

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND COERCION

- ◇ You may be a victim of coercion if you are a victim of domestic violence and your partner is trying to prevent you from doing something you have the legal right to do.
- ◇ You may be a victim of coercion if you are a victim of domestic violence and your partner is trying to force you to do something you have a legal right not to do.
- ◇ Recently, Coercion became one of the new family offenses under the family law. That means if your partner is committing coercion against you, you can go to family court and ask for an order of protection.



How do I know if my partner is committing coercion against me?

A person has committed coercion when he compels or induces a person to:

1. engage in conduct which the latter has a legal right to not to engage in,
2. or to abstain from engaging in conduct in which he or she has a legal right to engage,
3. or compels or induces a person to join a group, organization or criminal enterprise which such person has a right not to join, by causing her to fear that, if the demand is not complied with, the actor or another will: cause physical injury to a person; or cause damage to property; or engage in other conduct constituting a crime.

What are some examples of coercion?

- If a victim attempts to leave her abuser, he might say things like, “If you leave, I will take the kids and you will never see them again.”
- If a victim tries to call the police, the abuser might say, “I will kill you if you call the police.”
- If a victim refuses to have sexual intercourse with her abuser and he says, “Either have sex with me or there is going to be hell to pay.”
- If you have visitors or friends who are men, the abuser says he will call Child Protective Services

What can the Family Court do to help?

You can ask the Family Court for an order barring the other party from making such threats. That is called an **Order of Protection**.

SAFETY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING.

**IF THERE IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,
PLEASE TALK TO AN ADVOCATE.
CALL YOUR LOCAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
SHELTER TO DISCUSS SAFETY PLANNING.**

About this Guide

This guide was created by Legal Services of the Hudson Valley with support from the Legal Services Corporation.

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