

Free helpline providing specialized assistance at 0800.500.333

National HELPLINE for domestic violence victims

The National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men set up a free helpline for domestic violence victims, accessible by calling the phone number +40 800 500 333; call the helpline to report cases of domestic violence, human trafficking, gender-based discrimination, or multiple discrimination; the helpline is governed by Law no. 217/2003 on preventing and combating domestic violence. This services is available 24/7. This number can be accessed free of charge from any national telephone network.

The dedicated helpline may be used by the potential victim/victim of domestic violence, human trafficking, gender-based discrimination or multiple discrimination, a parent or another family member, a neighbour or a family acquaintance, a witness or any other person who might aware of such a case.

As part of the free helpline dedicated to domestic violence victims, our experts provide assistance and counselling aimed at overcoming all emergency situations in the field. They offer suitable solutions for the reported or indicated cases, providing information on the steps the victim may take to overcome the crisis, according to the type of domestic violence acts reported, as well as services that serve their needs.

The helpline counsellors are trained to provide the victim and the potential witnesses with brief information about the steps they may take to prevent and combat domestic violence, primary legal and psychologic assistance, and refer the victim to nearby competent institutions that can support and guide them to services available around the country.

Principles of the free helpline providing specialized support:

- Ensuring and maintaining the confidentiality of all aspects related to the victim's safety and private life, protecting the beneficiaries' privacy and respect for human dignity throughout the helpline activities;
- Promoting the victim's wellbeing, physical and psychological safety to overcome the crisis and return to an independent life;
- Comprehensive approach to domestic violence and violence against women, including by gender mainstreaming all social services for domestic violence victims;
- A higher level of personal development (self-determination) and empowerment for domestic violence victims;
- Non-discriminatory, free, non-bureaucratic (easy) access to adequate services for domestic violence victims.

Things to know

The helpline counsellors aim to inform, guide, and offer primary counselling to victims and witnesses, by providing free specialized assistance and information about services tailored to their needs, as well as recommendations to solve the situations that prompted them to call the help line, explaining the steps that callers may take to overcome the crisis they are facing, as described below:

- Call the national emergency number 112 if you are in an emergency¹;
- Guidance to a shelter close to the victim²;
- Referring victims to competent institutions around the county - such as General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection, County Police Inspectorate, Emergency room or forensic medicine service, non-governmental organizations, to receive counselling and support, psychological and legal counselling, as well as other services depending on the type of domestic violence acts described by the victim;
- Concrete information on how to obtain a protection order and a temporary protection order, issued to protect a person whose life, physical or psychological integrity or freedom is at risk because of an act of violence by a family member, and to remove the immediate danger; as well as information on the evidence that a victim may present in court³.

The victim be moved to a shelter if:

- The victim had to escape the perpetrator's anger by leaving their home, whether alone or together with their children;
- The perpetrator kicked the victim out of the house (at times, with no identification documents, money, or clothes);
- The respondent assesses that the victim has no alternative place to spend the night or cannot move in with family or friends, etc.;
- The victim left their home a long time ago before because of the violence, lived with family/friends/rent for a while, but can no longer use those options;
- The victim decides to return to their home after having left it for a time because of the violence, but the partner will not let them in or still act violently;
- The victim is not a local, coming from nearby localities or a different county altogether.

Are you facing domestic violence, human trafficking or gender discrimination?

- We understand and will not judge; to us, you are a valuable person.
- You have the right to remain anonymous and we will provide you with information regardless of whether you share your identity information or not.
- We will support you at your own pace; we will not pressure you into initiating actions you cannot or do not want to.

¹ An emergency is a situation in which the victim is under an imminent threat against their own or their children's life, health, or integrity.

² A shelter for victims of domestic violence is a protected safe house/refuge, whether stand-alone or associated to a psychological, social and/or legal assistance centre/office/service/programme mainly dedicated to women at risk of aggression or of family violence. Shelters are organized as "protected homes" with a secret address, served by professional and administrative personnel trained to work with victims of violence.

³ Proof of registration with the police unit of the criminal complaint about the type of violence used against the victim, obtaining a forensic medicine certificate, forensic medicine expertise, complaints registered with the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection, relevant audio-video recordings, text messages, medical documents showing potential psychological conditions the perpetrator may suffer from, etc.

- We will ask for your consent on whether you wish our institution to take certain steps on your behalf, by notifying the competent institutions, according to your specific situation.
- We will help you identify the forms of violence you are subjected to (physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence, social violence, economic violence, spiritual violence) and find the best solutions to overcome the crisis.

Do you know or have information about a domestic violence victim? This is what you can do:

- Don't judge and don't criticise the victim's behaviours; offer your help, but don't push them to take measures;
- Be warm and understanding when you approach the victim, talk to them when you are alone, tell them they are not alone and you know how to help;
- You can always call the specialized helpline +40800 500 333 for concrete information and suggestions;
- Accompany the victim when they decide to tell the perpetrator they want to break up, as this is the most dangerous moment; in case of trial, they will need witnesses and concrete data on the abuse they have been through;
- Give them our phone number +40800 500 333, accessible free of charge 24/7, so they can receive the necessary support for their domestic violence case.

Useful information for victims

- National social services - <https://anes.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/FISA-SERVICII-2022.pdf>
- Glossary on combating domestic violence- <https://anes.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Intrebari-VF.pdf>
- Guide on how to fill in a request for a protection order - <https://anes.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Anexa-1.pdf>
- Intervention centres for victims of sexual violence - <https://anes.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Anexa-2-Centrul-IVVS-003.pdf>

Recommendations for victims

- Customized safety plan for domestic violence cases - <https://anes.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/PLAN-individualizat-privind-siguranta-in-situatile-de-vd.pdf>