unless you choose to cancel it. However, the Family Court has become more cautious about granting temporary orders, which means the other person might sometimes be notified before it is approved and given the chance to respond – this can increase risk in the short term.

If the judge decides your case is not urgent, or if you've filed a non-urgent Protection Order application, the Court will let you know that your application needs to be sent to the other person involved and that no temporary order has been made. Before it is sent, you'll have a chance to stop your application if you want to – usually within 48 hours. To stop the application, you need to file what's called an "interlocutory application".

You can also apply for property and/or furniture orders at the same time as a Protection Order (and only then). A Property Order allows you to stay in the place you live while the other person has to leave. A Furniture Order allows you to keep furniture (e.g. bed, fridge) or take it with you, regardless of who owns it.

If you have children, you can also apply for a Parenting Order – for example, only allowing your co-parent to have supervised contact with the children.

See also [Protection Orders | New Zealand Ministry of Justice](#)

Restraining Orders vs. Police Action for Harassment

If the person stalking or harassing you is not a partner or family member, such as a co-worker, acquaintance, neighbour, or stranger, you can apply to the District Court for a Restraining Order under the Harassment Act 1997. This order stops the person from contacting, approaching, or monitoring you in any way, including by phone, text, email, or social media. If the order is granted and they breach it, police can arrest them.

Police can also take action without a court order. This might include issuing a warning, pressing charges, or making an arrest if the conduct meets the threshold for a criminal offence. You do not need a restraining order for police to investigate or lay charges.

Both pathways can happen at the same time. For example, you might apply for a Restraining Order to protect yourself from further contact while police investigate or charge the person for stalking or specific incidents of intimidation.

The law requires proof of a pattern of behaviour, usually at least two or more acts within a 12-month period, before a restraining order can be granted. If the person challenges the order, you may need to appear in court. It is helpful to have a lawyer or support worker assist you in preparing your application and gathering evidence such as messages, call logs, or witness statements.

See also: [Apply for a Restraining Order | New Zealand Ministry of Justice](#)



Harmful Digital Communications Orders under the Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015 HDCA

It is unclear what the threshold is for online stalking and harassment to be subject to this order, but this order can involve (among other things): orders to take down material; orders to publish a correction, an apology or give the complainant a right of reply; and/or orders to release the identity of the source of an anonymous communication.

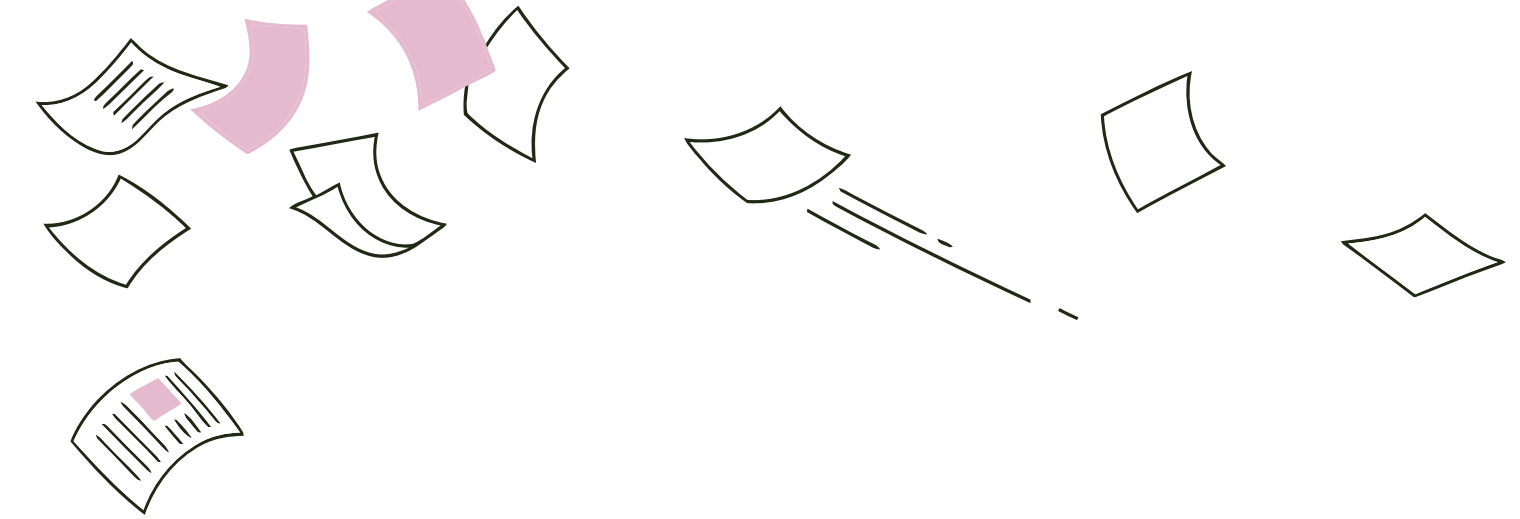
The first point of contact for orders under the HDCA is Netsafe. Netsafe does not have the power to remove harmful content, but they can often help you get harmful material taken down – for example, by guiding you through a platform’s reporting process or by working directly with the platform to have the content removed.

If the issue cannot be resolved this way, and your situation meets the legal thresholds under the HDCA, the Police can apply to the court on your behalf for a Harmful Digital Communications Order (HDCO) if you report it to the Police. If the Police decline to apply, you can apply for a Harmful Digital Communications Order yourself through the District Court. There is no fee for doing this.

You will need to make a report to Netsafe first, as they are the initial point of contact under the HDCA. Netsafe will provide the information you need, and staff at your local District Court can help you complete the process.

Be aware that this process can take time, and some material can spread quickly online before removal. However, it is still a useful tool for stopping ongoing abuse and showing that the behaviour is being taken seriously.

See also: [Applying for a Harmful Digital Communications order | New Zealand Ministry of Justice](#)



Trespass Notices

A Trespass Notice tells someone that they are not allowed to come onto a particular property. If the person stalking you does not know where you live (or work), **do not** request a Trespass Notice to your home (or workplace), as this can let them know where you live.

- Otherwise, even if you already have another order in place, a trespass notice can still be useful. It creates a clear record that you have told the person their contact or presence is unwanted and that they have been formally prohibited from approaching you or your property. This can:
 - help police see that the behaviour is persistent and unwanted
 - show that the stalker knew or should have known their actions were likely to cause fear and/or distress, and
 - strengthen your case if stalking charges are later considered.
- You can use it on its own, or in tandem with another order (such as a Protection Order or Restraining Order).
- It can be made verbally or in writing by anyone who controls a property. You can ask the police to serve it if you feel unsafe doing so yourself for your home. If you do it yourself, let police know you have done so.
- If the person stalking you knows where you work, you can ask your employer to issue a trespass notice for your workplace.
- Giving or serving a trespass notice means you are challenging the stalker's control, and they may choose to behave more abusively in response, so it's best to plan carefully and talk with police or a support worker first about the safest way to do it.
- See trespass pages at [NZ Police](#) and [Community Law](#).

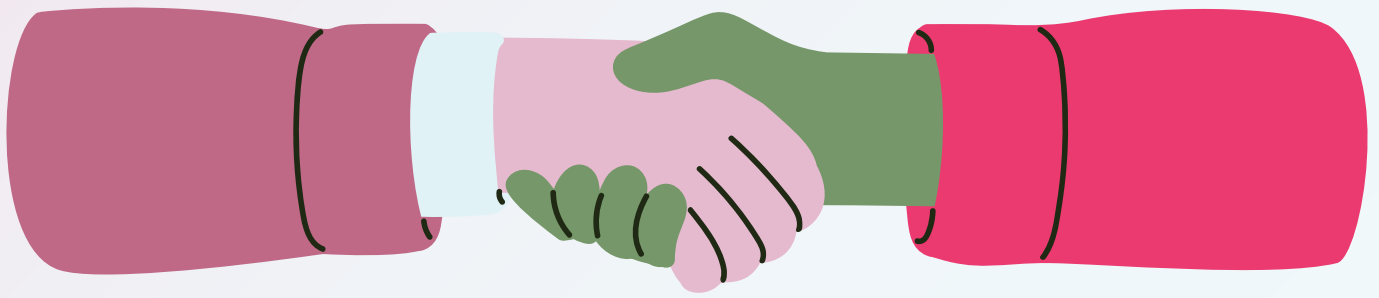
Police Safety Orders (PSO)

A Police Safety Order is issued by police when they believe someone needs protection from family violence. You cannot apply for a PSO yourself, but police can put one in place on your behalf.

A PSO requires the person to leave your home, stay away, and not contact you for a set period of time (up to 10 days), even if they own or normally live in the property. If they breach the order, police can arrest them.

This is a short-term measure designed to give you space and time to plan for your safety and connect with support services.

See also: [Police Safety Orders | New Zealand Police](#)



Legal advice and support

Getting legal advice and support can be very helpful – if you can access it, which is not always the case as lawyers are currently over-subscribed. A lawyer can help you fill out forms, apply for legal orders and represent you in court.

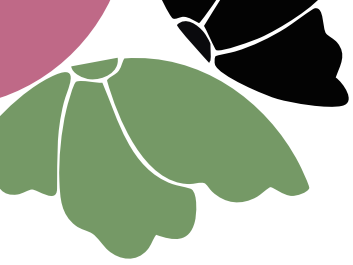
There is a cost to hire a lawyer, but if you cannot afford this, there are some other options:

- **Legal Aid:** If you qualify (primarily low income), legal aid can help you to pay for a lawyer. To find out if you qualify, talk to a legal aid lawyer, your local Community Law Centre, or Citizens Advice Bureau. Depending on your income, any property owned, and your type of case, you may have to repay some or all of your legal aid as it is considered a “loan”.
- **Community Law Centres:** These offer some free legal help through clinics held regularly throughout the country. See www.communitylaw.org.nz/our-law-centres. Depending on your situation, they may be able to help you with more intensive ongoing advocacy. They also provide an online law manual in plain language to help you know your rights in all areas of the law: www.communitylaw.org.nz/law-manual-online/. Including a [section on bullying and harassment](#) Sometimes they can refer you to other local lawyers or services.
- **Family Legal Advice Services:** provide free legal advice for people who qualify. They can only give you initial advice to help you understand your rights and options and help you with Parenting Order applications forms. They cannot represent you in court, and you can only use the service once a year.

Reporting stalking to the police

We acknowledge not everybody feels safe or comfortable contacting the police. Some people experiencing stalking have found the police to be helpful and understanding, while others have felt judged and/or had their concerns ignored, minimised, and not taken seriously.

Some victim-survivors have found the stalker chooses to react in anger and/or violence when police become involved, without the police involvement making the victim-survivor any safer. If the stalker knows you’ve contacted police, you may wish to take extra precautions. Be clear with police that you need to know what they are doing and when.



Victims Rights

Under the NZ Victims' Rights Act 2002, police and other professionals in the criminal justice system are legally obliged to treat victims with courtesy and compassion and respect victim's dignity and privacy. The Victim's Code sets out the rights for all victims of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is available as a PDF in [English](#), [Māori](#), and [several other languages](#): Arabic, Chinese, Fijian, Hindi, Korean, Samoan and Somali

You have the right to request a copy of your police report. You also have the right to receive information including about the progress of any investigation, reasons for not laying charges, any charges laid, changes to the charges, and the outcome of any prosecution.

If you feel your case wasn't handled properly, you can make a complaint to the police by using their online complaints form or by going to any police station, or you can make a complaint to the Independent Police Conduct Authority. Or you might want to talk to a [support organisation](#) such as Women's Refuge or Victim Support to ask if they can advocate on your behalf with police.

Why report to the police?

If you are in immediate danger; call 111, say you need the police and tell them you are in danger, and it is urgent.

Even if you are not in immediate danger, you may wish to report stalking to the police in order to:

- ask the police to warn the person to stop stalking you.
 - Stalking does not have to meet the definition/criteria of a stalking crime for police to warn the person to stop.
 - The warning may stop some people from stalking. And if the stalking continues, the warning may still be useful as evidence that from now on the stalker knows any similar behaviour may be considered a crime.
 - The warning tells the person that they are doing something that is causing or likely to cause fear or distress (which is part of the definition of stalking as a crime); and that therefore what they are doing may amount to an offence.
 - The police can decide whether or not to warn the person. If they decide to warn the person, they do not need your permission to do so but they must inform you first. This requirement to notify the person targeted by stalking is designed to increase victim safety, and is part of the new stalking law.
- To request the police to investigate, and/or arrest the person stalking. For some people (although not all), conviction can act as a deterrent to further stalking. Police can arrest someone for stalking if there is evidence the stalker has stalked you on at least two occasions within a 2-year period, and there is evidence that they knew their behaviour was likely to cause you fear or distress. If police consider there is already sufficient evidence of stalking, they can decide to immediately arrest the stalker – they do not have to warn them first and wait until “next time”.
- To ask the police to serve a trespass notice.
- To ask for a [Police Safety Order](#) against someone you live with, e.g. to give you time to arrange a [Protection Order](#).

When is stalking a crime?

Note you may have a good reason to report stalking to the police, even if it is not a crime.

Some stalking behaviours are offences on their own (e.g. assaults, some threats, non-consensual sharing of intimate images). But stalking itself – i.e. certain patterns of behaviours – can also be a crime, even if the individual actions in the behaviour pattern (such as messaging or calling) would not be a crime if they were done once.

Stalking is now a crime under the Crimes Act when:

- a) the stalker does a “specified act” directed towards the target person at least twice within two years; and
- b) the stalker does these acts knowing their behaviour “is likely to cause fear or distress” to the targeted person. Note: The behaviour does not actually need to have caused fear or distress. Targeted people are under no obligation to say how the stalking has made them feel. But it can be useful to explain to the police why the stalker would know their behaviour would be likely to cause fear or distress.

In the law, the list of “specified acts” that can be the components of stalking include the catch-all “acting in any way that would cause fear or distress to a reasonable person”. The list of “specified acts” also includes:

- watching, following, loitering near, or obstructing the target person
- recording or tracking the target person
- contacting or communicating with the target person
- damaging, devaluing, moving, entering, or interfering with the target person’s taonga or property (including pets) – even if the property or pets are also the stalker’s
- damaging or undermining the target person’s reputation, opportunities, or relationships, and
- pretending to be the target person, or publishing anything about them (e.g. through social media). This can be gossip, misinformation or lies, or simply any statement concerning the target person .

The law also states that:

- “a specified act may be done by or through any means whatsoever (for example, tracking devices, digital applications, spyware, drones, or the use of artificial intelligence)”
- stalking is still a crime if it meets the criteria above even if the stalker uses another person (e.g., children or potentially-unwitting friends) or an organisation to carry out the “specified acts” toward the target person.
- if the stalker directs any of the specified acts towards any of the target person’s family members, that is considered part of the stalking of the target person also.

How do I report stalking to the police in a non-emergency situation?

- You can call the police non-emergency line 105. You may wish to record the conversation to refer back to.
- You can make an online report (make a copy of each response you give)
- You can visit any police station (be aware the front reception is a public place, and you may have to report details in front of other people in the waiting room.)

Below are some tips that might help you to report stalking to the police, if you choose to do so.

Consider contacting a Liaison Officer, if relevant to your situation.

The New Zealand Police as an organisation exhibits racial bias², and gender bias and sexuality bias.³ In an attempt (which is sometimes successful, sometimes not) to make the reporting process more comfortable and culturally safe, the Police employ “liaison officers” for particular population groups (although not women per se – yet!). If you think they may assist, you can ask to be put in contact with them:

- [Iwi liaison officers](#) (NB: public role descriptions do not include assisting individual victims)
- [Pacific liaison officers](#) (contacts only page)
- [Ethnic liaison officers](#) (contacts only page)
- [Diversity liaison officers](#) (for Rainbow communities – explanatory page)

Have a support person with you

when you report to police – whether it’s on the phone, in person or via online report. Your support person can:

- take notes (see below)
- help explain stalking behaviours you’ve experienced
- say what stalking behaviours they have witnessed you being targeted with
- speak and advocate on your behalf if police do not take your concerns seriously
- Remind you of any questions you wish to ask.

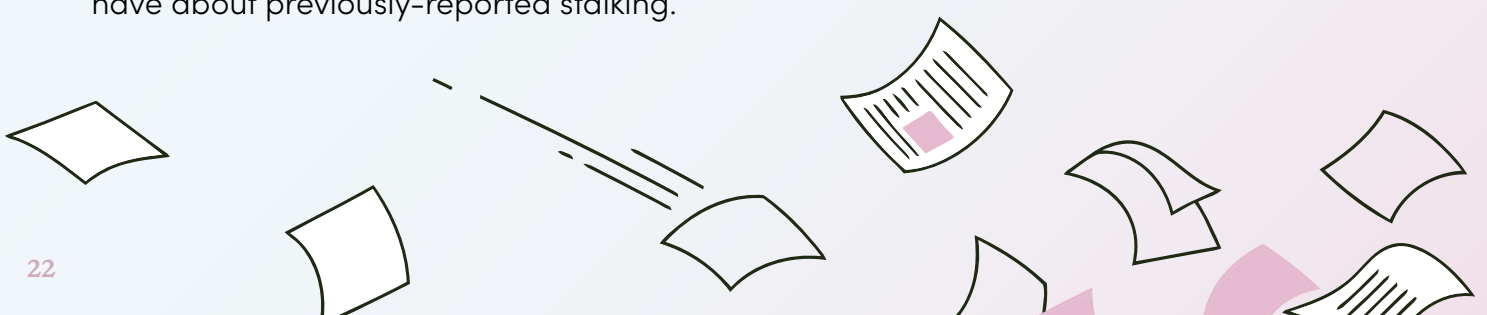
You may want to let your support person know beforehand what role you would like them to play in supporting you to report stalking to police. It can also help to debrief with them after you talk to the police (i.e, talk about the meeting with police) and talk through anything you didn’t understand or weren’t clear on.

Prepare ahead of time

If possible, we recommend you write notes ahead of reporting to police, about stalking behaviours you have experienced, with as much detail as possible, including person targeting you (if you know who they are), date, time, place, what happened, any witnesses or evidence/ records (text messages, emails, diary notes, photos, etc). Record each stalking episode separately, with as much detail about each one as you can, and put them in order, so you don’t leave out any information that can help the police investigate and charge your stalker. Even small details (like part of a car’s license plate or where the person was last seen or their social media or dating app profile names, in the case of stranger stalking) can help police.

Refer to any previously reported stalking

If you have previously reported stalking, make sure police are linking your current report with any previous reports to establish the pattern of stalking, by referring to the old job or case number and any other report or file numbers. Share any new information or evidence you have about previously-reported stalking.



Provide details about stalking behaviours

When you report a stalking episode, it might help to say clearly, “I am being stalked”, and give details of what happened. Start with the most recent episode– dates, times, descriptions of incidents. Show officers any evidence you have, and say the stalker should know their behaviour is *likely* to cause you fear and/or distress. In practice, police may be more likely to take the behaviour seriously if you say the behaviour is making you distressed and/or fearful for your safety and/or that of your family. (In theory, for stalking to be an offence, the stalker only has to know their behaviour is likely to cause you fear and/or distress – you shouldn’t have to ‘prove’ your fear.) You may also wish to tell them any precautions you are taking because you are fearful and/or distressed.. You could also say “I believe this is criminal stalking, under the Crimes Act.”

Take notes

You or your support person may want to take notes during the meeting. Make sure to record the date of the conversation, the name of the officer you spoke with and what they said they will do. If you are calling 105, or making an online report ensure you have a job number that you can refer back if you make further reports. All of this information may help with future follow-up.

Next steps

Ask them what they will do with the information you have provided. If you want them to arrest the person stalking you, and they are non-committal about this, ask them why they are not planning to arrest the person, and what more they need before they will arrest them. Ask them for an officer’s contact details and what they will do and what you can do to ensure that police will respond promptly the next time you are being stalked.

Stand your ground

If an officer seems to downplay your concerns, you or support person can politely ask to speak to a supervisor or – if the stalker is your current or former romantic partner, or even just someone you dated once – you can ask to speak to someone from the Police Family Harm team. Remember, police are legally obliged to treat victims with courtesy and compassion and respect victims’ dignity and privacy. If you’re not satisfied: You have the right to request a copy of your police report.

Be persistent

It’s okay to call 105 again or visit the station multiple times if stalking continues. Each report is important to help establish an ongoing pattern of stalking.

Documenting your experiences

It can also be helpful to record every stalking episode in as much detail as possible, and record and save any evidence. These records can be crucial if you go to court or report to police later. Keep back-up copies of all images and documents sent to the police.

If you are worried that your stalker may hack into your device, think about safer ways to store your records and evidence, such as on your work device, on a friend’s or workmate’s device.

Record dates, times, places, and exactly what your stalker did and how you responded. Save all available evidence: screenshots of texts or emails, copies of letters, photos of unwanted items left for you, voicemails, etc. Also, record names of anyone who witnessed any of the stalking episodes, particularly if you don’t have any other evidence for those. You can also ask any witnesses to write down what they saw and share it with you. A stalking log template can be found at stalkingawareness.org

Stalking response - possible legal options

A support worker or lawyer can help assess your situation and give you information e.g. on likely timelines for particular processes. You can reach out to a support organisation at any time, no matter what your circumstances are.

Does the stalking/harassment involve....

<p>Your partner, ex-partner, flatmate, family member, or whānau member?</p>	<p>You may qualify for a PROTECTION ORDER which prohibits threatening, or harming you. We recommend seeking help from Women's Refuge or SHINE or another specialist family violence service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply through the Family Court • You may need legal advice (and may be eligible for legal aid) • It can include protection for children • It can require surrender of firearms • Temporary (urgent) orders may be available • You can also apply for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Property Order (you stay, they leave) - Furniture Order (you keep essential items) - Parenting Order (e.g., supervised contact) <hr/> <p>If the police are involved due to family violence they may issue a POLICE SAFETY ORDER (PSO)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You cannot apply yourself • Police decide • Lasts up to 10 days • Requires the person to leave the home & not contact you • Gives time for safety planning & support
<p>Any sort of physical world/ offline stalking/ harassment from someone who is not family or an ex/partner?</p>	<p>You may qualify for a RESTRAINING ORDER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply through the District Court • Requires 2+ acts within 12 months AND the person knowing behaviour likely to cause fear • Prohibits contact, monitoring, following, approaches • Police can arrest if breached (at their discretion) • Can apply AND police can investigate at same time • You need to know the person's identity (police may be able to help find it)
<p>Someone (whether family or not) coming onto your property or workplace?</p>	<p>You/your employer may issue a TRESPASS NOTICE, which is simply telling the person they are not allowed on the property</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can ask police to issue a notice (for safety), or issue it yourself and then let police know • Useful even if you have another court order • Documentation of trespass is evidence the stalker should know their behaviour is unwanted
<p>Someone (whether family or not) stalking/harassing you online?</p>	<p>Contact police if it involves a direct and/or immediate threat. Contact Netsafe.</p> <p>You may qualify for a HARMFUL DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS ORDER, e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take-down orders • Cease-and-desist orders • Release identity of anonymous sender • Police can apply for this - if they decline, you can apply (free, District Court)
<p>• 2+ acts in 24 months AND • The person knew their behaviour was likely to cause you fear and/or distress?</p>	<p>The behaviour may meet the threshold for CRIMINAL STALKING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police can take action at their discretion • Police can investigate, warn, charge, arrest • No restraining order needed for police to act • Criminal action can run alongside civil orders (eg restraining order)

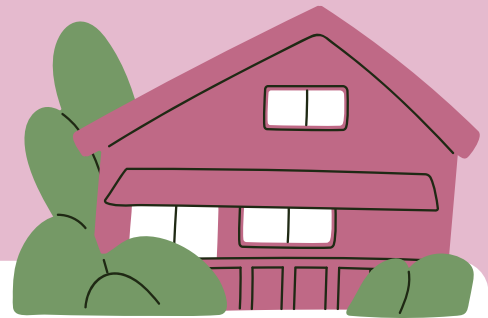
Direct protections

You should not have to change your behaviour to stay safe, and it is never your fault if someone chooses to stalk or harass you. The responsibility always lies with them. Still, thinking ahead about your safety can sometimes help your own sense of wellbeing and safety, by helping you feel more prepared and in control.

The steps in this section are about practical ways to look after yourself and reduce risk where possible, while the situation is ongoing. These are simply ideas that might help you feel safer and more prepared while the situation is still ongoing. Everyone's safety needs are different, so use what feels right for you and set aside what doesn't. You know your situation best.

Your physical safety

If you are being stalked physically (as well as or instead of online) – or you think your stalker may start stalking you physically – here are some ideas:



Home security

To enable you to see who is approaching your home (and possibly to act as a deterrent), consider or talk to your landlord or property manager about installing

- an alarm
- security lights
- security cameras
- a peephole in the door.

To make your home more secure, consider

- changing your locks and/or
- installing extra locks
- installing window stays so your windows are secure even when open,
- installing a doorstop chain or using a doorstop wedge
- installing a security screen (e.g metal mesh to fit over your door) or changing out any doors made of glass with solid doors.

If your stalker is an ex-partner or family member and you want to stay separated, you may be eligible for the Women's Refuge Whānau Protect Home Safety Service that will upgrade your home security and provide a monitored safety alarm that alerts police when triggered and records audio evidence.

**To find out more, call 0800 REFUGE (0800 733 843)
or email whanauprotect@refuge.org.nz**

Alert neighbours and housemates to what is happening. Give them a description or photo of the stalker if you have one. Tell them clearly what you'd like them to do if they see the person near your home – for example, to call police immediately (111), to contact you first, or both. Make sure they understand that this behaviour is unwanted and potentially unsafe, and that their quick action could help keep you safe. If you have a Protection Order, Restraining Order, or Trespass Notice in place, let them know.

Workplace safety

Employers have a legal responsibility to provide a safe workplace under the Health & Safety at Work Act 2015, so letting your workplace know you're being stalked can help them help you. Emphasise that you are in danger. You do not have to give personal details to your employer about the kind of relationship you have had with the person stalking you if you are worried this will make you vulnerable.

- For extra support, talk to a trusted colleague or union representative or 'First Responder' (family violence peer support staff that more employers are appointing) and ask them to help you to speak with your manager or HR team.
- Report each and every stalking incident that happens at work to your employer, and ask for a copy of the internal record each time.
- You can look at SHINE's [DVFREE Workplace Guidelines](#), and their DVFREE Workplace Safety and Wellbeing Planning Tool ([click here to download this Word template](#)) for ideas on how workplaces can support people experiencing family violence or stalking. These ideas include situations where your stalker works for the same employer, and many will be relevant even if your stalker is not an (ex-) partner or family member. The Tool ([download](#)) includes options like alerting reception or security, managing who has access to your location or moving your work location, trespassing the person, supporting you to apply for a protection order (or restraining order) or helping to enforce the order, and much more
- If the person stalking is not another employee, consider sharing their photo in a staff-only folder or staffroom.
- Consider having someone accompany you when you arrive and depart your workplace eg to your car or to public transport.
- In addition, if you're being harassed by **someone you work with**, Worksafe provides an [anti-bullying toolbox](#) which may be useful although some of the content is not safe or appropriate for stalking (e.g. mediation).
- If you're being harassed or stalked **online** as part of your work, your employer may find the Ministry of Women's ["Free to Lead"](#) employer course useful.
- If your employer does not take your concern seriously, and you are comfortable sharing personal information, you may want to share with them any evidence of stalking you have, such as:
 - CCTV footage or staff witnessing the person following, waiting, or loitering
 - reports or written statements from you or others who've seen their behaviour,
 - messages, emails, or records showing the person's unwanted contact
 - any police reports or existing warnings you can share, or
 - a written statement from a FV support worker, GP, or other credible professional who can state in writing that you are experiencing stalking and are in danger at work.



In education

If you are a school student, let a trusted staff member know what is happening, e.g. a teacher, dean, librarian, or counsellor. For extra support, you may wish to have a trusted friend help you let them know.

If you are a tertiary student, you can seek confidential advice through your institution's student support.

If the person stalking or harassing you is **another student or staff member,** your university, wānanga, institute or training provider has a duty to respond under its harassment or conduct policies. Auckland tertiary institutional anti-harassment policies include:

[University of Auckland bullying, harassment and discrimination policy.](#)

[AUT bullying and harassment disclosure form and procedures](#)

[UNITEC bullying, harassment and discrimination procedure](#)

If the person stalking you is **not staff or student** but turns up or contacts you on campus, campus security and other staff can help manage safety plans, restrict their access, and support you with reporting options. Campus security personnel are often (although not always) experienced at keeping people safe from stalkers – for example, arranging escorts to your car or classroom, changing your schedule, blocking the stalker from entering the premises, or ensuring your personal details are not shared with anyone outside the organisation.

Moving around

- **More eyes and ears:** Share what's happening with people who spend time with you and who are often in places where you frequently spend time, so they can be eyes and ears to spot if your stalker is around and help keep you safe. In addition to your neighbours and workplace, this could be your friends and family, university, gym, club, church, etc. Give them a description or photo of the stalker, let them know if you have a protection order or a restraining order, and let them know what you want them to do if they see your stalker – e.g. ring police immediately, and if you have one, and let them know if you have a Protection Order, Restraining Order, or Trespass Notice in place.
- **Find your local police station; vary your routines:** If you can, try to vary your routines – drive or walk different routes to work, school or other regular places, and let someone know where you're going and when you expect to return. Find your nearest police station and know what hours it is open. If necessary, find your nearest police station that is open 24/7, or if that is far away, know where there are businesses near you that are open 24/7. If you are being followed while in your car, drive to your nearest open police station or business where you will be least likely to be attacked and where you can ask for help.
- **GPS tracking:** If your stalker seems to know where you are wherever you go, they may be using a tracker to locate you that's in one of your devices or apps, or physically attached to your car or something else you own (see next point). You might want to go through all your device apps and disable location services (GPS) (or enable only when you're using the app if necessary) and disable Bluetooth when not needed. If there are any apps or programs on your devices that you do not recognise and cannot figure out what they are, you may want to delete them in case they are "stalkerware" or spyware. Or you may want to do a "factory reset" to restore your device to its original settings by erasing all apps, files and data – it wipes the phone completely clean, which has an obvious downside, but is the best way to make sure there are no malicious apps. Make sure you back up important photos, contacts and files first. You could also visit a tech or phone store to get your phone reset or scanned for spyware, but there may be a cost for this. Netsafe may help with further advice (See next section).
- **Bugs, spycams and location trackers:** These can be attached to almost anything – your car, suitcase, handbag etc. so your stalker can track, listen to, or watch you. You might be able to find them by looking for unusual boxes of devices that seem out of place (e.g. under your car), or you can buy cheap bug detectors from your local IT store to locate hard-to-find trackers, e.g. if you suspect your house is bugged.
- **Stay connected with trusted people:** Keep your mobile phone with you, and keep it charged (or keep a power bank/portable charger handy). Consider using a live location-sharing app with a trusted friend or family member when you're out (so they can see where you are if needed). If you are going to community events that are important to you, go with trusted people who know about the stalking and can help keep you safe at the event if the person stalking you attends.
- **Carry a personal alarm:** A small alarm or whistle can draw attention if you are threatened. If you're attacked or feel in danger, use the alarm to let others know you need help quickly.
- **Apply for a violence prevention smartwatch alarm:** find out if you're eligible by contacting an organisation listed by [Help@Hand](#)



Your online safety

If you are being stalked online/remotely (as well as or instead of physically) – or you think your stalker may start stalking you online – here are some ideas:

- **Blocking/muting/hiding:** You can block and/or put “call barring” on the stalker’s number on your phone so they cannot message or call you directly. You can also block them in any messaging apps (WhatsApp, Messenger, etc.) and block or mute or hide them on other social media. Depending on the platform, your stalker may be able to see you’ve “blocked” them, but not be able to see that you’ve “muted” or “hidden” their posts. You may wish to consider whether letting your stalker know you’ve “blocked” them is likely to act as a deterrent, or whether it will lead to them finding other platforms/ways to harass you. So it may work better to mute or hide their messages rather than block them so you don’t alert them to what you’re doing.
- **Strong passwords:** Use strong unique passwords on all online accounts and enable two-factor authentication (2FA) on important accounts. Consider changing passwords to any accounts your stalker might have gained access to. Never share your passwords or 2FA codes with anyone. Change your voicemail PIN to something hard-to-guess so the stalker can’t check your messages – even if you rarely receive or listen to your messages.
- **If you’re required to have contact with your stalker (e.g. co-parenting):** keep a record of all abusive and excessive calls as evidence. Consider whether or not it would help to only respond when necessary. Another idea is to get a second phone that you can use for everything else, and ask a trusted friend to look after the phone your stalker contacts you on, permanently or for agreed periods of time to give you a break. That person can check messages and let you know when there’s something you need to respond to.

- **Privacy settings in social media, etc:** Change your privacy settings so that only friends can see your posts and profile. Be careful about including information about your location or plans in your posts, and avoid “checking in” or tagging your location. On apps like WhatsApp, enable two-step verification (so you need your PIN to get back in), and check “Linked Devices” to sign out of any devices you do not recognise. Set the people who can see your profile picture, status and “last seen”, to “Nobody” or “My Contacts” so strangers cannot track you.
- **Online presence:** Think about using an alias or nickname on public profiles. Log out of sites and remove saved Wi-Fi/Bluetooth/streaming networks from shared computers so the stalker can’t piggyback onto your connections. When researching your rights or doing any online activity related to stalking, use “private” or “incognito” mode on a browser, especially if you share a device.
- **Keep evidence, report to the platform:** Keep a log of calls or messages and record evidence such as screenshots before deleting anything. You can ask platforms directly to take actions such as removing harmful content, restricting the account, or banning the user, or report to Netsafe. The [Australian e-Safety guide](#) provides a lot of information about how to do this for different platforms. Note: Australian law differs from NZ law – so advice from any link with “gov.au” may not pertain to NZ, but the links provided by the apps themselves should pertain to Aotearoa NZ as well as Australia. To stop some forms of non-consensual intimate image sharing (aka image-based sexual abuse” or “revenge porn”) you can also contact [stopncii.org](#) (over 18) or [takeitdown.ncmec.org](#) (if the images show someone under the age of 18).
- **Contact Netsafe:** Netsafe can support anyone being targeted online They offer:
 - Specialist online harm support. [Netsafe](#) provides free, confidential advice through their helpline. They can talk you through your options, help you decide on next steps, and give you guidance on staying safe and secure online.
 - Help with getting harmful or sensitive content removed. Netsafe operates under the Harmful Digital Communications Act (HDCA). While the HDCA does not give them the power to remove harmful content themselves, they can often help you get harmful material taken down – for example, by guiding you through a platform’s reporting process or by working directly with the platform to have the content removed.
 - Advice and support around illegal online behaviour including stalking and image-based abuse - e.g. sharing intimate images without your consent.



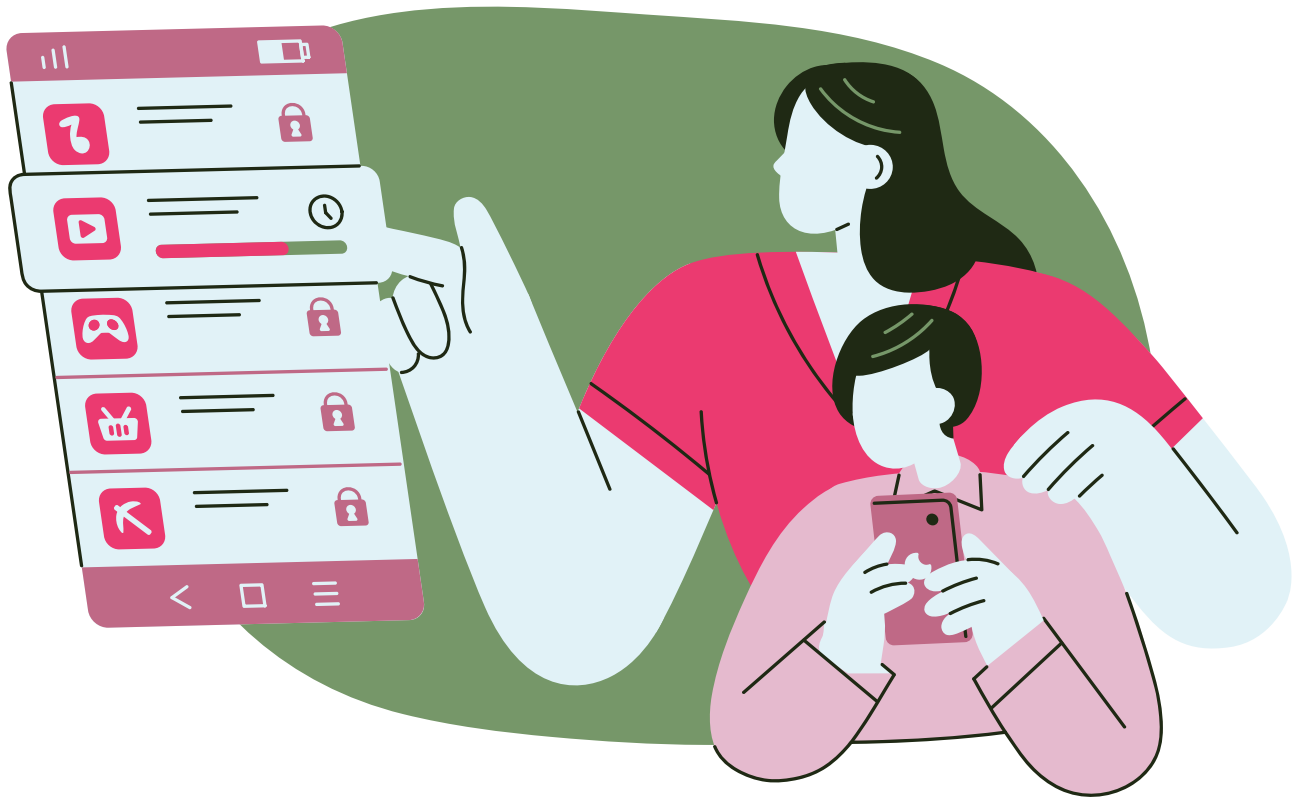


Keeping your tamariki/ children safe

See [Victim Support's advice](#) on supporting children and young people, including assisting children who have witnessed traumatic events, and on keeping children safe on line.

Children can be scared by stalking. Talk to them in simple, honest language. Reassure them that someone doing things that they don't want them to do is not their fault; and encourage them to tell you or another trusted adult if anything happens that frightens them. Try to keep their daily routine (school, sports, friends) as normal as possible to give them stability. Here are some other ideas for you to consider for your situation and your children:

- **If the stalker is the children's parent or family member:** it can really help to have support from family violence services in these situations, especially if they have child specialists who can help support your children. You can ring one of the family violence helplines at the end to find out about your local services and be put in touch with them.
- **Teach them to call 111:** Even very young children may be able to learn how to call 111 for police in an emergency. This is certainly simpler than learning a normal phone number, but if they're old enough you might also want to teach them a number for a trusted relative or friend. If they know you are being stalked and are feeling afraid, it can help to give them a sense of control by having a plan of what to do if something bad happens. Make sure they know your address and surname, or write it down for them if they can read and keep it somewhere visible.
- **Practice what to do in an emergency at home:** Again it can help give children a sense of control if they have a safety plan for emergencies, but what exactly that plan is depends on what you believe to be the most likely scenario they may be responding to. If, for example, you're worried about the stalker breaking into your home, this could be to climb out a window and run to the neighbour's if you can pre-arrange something with them, or run to their bedroom and lock the door, and ideally have a phone there so they can ring 111.
- **Simple instructions about answering the door:** Tell them do not open the door unless they know the person, and don't believe anyone who says they know you. If they know the stalker, make sure they know not to open the door for that person, and to ring the police on 111 OR let you know ASAP depending on how dangerous you believe that person is.



- **Simple instructions if they are followed:** Make sure they know what the person looks like if they don't know them already and give simple instructions for what to do if they are followed, i.e. yell or scream "HELP!"; run to nearest adult, a woman with children is always safest, and tell them that they are in danger from the person following them. If they have a cell phone, they can ring 111, but it's best to run to be near people first.
- **Talk to their school/daycare:** Let them know what's happening, share a photo or description of the stalker and, if you have one, a copy of a protection order or restraining order. Let the school/daycare know if you want them to ring police if they see the person there, and/or alert you immediately.
- **If your children have phones or are on social media:** This can be one of the hardest parts of managing safety for you and your children. See all ideas in the previous section about online safety, as some of these may be relevant to your children's online safety. You may want to make sure your children aren't being contacted or tracked on their devices or apps, and that the stalker is blocked from their phone and all social media and messaging apps. You may want to check their privacy settings and GPS settings, and give them instructions about not posting anything with their location or planned locations, and not turning on GPS or location sharing.

Children may sometimes ignore your instructions if they don't understand why they matter – or if they've been told something different by the other parent or family member. Try to explain, in a calm and age-appropriate way, why certain rules or safety steps are important for their safety and yours. Helping them understand that these measures are about keeping everyone safe can reduce confusion and make them more likely to follow your guidance.

Your financial security

Stalkers sometimes try to control victims by messing with their money. These are some ideas that may help mitigate against this possibility.

- **Report stolen items:** Immediately tell your bank or card companies if your cards or money go missing. If the stalker has stolen money or property, that's a crime – you can report it to the police and to your insurance company.
- **Change accounts or account logins:** If your stalker might have access to your accounts, you may want to change your PIN numbers and passwords for your bank accounts and credit cards and keep any physical cards in a safe place. Or you may want to open a new account altogether to be even safer.
- **Bank 'extra care' teams:** Many banks now have special teams to provide extra care for 'customers with vulnerabilities' which includes customers experiencing economic abuse and family violence. Ask if your bank has a team like this that you can speak to. They will often assign one person to deal with you so you don't have to retell your story, and also make sure they are doing everything they can to keep you safe from further abuse.
- **Abusive transaction references:** Stalkers that have your account information may also make payments of any size so they can send abusive messages in the transaction fields. If this happens, take a screenshot as evidence, and report it to your bank.
- **Joint accounts:** If the stalker is your joint account holder, talk to your bank about what is happening and ask them to help protect your money. Some banks can freeze accounts, separate joint accounts without approval from the joint account holder, or issue new cards for your safety. You might open a new account in your name only and move your money there.
- **Stay organised:** Keep copies and take photos of important financial documents (receipts, contracts, tax info). These can be evidence if the stalker is committing financial abuse (like taking your money or sabotaging your work).
- **Get help for economic abuse from [Good Shepherd](#):** This organisation supports people who experience economic abuse and can help with issues like debt caused by abuse, or other banking or financial issues related to economic abuse. Their website has more information that may help.
- **Get legal help for financial issues from [Community Law Centres](#):** They offer free legal help on issues like financial or economic abuse.

Reducing the impacts of stalking on your wellbeing

As well as looking to reduce the ability of the stalker to intrude in your life, it can also be useful to look to reduce the effect of those intrusions on your psychological, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing. Look after your wellbeing in whatever ways you think will help and you are able to do. Looking after your hauora means caring for your whole self. What works will look different for everyone.



Grounding practices such as karakia, meditation, or journaling may help.



Spending time with safe friends and whānau, and enjoying their company



Strength or distraction may be found in creative activities like arts and crafts, music, dance, or writing.



Rest, exercise and nourishing food can also support stability and a sense of control.

The most important thing is to choose what feels right for you.

NZ-wide Support Services




Call 111 if you are in immediate danger; ask for police and say it is urgent.

All of these helplines are free to call and confidential. Some of these can help you find local services to support your needs, including culturally appropriate support, and help to connect you with these services.


If you can, getting whānau and community support are also important; see [“Getting Support”](#) section.


Available 24/7

Family violence

 **Women’s Refuge:** Call 0800 REFUGE (0800 733 843)


24/7 helpline for women and non-binary people experiencing family violence. They offer crisis intervention, safe houses, community advocacy and more.

 **SHINE (family violence helpline):**

 Call 0508 744 6332 or chat online www.2shine.org.nz

24/7 support, information and support for safety and wellbeing.


 **Shakti Aotearoa:**

 Call 0800 SHAKTI (0800 742 584) or email crisisline@shakti.org.nz.

24/7 multilingual helpline for migrant and refugee women facing violence.

 **Are You OK? (family violence helpline):** Call 0800 456 450


Sexual abuse/harm

 **Safe-to-Talk (sexual abuse/harm support):** Call 0800 044 334 or text 4334

 www.safetotalk.nz

Elder abuse

 **Elder Abuse Response:** Call 0800 32 668 65 or text 5032


 **Age Concern NZ:** Call 0800 65 2 105

Mental health support


 **1737 (mental health support):**


Call or text 1737 - Trained counsellors if you feel anxious or overwhelmed.

Online image abuse

 **Stop NCII:** International websites which can help prevent some nonconsensual intimate image sharing stopncii.org (over 18), takeitdown.ncmec.org (under 18)

Criminal justice system

 **NZ Police:** Call 111 if you are in immediate danger. For other police help, call 105 or use the online reporting portal at www.police.govt.nz


 **Victim Support | Manaaki Tāngata:** Call 0800 VICTIM (0800 842 846). Free, 24/7 support for any crime victim. They can advise you, accompany you to police or court, and help you understand your options.


 **Victims Info** (non-interactive): www.victimsinfo.govt.nz

Available more limited hours:

Takatāpui/ Rainbow support

 **OutLine peer support:** 0800 688 5463.

 **Rainbow Youth helpline (for young people):** 0800 376 633.

 **Hohou te Rongo Kahukura** – free resources & recovery services for Takatāpui and Rainbow people experiencing violence www.Kahukura.co.nz


@ Email intake@kahukura.co.nz for their national sexual harm support service

Sexual harm

 **Shama National Response to Sexual Harm (multiethnic):**

@ Email crisis1@shama.org.nz or call 078433810.

Online abuse

 **Netsafe (Online Safety):** Call 0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723) or text 4282.

Financial abuse

 **Good Shepherd:**
www.goodshepherd.org.nz

Legal information

 **Community Law:**
www.communitylaw.org.nz

All of the above services are free and confidential. You can ask them to connect you with culturally appropriate support. For example, Women's Refuge, Shama and Shakti have staff from many communities, and the police can involve local iwi liaison officers. Whānau and community support (manaaki) are also important; consider talking with extended whānau or your local marae for help and guidance.

You are not alone. By taking the sometimes daunting step of reaching out, you are helping to protect your loved ones and the community as a whole, as well as yourself. You have the right to support and safety. You have the right to live without fear. Your life, safety, mana, dignity, wellbeing and future are precious.

**Me aro koe
ki te ha o
Hineahuone**

**Pay heed to
the dignity
of women**



**Te Wāhi Wāhine o
Tāmaki Makaurau**
AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE