

Q: What if criminal charges are filed against my partner/spouse? How will this affect his/her job?

A: Each incident is looked at on a case-by-case basis. According to the Prohibition of Domestic Violence Policy, a judicial finding of cause must be found before termination can take place. This does not mean that some form of disciplinary action will not occur based on subsequent rule violations. The Department always reserves the right to terminate based on the facts of the case regardless of the judicial outcome.

Q: What if my partner/spouse is convicted of a domestic violence offense?

A: The Lautenberg Amendment was signed into federal law effective September 30, 1996. This law makes it unlawful for anyone convicted of a domestic violence offense (including misdemeanors) to ship, transport, possess or receive firearms and/or ammunition. This law does not make exceptions for law enforcement personnel or military personnel.

Q: What if, as a family member, I have specific questions but do not want to reveal any information that would allow the Department to identify my abusive partner/spouse?

A: If you choose not to reveal information that would allow us to identify your abusive partner, we will still assist with whatever questions or services you request. The safety and well being of our employees and their families is our biggest concern, refer to available services listed on this brochure.



Services Available From The Domestic Violence Office

- Safety Planning
- Confidential Support and Guidance
- Referrals for individual counseling (including children), group counseling, community services, certified programs for those with abusive/controlling behavior
- Information concerning Department of Correction Prohibition of Domestic Violence Policy (103 DOC 238), the criminal court process and restraining order process
- Address Confidentiality Program (administered by the Secretary of State's Office)

If you are in an abusive relationship, for assistance PLEASE contact any of the agencies listed below.

You are not alone!

If you are in immediate danger, dial 911.

Department of Correction

Domestic Violence Coordinator 508-963-1853

This service is also available during non-business hours by contacting the **Duty Station** at 508-422-3481. Request for program referral will be kept confidential.

Domestic Violence SafeLink

1-877-785-2020

1-877-521-2601 (TTY)

National Domestic Violence Hotline

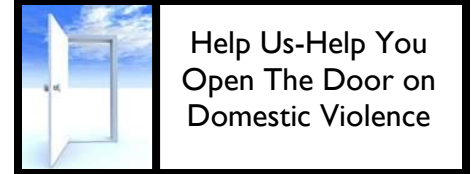
24-hours for confidential crisis intervention, information and referrals

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

1-800-799-3224 (TTY)

National Sexual Assault Hotline

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)



Help Us-Help You
Open The Door on
Domestic Violence

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Correction

Domestic Violence Important Information *for* Correctional Professionals and Their Families



Linda Harriman,
Domestic Violence Coordinator
508-963-1853

A Message From the Domestic Violence Office

The Department of Correction Domestic Violence Office was established on January 5, 1998, under the auspices of the Division of Human Resources. The primary mission of this unit is to provide services to employees and their family members who are confronted with issues of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Robert J. Sawyer, noted writer, said, "*Learning to ignore things is one of the great paths to inner peace.*"

This statement should *never* apply to acts of abuse. Domestic violence is an extremely serious issue that is unacceptable under any circumstances. By ignoring the behavior we protect the secret that feeds off our complacency. We all need to place accountability where it belongs - with the abuser. It is not just the victim who pays the price for these tragic events, but society at large, our communities, and the workplace. We, as individuals, will only be able to experience inner peace when our children, our co-workers, our friends, and our family members are safe in their relationships.

While the vast majority of law enforcement families live lives free of abuse, according to the National Center for Women and Policing the rate of domestic violence is estimated to be 2 to 4 times higher in police families than that of the general public. The Department recognizes the unique position of victims when the abuser is a member of law enforcement. In working with these victims, it has been demonstrated that the abuser *may* use their position to deter the victim from reporting the abuse. It has also been determined that training and law enforcement experience *can become* a tactic used to commit acts of abuse.

Common examples are: *using a Department issued uniform and badge as a form of intimidation, using interrogation techniques to gain information from the victim about their daily activities, using knowledge of the criminal justice system to provide misinformation, and/or using their presence (stance and voice) to establish authority*

Research has proven that domestic violence occurs in cases where the abuser is attempting to gain or maintain power and control in the relationship. It is incorrect to believe that these acts are caused by alcohol/drug abuse, the stress of a job or home environment. These are simply excuses given by the abuser to justify the behavior. Abusive acts come in many forms; some more subtle than others. All acts of abuse are serious and some are considered criminal and against the law. Here are some examples:

- Control through criticism, moodiness, anger, or threats
- Limiting contact with other people by starting fights or making you ask for permission to visit with family and/or friends
- Calls several times a day to "check on you"
- Monitoring your behavior or where-about, including engaging family/friends
- Uses intimidation tactics to control you by making you think what could happen (getting in your face, punching the wall, or driving erratically)
- Any form of physical, sexual, spiritual, or economic abuse
- Using children or pets to control

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If I need to file a restraining order against my partner/spouse does it mean that he/she will lose their job?

A: Not necessarily. Restraining orders are civil and not considered a criminal offense. Any violation of such an order is a criminal offense. The Department of Correction is required to comply with all restrictions listed on a restraining order. The employee will be not allowed to use weapons while at work. Employees under a weapons restriction will still be expected to come to work unless the circumstances of the case dictate otherwise. The Department does, however, reserve the right to impose discipline based on subsequent rule violations. Each case will be reviewed individually.

Q: My spouse/partner is the subject of a restraining order that has been modified by the Court to state that weapons will be allowed for the course of duty. Will the Department lift the weapons restriction?

A: No. An Act Relative to Gun Control in the Commonwealth, Chapter 180 of the *Acts of 1998*, enacted on October 21, 1998, made changes to existing firearms law. The change relative to FID Cards, Class A, or Class B LTC is that anyone who is the subject of a permanent or temporary restraining/protection order issued pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 209A, including suspension and surrender order, (or an order of protection issued by another jurisdiction) is now disqualified from holding any of the above licenses. This means that the licensing authority must continue the suspension of a permit even if a court modifies or vacates a suspension and surrender order, as long as the underlying order remains in effect.