

People experiencing domestic abuse

You should always feel safe in your home. If you feel unsafe or threatened, call the police. In an emergency, always call 999.

You should be safe from any kind of abusive behaviour. This includes physical violence, controlling behaviour, financial and sexual abuse. You can get support for any kind of situation, including staying safe in or [leaving your home](#).

The Housing Executive will never talk to your abuser about your situation. But they may want to speak to people or groups that you've reached out to, such as a solicitor, friend or family member.

Support if you're affected by domestic abuse

There are several organisations that can help you, including:

- [24-hour Domestic and Sexual Abuse helpline](#)
- [LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline](#)
- [The Men's Advisory Project](#)
- [Women's Aid NI](#)

If you're not entitled to benefits because of your immigration status, it can be harder to think about leaving an abusive situation. Speak to one of the organisations above to check if you can get help.

Staying in your home

If you decide to stay in your home, you must take measures to stay safe. You should speak to:

- [a solicitor](#) about getting a court order to keep the abuser away from you and your home
- the Housing Executive to see if they can help to make your home safer

Keep an abuser away from you and your home

There are two main types of court orders that a solicitor can help you get to keep you safe from an abuser:

- An occupation order means that an abuser must stay away from your home, and they cannot live in your home. It gives you the right to remain in the home. You can get an occupation order even if you're not the main tenant or owner, or if the abuser is the legal owner or tenant. You must call the police if the abuser breaks the court order.
- A non-molestation order prevents an abuser from harassing, threatening or attacking you. It also prevents them from coming to your home or anywhere near you. It helps give you time to stay in your home and make long-term decisions.

Get help keeping your home safe

If you decide to stay in your home, you should take action to make it safer.

If you are a Housing Executive tenant, they might be able to help you. They run a [sanctuary scheme](#) that can install proper security (such as alarms and CCTV). To access the scheme, the police will need to check your home first.

Leaving your home

You should contact the Housing Executive if you feel that leaving your home is the best option.

The Housing Executive has a **legal duty** to give you temporary housing if they believe that you:

- are homeless or cannot go back to your home, and
- experienced or are at risk of violence in your home (also called 'priority need')

You can get free bus or rail tickets from the Housing Executive or Women's Aid to travel to a refuge or emergency accommodation.

You might still have to pay rent on your home, even if you have left it. You can [**get help paying for two homes**](#) if you:

- left because of threats of violence and
- you plan to go back and
- you're entitled to benefits.

If you left because of domestic abuse and your rent is not covered by benefits, [**speak to our advisers**](#) for help.