

## Links with further information

[www.lfsh.de](http://www.lfsh.de)

Website of the Regional Association for Women Counseling in Schleswig-Holstein (*Landesverband Frauenberatung Schleswig-Holstein e. V.*)

[www.weisser-ring.de](http://www.weisser-ring.de)

The White Ring Association (*WEISSER RING e. V.*) is the only German-wide aid organization for victims of crimes and their families. Affected persons, who are looking for help, can find contacts of the White Ring Association closest to them.

[www.polizei-beratung.de](http://www.polizei-beratung.de)

On this crime prevention internet portal of the police on the state and federal level you can find information under the tab:

→ topics and tips (*Themen und Tipps*) → violence (*Gewalt*) → stalking

[www.bmj.de](http://www.bmj.de)

On the internet portal of the Federal Ministry of Justice, there are tips regarding stalking under the tab:

→ topics (*Themen*) → help for victims and violence prevention (*Opferhilfe und Gewaltprävention*) → protection from domestic violence (*Schutz vor häuslicher Gewalt*)

<https://www.afpg-online.de>

The Darmstadt University of Technology, Institute for Psychology, Department for Forensic Psychology and Expert Opinions for Courts offers current information on research projects and proposals about stalking on their website.

## Counseling

### Helpline - „Violence against Women“

At the toll-free phone number +49 8000 116 016 women anywhere in Germany, who are affected by violence, can reach counselors. With the help of translators, counseling is possible in a variety of languages.

### Further help and support

#### White Ring (WEISSER RING e. V.) - State office in Schleswig-Holstein

Tel.: +49 4331 434 99 09

[www.weisser-ring.de/schleswig-holstein](http://www.weisser-ring.de/schleswig-holstein)

#### Ministry of Justice of Schleswig-Holstein

At [www.schleswig-holstein.de](http://www.schleswig-holstein.de) you can find the flyer for download and other information regarding stalking under the tab:

→ justice (*Justiz*) → topics (*Themen*) → law (*Recht*) → criminal law (*Strafrecht*) → victim protection and criminal law (*Opferschutz und Strafrecht*) → better protection for victims of stalking (*Besserer Schutz für Stalkingopfer*)

#### Representative of Victim Support and Central Contact Point for Victims of Crimes and their Relatives in Schleswig-Holstein

You can find further information from the Representative of Victim Support and the Central Contact Point at:

[https://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/landesregierung/themen/justiz/opferschutz/opferschutz\\_node.html](https://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/landesregierung/themen/justiz/opferschutz/opferschutz_node.html)

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## Stalking Information for affected persons



## What is Stalking?

The origin of the word stalking comes from the hunting language and it describes creeping up to or cornering prey. Stalking describes intentional, malicious, and repeated following and harassing of a person which threatens their safety. Past studies say that the perpetrators are mostly male (87 %), and the victims are mostly female (80 %). Stalking can occur in different forms of relationships.

Often, ex-partners do not accept the end of a relationship and want to continue to wield power and control. But stalking can also occur in relationships to acquaintances, friends, neighbors, professional contacts, or strangers. The reasons for it can be one-sided love obsession or anger and rejection.

Typical behaviors are, for example:

- repeated and unwanted contacting by phone, email, text message, letters, gifts etc.
- continuous watching, monitoring, and following
- demonstrative waiting in front of the place of residence or at work
- damaging the victims property
- contacting other persons or institutions
- placing orders for delivery in the victim's name

## What can you do?

Stalking is not a one-time event, and its progression is often not predictable. There is not a simple solution. However, experience shows that early and consistent action tends to lead to an end of the harassment. So, definitely get qualified help and support from counseling services, the police, and/or specialized lawyers.

Furthermore, you should, depending on your individual situation, adhere to the following behavioral advice:

- Get information on stalking! You will realize that you are not the only one affected and that it is not your fault that this is happening to you.
- One time and unequivocally, make it clear to the stalker that you do not want any contact with them, neither now and nor in the future! And then ignore them. Any further reaction would be understood as invitation to keep going.
- Document all actions of the stalker so you have proof! This includes, but is not limited to, every meeting that they request, every visit, call, letter, and gift.
- Inform your relatives, friends, neighbors, and colleagues about the stalking so they cannot be used to get information or unknowingly help the stalker. You are the victim and there is nothing to be ashamed of!
- Do not answer your phone but use an answering machine with a neutral voice. Do not cancel your phone line but get a second number that you only give out sparingly.
- Make letters and personal items illegible when throwing them out!
- In certain situations, create public recognition and make other persons aware of the threats and harassment. This is for your own safety!
- Get advice about possible legal steps early on. Keep in touch with the police.

## What legal steps can you take?

As the victim, you can get a court order for your protection according to the Protection Against Violence Act (*Gewalt-schutzgesetz – GewSchG*); in urgent cases you can, even an injunction. You can file a motion with a lawyer or personally at the legal application office (*Rechtsantragsstelle*) of the local District Court. The court can order (Section 1 of the Protection Against Violence Act) that the perpetrator must not:

- enter your apartment,
- be within a certain radius of your apartment,
- visit places that you are attending on a regular basis (e.g. your place of work),
- contact you, whether in person or by telecommunication devices,
- cause meetings with you.

You can also apply for your common apartment to be assigned to you for sole use (Section 2 of the Protection Against Violence Act). When enacting a court order for protection or apartment assignment, the perpetrator can be fined or be imprisoned by the court for violating the order, if you file a request for punishment. Violating the court order can be considered a crime (Section 4 of the Protection Against Violence Act).

The criminal code includes in Section 238 stalking as a criminal offence. It can be punished by a fine or imprisonment of up to three years if one stalks another person in a manner suited to not insignificantly restricting that person's lifestyle by repeatedly

- seeking the other person's physical proximity,
- trying to establish contact with the other person by means of telecommunications or other means of communication or through third parties,
- improperly using the other person's personal data for the purpose of ordering goods or services for that person or inducing third parties to make contact with that person,
- threatening the other person, or one of his or her relatives,
- spying on or intercepting their data,
- disseminating or making available to the public a depiction of that person, one of his or her relatives or another person close to him or her,
- disseminating or making available to the public content suited to disparaging or negatively affecting public opinion about that person by feigning that person's authorship or
- committing a comparable act.

Please keep in mind that criminal proceedings can be lengthy and that they do not always lead to conviction.

**In any case, before taking this step, get legal advice!**