

Hugh J MacMillan, MSW

Registered Social Worker
544 George Street North
Peterborough, ON K9H 3S2

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BEING STALKED OR HARASSED

1. It is not your fault. Harassment is a form of abuse.
2. You are primarily responsible for your own safety.
3. You should trust your own intuition.
4. When breaking off a relationship, be absolutely clear: "I don't want to be in a relationship with you". State: "Don't call me".
5. Avoid all contact with the harasser. Avoid positively reinforcing the harasser by agreeing to brief meetings ("just a coffee"), exchanging e-mails, phone calls, etc.
6. Don't feel sorry for the person harassing you. Threats of self-harm or nice presentations are ways the harasser can keep you involved.
7. Have a third party call to tell this person to stop calling you.
8. Do not threaten the harasser.
9. Do not humiliate the harasser.
10. Educate yourself on your legal options. Criminal harassment is against the law. Involve the Police as soon as possible. They will file a complaint and provide advice on options available.
11. Inform your neighbours and work associates that you are being stalked or harassed. They can look out for you. Don't be embarrassed to tell others.
12. Document each incident in a log (date, time, what happened).
13. Peace bonds are not always the best route. You may have to encounter the harasser when seeking the order from the Justice of the Peace and often the order is ignored. If you are being bothered, even once, call the Police. They will warn your harasser. He or she has to know that contact is not wanted and this initial contact from Police is often effective. If you lived with this person in the past, you may be able to get a more permanent restraining order by applying to the Family Court. You can get an application at the Court and fill it out yourself if you do not have a family lawyer.

Section 264: CRIMINAL HARASSMENT / Prohibited conduct / Punishment.

Criminal Harassment

(1) No person shall, without lawful authority and knowing that another person is harassed or recklessly as to whether the other person is harassed, engage in conduct referred to in subsection (2) that causes that other person reasonably, in all the circumstances, to fear for their safety or the safety of anyone known to them.

Prohibited conduct

(2) The conduct mentioned in subsection (1) consists of

- (a)** repeatedly following from place to place the other person or anyone known to them;
- (b)** repeatedly communicating with, either directly or indirectly, the other person or anyone known to them;
- (c)** besetting or watching the dwelling-house, or place where the other person, or anyone known to them, resides, works, carries on business or happens to be; or
- (d)** engaging in threatening conduct directed at the other person or any member of their family.

Punishment

(3) Every person who contravenes this section is guilty of

- (a)** an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years; or
- (b)** an offence punishable on summary conviction.

[1993, c.45, s.2]