



# The Sayra and Neil Meyerhoff Center for Families, Children and the Courts (CFCC)

University of Baltimore School of Law

**CFCC WORKS TO ENSURE THAT THE PRACTICE OF FAMILY LAW IN MARYLAND, THE NATION AND AROUND THE WORLD IMPROVES THE LIVES OF FAMILIES AND CHILDREN AND THE HEALTH OF COMMUNITIES.**



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## ABUSE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY: ARE YOU AT RISK?

### SIGNS: IS SOMEONE DOING THIS TO YOU?

#### Coercion and Threats

- Making threats via email, direct messages, text messages, and social media
- Sending you disturbing information and website links
- Posting false and hurtful information about you on public forums

#### Intimidation, Monitoring, and Stalking

- Frequently monitoring your location and activities
- Secretly changing your files or device settings
- Destroying your technology or assistive devices
- Impersonating you on social media
- Often or constantly contacting you via messaging and social media

#### Emotional Abuse

- Using technology to ridicule you or put you down
- Manipulating technology to confuse or scare you
- Keeping you dependent on technology that is within their control

#### Isolation

- Cutting you off or limiting your technology use and access
- Tracking and monitoring your whereabouts
- Using technology to discredit you personally or professionally
- Sending damaging or inappropriate emails, text messages, or social media posts
- Forbidding you to leave the house under any circumstances
- Providing confusing and conflicting information about restrictions related to COVID-19

#### Minimizing, Denying, Blaming

- Normalizing control and abuse by saying the technology monitoring is for "your own safety"
- Attributing their constant monitoring to you by saying you somehow installed spyware or other technology devices

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### Using Others

- Getting other people to monitor and harass you, install devices, and get information about you, such as account numbers and passwords
- Using websites and social media to encourage strangers to harass you

### Using Privileges and Oppression

- Making all of your decisions about technology
- Making you feel stupid and incapable of understanding technology
- Trying to make you afraid of technology

### Economic Abuse

- Tracking or manipulating your financial accounts online
- Controlling and damaging your credit rating through identity theft or other means

## USEFUL TIPS

### Stay Vigilant

- Look for signs of abuse through all forms of communication, including social media.
- Look for signs of abuse through all forms of technology, including lesser-known ones, such as “smart” TVs, lighting, and other appliances.

### Communicate

- Alert someone to your situation, whether a close friend, family member, or domestic violence organizations.
- Join a support group for domestic violence victims and discuss your experiences with people who can relate to them.
- Try to avoid communication through wireless or Bluetooth devices, as the abuser may have an opportunity to spy on the conversation; use a “traditional” phone that has a cord or communicate in person in a public setting.

### Plan

- Create and practice a safety plan, even if you do not intend to escape.
- Pack a bag and keep it where it can be accessed in an emergency.
- Review the safety plan with other people involved, such as the children.

### Educate

- Educate yourself about the signs of domestic violence and resources for domestic violence victims.
- Research local organizations that can help you.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

**Clinic to End Tech Abuse (CETA)** (<https://www.ceta.tech.cornell.edu>)

- Cornell University's remote platform to help survivors of intimate partner violence use their devices without fear of monitoring or stalking

**The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)** (<https://nnedv.org>)

- Tech safety blog that provides resources to survivors of abuse perpetrated through technology
- App safety center that identifies smartphone apps for survivors to use

## APPS

**SoSecure** (Available on Google Play and iPhone)

- A mobile safety app that provides a lifeline for victims
- Provides the ability to silently SMS chat with ADT's 24/7 professional monitors
- Provides the ability to discretely trigger an emergency alarm, which allows ADT to pinpoint the user's GPS
- Provides the ability to designate friends or family to receive alerts when the emergency alarm is triggered

**TECH SAFETY** (Available on Google Play and iPhone)

- An educational app that provides resources to victims
- Provides information and tips on how to identify and prevent abuse
- Connects victims with advocates
- Provides an updated list of organizations and numbers that victims can use for help

**UBER** (Available on Google Play and iPhone)

- Partnering with organizations that support sexual, domestic, and gender-based violence to provide free rides and additional support to shelters and safe spaces in more than 35 cities across 17 countries

## HOTLINE

**The National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH)**

- Trained counselors available 24 hours a day at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) and by chat at <https://www.thehotline.org>
- “Staying Safe During Covid-19” resource for survivors and their families can be found at <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/staying-safe-during-covid-19>
- In partnership with The NO MORE Foundation, expanded their campaign #ListeningFromHome to heighten people's awareness of domestic violence and to encourage them to safely get help if they experience, hear, or observe incidents of domestic abuse

