

Domestic Violence- FAQs 2021

What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner.¹ Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person.

Who can domestic violence affect?

Domestic violence can occur between people of all ages, race, ethnicities, and economic, educational, and religious backgrounds. Domestic violence occurs in both opposite-sex and same-sex relationships and can happen to intimate partners who are married, living together, or have a child in common.

Domestic violence not only affects those who are abused, but also has a substantial effect on family members, friends, co-workers, other witnesses, and the community at large. Children, who grow up witnessing domestic violence, are among those seriously affected by this crime. Frequent exposure to violence in the home not only predisposes children to numerous social and physical problems, but also teaches them that violence is a normal way of life - therefore, increasing their risk of becoming society's next generation of victims and abusers.

What does domestic violence look like?

- Calls you names, insults you, or constantly criticizes you
- Keeps track of where you go or whom you are with
- Threatens you or your children with physical violence or the use of a weapon
- Forces you to have sex or disregards your wishes about sexual activity or birth control
- Causes you to lie to others (e.g. regarding injuries)
- Embarrasses or humiliates you in public in an attempt to control you
- Bites, slaps, hits, kicks, or chokes/strangles you
- Prevents you from having access to your own money or shared financial accounts
- Keeps you from working outside the home or has forced you to switch jobs

What can you do to if you or someone you know is a victim of domestic violence?

- If you would like confidential support and guidance, including information on what options are available to you and accompaniment through the process, contact NOVA's confidential victim advocate at 703-323-2136 at cokirkland@nvcc.edu. The Office of Wellness and Mental Health can help you to think about your options and talk about how the incident(s) has (have) impacted you. OWMH can also refer you to local resources, including shelter and provisions for basic needs. Domestic violence is a violation of NOVA Student Conduct Policy. For information on NOVA's obligation under Title IX to address instances of domestic violence, see the Title IX Policy on Sexual Violence, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking. For more information, visit the [Title IX](#) web page.
- You have the right to file a police report, and to file a report with the Office of Wellness and Mental Health or the Title IX Coordinator.

¹ Adopted from The United States Department of Justice (2015) and Fairfax County Domestic Violence: Domestic Violence Overview (2013).

- In case of an emergency, call 911 or notify campus police at 703-764-5000. Go to a safe place and seek medical attention, if needed.
- If you are a victim of domestic violence, know that the abuse is never your fault and there are resources available for you.

*** Please see the [VA code § 18.2-57.2](#) for the legal definition of assault and battery against a family or household member and [VA code § 18.2-57](#) for assault and battery against others, to see which may apply to your situation. There may be additional codes that apply. Please contact law enforcement if you are not sure whether or not what has happened to you is a crime.**

**For more information, contact NOVA Confidential Victim Advocate at
703-323-2136 or cokirkland@nvcc.edu or wellness@nvcc.edu**