

## Planning for safety

There are several things you can do to keep yourself safe:

- ▶ Memorize numbers of people you can go to for help, local crisis lines and emergency numbers. If you feel you are in immediate danger please call 911.
- ▶ Tell others you trust such as neighbors, friends or co-workers and talk about ways they can help.
- ▶ Identify escape routes and where you can go if you need to run away quickly.
- ▶ Talk to your children about what they can do during a violent incident and how they can keep themselves safe.
- ▶ Put together an emergency bag with your important papers (or copies of your papers). These may include: passports, visas, green card, EAD card, Social security card, drivers license, birth certificates, marriage certificate (or other proof of marriage such as pictures or wedding invitations), proof of divorce (if either you or your spouse had a previous marriage), public assistance documents, tax returns and pay stubs for you and your spouse, and copies of your abuser's immigration documents (if you are unable to get a copy write down the information from his green card or naturalization certificate.)
- ▶ Also pack your medical prescriptions, extra car keys, money, checkbooks, credit cards and a list of contact numbers. Keep the bag with someone you trust.
- ▶ Trust your instincts. If you feel you are in danger you probably are. Try to get to a safe place as soon as you can.



**Everyone has the right to live without violence and fear in their home.**

The Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence is a statewide member-based organization committed to eliminating domestic violence by promoting systems change and supporting intervention programs which serve all domestic violence victims. Certified shelters respond 24 hours a day, providing safe shelter, emotional support, advocacy, referrals to other social services and information on victim's rights. All services are free and confidential.



GEORGIA  
COALITION  
AGAINST  
DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE

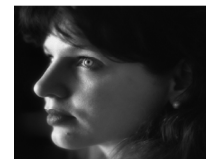
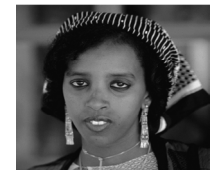
**Please Call**  
**1-800-334-2836** V/ TTY  
Help is available 24 hours a day

Please speak the name of your language and wait for a couple of minutes and an interpreter will be made available to you. In case you have any problems reaching this number you can call Tapestri at 1-866-562-2873 (9 am—5 pm) for assistance.

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**Violence  
Does Not  
Mean Love In  
ANY  
Language**



*Free from Violence  
Free from Fear*

*Finding Safety and Support*

## Domestic Violence Can Happen to Anyone.

### Are YOU Being Abused?

#### Does someone in your family or home:

- Call you names or constantly criticize you?
- Control your everyday life?
- Prevent you from working, learning English or learning how to drive?
- Threaten to take away your documents or have you deported?
- Deny you food, housing, or medicines?
- Hit, kick, slap, strangle or push you?
- Threaten to hurt you or someone you love?
- Use weapons or other things to hurt you?
- Make you be sexual or do sexual acts when you don't want to?
- Make you feel afraid?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you may be one of the many women that are being abused everyday in all parts of the world.

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviors that some individuals use to control others in their family or home, which tends to get worse over time.

You may be blaming yourself for what is happening, but nothing you do or say can justify someone using violence against you. Battering is the choice and the responsibility of the person being abusive. Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of their class, religion, ethnic background, education, age, gender, physical ability or sexual orientation. You have the right to be safe and have access to available services, **regardless of your immigration status.**

### Services Available:

**Shelters:** Shelters are safe, confidential places that assist abused women. They provide a temporary place to stay until you decide what you want to do. Shelters provide you with free food and boarding. They will assist you with safety planning, your legal options and help with locating other local resources. They may also assist you with your other needs such as finding a job or a permanent place to stay. Most shelters will provide you services whether you wish to leave your abuser or not.

**Temporary Protective Order (TPO):** A TPO is a civil court order that orders your abuser not to come near you or contact you. With this order you can also ask for the custody of your children, child support, that the abuser be removed from the home, and that the abuser not interfere with your immigration status. The TPO could possibly lead to the deportation of your spouse if he violates the order.

**Criminal Charges:** You may be able to press criminal charges or get a criminal warrant against your abuser if either you or your loved ones have been physically injured, raped or harassed. If you prosecute your abuser, he/ she could be arrested and possibly imprisoned. Be aware that this could lead to your non- U. S. citizen abuser/ partner being deported.

**Public Benefits:** You may receive public benefits: 1. If you are refugee who has been in the country for less than 5 years; 2. If you are undocumented but have applied for your green card; or 3. If your children are U.S. citizens. Even if none of the above apply to you, you can still get emergency Medicaid (medical services.)

### Immigration- Related Options:

If you are married to a US citizen or green - card holder you can apply for your own green card through the Violence Against Women Act. You can apply for this without the knowledge or cooperation of your abuser. If you have been divorced from your citizen or green- card- holding spouse for less than 2 years, you may still be eligible to “**self- petition**” for your green card.

If you are already in deportation proceedings, or expect that you soon will be, you can apply for “**Cancellation of Removal**” . If you qualify, the court may waive your deportation and grant you a green card.

If you currently have a “conditional” green card, you can apply for the “**Battered Spouse Waiver**”, through which you can obtain a permanent green card.

If you are not married to your abuser or if he/ she is not a citizen or green card holder, you may qualify for a **U visa**. This is a 3- year visa for victims of crime. To qualify for this visa you will be required to cooperate with the authorities in prosecuting your abuser. You may also apply for “**Gender Based Asylum**” if you can show that you have come to the US to escape from abuse or if the situation in your country is such that you will undergo persecution or gender based violence if you return.

If you are seeking assistance on immigration issues, **always consult an immigration attorney.** Do NOT call BCIS. Your conversation with the attorney will be confidential. If you cannot afford an attorney, contact a local domestic violence agency for assistance or call

**1-800-33-HAVEN (V/TTY)**