

# FAMILY VIOLENCE

---

## E-BROCHURE



### Content

Introduction	Page 2
Types of family violence	Page 3
What can I do as a victim?	Page 4
Court orders	Page 5
Types of evidence to collect	Page 6
What can I do as a bystander	Page 7
Self-defence	Page 8
Applying for a Personal Protection Order	Page 10
Helplines and additional information	Page 15
Safety plan and emergency pack	Page 17



The information provided in this e-brochure does not, and is not intended to, constitute legal advice; instead, all information, content, and materials available on this site are for general informational purposes only.

This e-brochure only deals with family violence under the Women's Charter. For persons or situations which are not covered by the Women's Charter, the Protection from Harassment Act (POHA) may be applicable. For information on POHA, please refer to the State Courts website at <https://www.statecourts.gov.sg>.

Information in this e-brochure is correct as of 1 October 2020.

This e-brochure contains links to other third-party websites. Such links are only for the convenience of the reader, user or browser. SMU Law Outreach Club makes no representation or warranty of any kind, express or implied, regarding the accuracy, reliability, validity, adequacy or completeness of any information on our e-brochure or the links provided.



## INTRODUCTION

As part of SMU Law Outreach Club's initiative, "Law for All", we hope to reach out to the wider community through raising awareness of the law. The purpose of this e-brochure is to promote understanding about family violence and provide someone seeking help with a step-by-step guide.

## WHAT IS FAMILY VIOLENCE?



Under section 64 of the Women's Charter, "family violence" constitutes:

- wilfully or knowingly placing or attempting to place a family member in fear of hurt;
- causing hurt to a family member by an act which he or she knows or ought to know would cause hurt;
- wrongful confining or restraining a family member against their will;
- causing continual harassment with intent to cause anguish to a family member, including verbal abuse, psychological or emotional abuse.

\*Acts that fall within this definition will not be considered as family violence if they are used in self defence (i.e., pushing the abuser away) or used to correct a child (i.e., spanking a child).

\*This does not apply to non-family members living together.

## 4 KINDS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

AS MENTIONED ON [WWW.MSF.GOV.SG/BREAKTHESILENCE](http://WWW.MSF.GOV.SG/BREAKTHESILENCE)

**Physical Abuse**

**Emotional &  
Psychological Abuse**

**Sexual Abuse**

**Neglect**



# TYPES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE



## Physical Abuse

You may be a victim of physical abuse if a family member has:

- Slapped or beat you
- Kicked or choked you
- Hit or punched you
- Thrown objects at you
- Locked you in the house
- Threatened to hurt you with a weapon
- Given you poison



## Emotional & Psychological Abuse

You may be a victim of psychological abuse if a family member has:

- Continually criticised you
- Insulted or driven away your friends or family
- Humiliated you in private or public
- Controlled your money or made all the decisions
- Threatened to harm your loved ones or keep them away from you when the abuser was angry with you
- Destroyed personal items



## Neglect

You may be a victim of neglect if a family member has:

- Not attended to your medical needs
- Denied you of medication or intentionally administered inappropriate medication
- Denied you food over a period of time
- Denied a child, elderly or mentally incapacitated person proper care and supervision



## Sexual Abuse

You may be a victim of sexual abuse if a family member has:

- Insisted on unwanted or uncomfortable touching of private areas of your body
- Raped you



# WHAT CAN I DO?

**1**

## **Go to the Police or make an online report**

The police can provide a referral letter to go to the hospital for medical examination and treatment. If you receive the referral, do go for the medical treatment as soon as possible.

**2**

## **Go to a Family Service Centre or Family Violence Specialist Centre for advice and assistance**

You can call any of the hotlines or go to the nearest family service centre or Family Violence Specialist Centre for help or if you need someone to talk to.

**3**

## **Go for a medical examination/treatment if you are injured**

You should seek medical treatment at your nearest hospital or clinic, even if you do not wish to take action against the abuser. In some cases, this can be used as evidence of the abuse.

**4**

## **Seek shelter elsewhere if you fear your own safety or that of your family members**

You can seek shelter with your relatives or friends whom you can trust. If that is not available, there are crisis shelters where you can stay temporarily. You may approach a Family Service Centre, a Family Violence Specialist Centre or the Police for help.

**5**

## **Apply for an order at the Family Justice Courts or Family Violence Specialist Centre or on iFAMS**

\*The Integrated Family Application Management System (iFAMS) is a system developed by the Family Justice Courts for the filing of Maintenance and Protection Order and related applications

# **TYPES OF COURT ORDERS**

## **Personal Protection Order (PPO)**

PPO is an order to protect you from further violence by the abuser.

## **Expedited Order (EO)**

EO is a temporary PPO made typically at the date of application.

It lasts for 28 days but can be extended during the court mention until date of hearing.

## **Domestic Exclusion Order (DEO)**

DEO prevents the abuser from entering all or part of the house. It could mean that the abuser will not live in the same house as the other family members.

## **Counselling Order (CGO)**

CGO is an order for counselling.

It may include children. Counselling is conducted by a family support agency located at the Family Justice Courts.

## **COURTS' CONSIDERATION**



In deciding whether a protection order should be ordered, the courts consider two factors:

- Probability of future violence
- Probability of reconciling the relationship

**In a situation where a parent files a PPO on behalf of their child:**

If a parent applies for the PPO against the other parent for their child, the court will consider other factors such as how reasonable discipline was meted out and whether the PPO application is a strategy to gain child custody.

For example, in *TNI v TNJ*, where the husband successfully filed a PPO application against his wife on behalf of the children, the court took into account the fact that the wife had used excessive force on their children.



# TYPES OF EVIDENCE TO COLLECT

**1**

## Medical Examination Report

It is advisable that you visit the doctor to have your injuries treated as well as documented as evidence of the abuse.

**2**

## Video Footage of the Abuse and Pictures of the Injury

You may want to consider putting a security camera at home to prevent domestic violence. Moreover, should the abuse take place, it will be recorded and can be used as evidence of the abuse.

You may also want to take pictures of any injuries you have suffered from the abuse.

**3**

## Police Report

A police report is a formal record of the accident but the report alone is not objective\*, unless an investigation has been done (which is rare unless there is already a PPO).

It should be noted that the police report can still help substantiate the objective\* evidence required. Please also make sure to retain a copy of it to avoid the difficulty in retrieving this abuse record in the future.

\*Objective evidence is evidence that the court can examine and evaluate for themselves.



## **SOMEONE I KNOW IS ABUSED. WHAT CAN I DO?**



### **SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR**

There are several signs that one may look out for in people who have been or are facing abuse:

- **Physical:** Unexplained injuries, bruises, black eyes, sprains, broken bones or teeth
- **Emotional:** Expressed anxiety, depression, anger or worry
- **Social:** Avoiding people, not answering the door or phone, canceling events
- **Financial:** Overdrawn account and eviction



### **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

- Listen to their problems.
- Offer information on available resources – counselling services, hotline numbers, numbers of nearest hospital and neighborhood police post, crisis shelter homes and procedure for getting a PPO.
- Work together to develop a safety plan. And after developing a safety plan, encourage the victim to seek professional help.
- Accompany them to the police post, hospital, counselling centre or help them get into a crisis shelter home if they wish to do so.
- Call the police or other agencies that may be able to help.





## **CAN I DEFEND MYSELF?**



Yes, under the law, you are able to practise self-defence when faced with abuse. However, you are not protected by the law if you inflict excessive or unnecessary force.



## **COURTS' CONSIDERATION**

Since this area of family law is not fully developed yet, we may possibly rely on the guidelines established for private defence in criminal law. For private defence to apply, the pre-conditions and conditions must be satisfied.

\*Pre-conditions are factors that have to be satisfied before the court will look at the conditions of the defence.

### **PRE-CONDITIONS**

- (1) The offender must have committed an offence.
- (2) There was no reasonable opportunity to seek protection from the public authorities. An example would be a situation occurred when there are no police nearby.

### **CONDITIONS**

- (1) You must have reasonably expected danger to yourself or to others. For example, you could have been threatened or there has been previous attempts to hurt you.
- (2) The force used during self defence must be reasonable. This is judged based on factors such as the relative body size, and the presence of weapons.



## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**



# APPLYING FOR PPO

## Who can apply?

You can file an application to protect yourself or your children aged under 21 from family violence if:

- You are above 21 years of age.
- You are under 21 years of age but are married or have been married.

\*Other persons may also apply on behalf of a person under 21 years of age, other than his/her parent.



For an incapacitated person, the application to protect him/her must be made by his/her welfare officer, donee or deputy (if appointed), or family member.

## Where to apply?

Applicants are encouraged to apply via the online system iFAMS.



Otherwise, applicants are encouraged to approach any one of the Family Violence Service Centres ('FVSCs') conveniently located near your area, to file a Personal Protection Order ('PPO') application.

Applicants may also apply in person at the Family Protection Centre of the Family Justice Courts ('FJC').



## **APPLYING FOR PPO**

### **Family Violence Specialist Centres**

#### **PAVE Integrated Services for Individual and Family Protection Specialist Centre (ISIFPSC)**

Blk 211 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 3

#01-1446

Singapore 560211

Tel: 6555 0390

#### **TRANS SAFE Centre**

Blk 410 Bedok North Avenue 2

#01-58

Singapore 460410

Tel: 6449 9088

#### **Care Corner Project StART**

Blk 7A Commonwealth Ave

#01-672

Singapore 141007

Tel: 64761482

### **Family Justice Courts**

The Family Protection Centre (FPC)

Family Justice Courts, Level 1

3 Havelock Square

Singapore 059725



# APPLYING FOR PPO

## Making an application

### Where to Apply

**1**

Applicants are encouraged to apply via the online system iFAMS. If you do not have access to internet, you may approach the Family Violence Service Centres ('FVSCs') or Family Protection Centre ('FPC') at the Family Justice Courts.

Do bring along any documents (police or medical report) that you are relying on.

### Required Documents

**2**

You are encouraged to submit your application in draft and documents online by iFAMS.

Have your SingPass ID and the required information.

Login to iFAMS via <https://ifams.gov.sg/sop/#iFAMS> and click "Protection Order Application" box.

Proceed to fill in the online form. You may refer to the following link as a guide. It is accessible via [https://www.familyjusticecourts.gov.sg/docs/default-source/family-courts/family-protection/step\\_by\\_step\\_guide\\_for\\_fresh\\_maintenance\\_order\\_application.pdf](https://www.familyjusticecourts.gov.sg/docs/default-source/family-courts/family-protection/step_by_step_guide_for_fresh_maintenance_order_application.pdf).



# APPLYING FOR PPO

## Making an application

**3**

### Counselling

If you apply for the PPO at the FPC or FVSC, a Family Court Specialist may attend to you and provide you with the necessary information that you may require with regard to your safety.

**4**

### Attending Before a Judge

Attendance before a Judge can be in person (at the FPC) or by video conference (at an FVSC). You will then have to swear or affirm that the contents of your application and your answers to the Judge are true and correct.

It is a serious offence to include statements that you know to be untrue or incorrect in a sworn or affirmed application. If your application is in order, the Judge will issue a summons to the Respondent.

You will pay a nominal sum of S\$1.00 for the issuance of the summons.

\*Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all Court hearings scheduled from 2 June 2020 onwards will continue to be conducted by videoconferencing or teleconferencing, where appropriate. However, if parties have any concerns participating in the hearing via Zoom, they may contact the Court and state their concerns.



# **THE PPO PROCESS\***

## **APPLY FOR THE PPO**

## **SERVING THE SUMMONS**

The summons will be served personally on the alleged abuser.

## **COURT MENTIONS**

The case will proceed for mention and the Judge may refer parties for counselling. If both parties agree, the Judge may make grant the PPO on the spot by consent.

If there is no agreement, the Judge will then order both parties to exchange documents and fix trial dates.

However, given the current Covid situation, court mentions and trials have been virtual. If either of the parties is unable to have access to internet connection, they are to contact the Court's Registry in advance to secure a Zoom room at the Family Court.

## **TRIAL**

There will be a trial where the Court will decide if a PPO should be granted. The hearing will be held in court and will last much longer than the court mention. The Judge will then make the order after the trial is over.



# HELPLINES

## ComCare Call

**1800 222 0000**

ComCare provides social assistance for low-income individuals and families.

## National Care Hotline

**6202 6868**

The National Care Hotline offers emotional support to anyone facing struggles in life.

## MSF Child Protective Service

**1800 777 0000**

Child Protection Officers conduct investigations and provide services for children and young persons who have been abused or neglected.

## Tinkle Friend Helpline

**1800 274 4788**

Tinkle Friend is a helpline for all primary-school-aged children which provides support and advices to lonely and distressed children.

## Care Corner Project StART

**6476 1482**

An agency that specialises in protection, safety and violence control planning in support of people affected by domestic violence.

## PAVE Integrated Services for Individual and Family Protection Specialist Centre (ISIFPSC)

**6555 0390**

PAVE is an organisation that provides integrated services against interpersonal violence.

## TRANS SAFE Centre

**6449 9088**

TRANS SAFE Centre is a Family Violence Specialist Centre (FVSC). that provides help to victims of abuse.

## Police

**999**

In case of immediate threat, call the Police at 999.





# FAMILY SERVICE CENTRE

MSF MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

FAQS | CONTACT US | FEEDBACK | SITEMAP | Font Resize

Singapore Government Integrity · Service · Excellence

Search

ABOUT MSF | JOBS & CAREERS | PUBLICATIONS | RESEARCH & DATA

f t y i

HOME ASSISTANCE POLICIES MEDIA ROOM EVENTS DIRECTORIES

Home > Directories > Family Services

## Directories

ENTER YOUR LOCATION

Enter your Postal Code  GO

CLEAR LOCATION

### BROWSE

- FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES
- SOCIAL SERVICE OFFICES
- STUDENT CARE CENTRES
- PRESCHOOLS
- SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES
- ELDER CARE SERVICES
- DISABILITY SERVICES

### FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES

Enter your location above to find the Family Service Centre assigned to your residence

Report Vulnerability | Privacy Statement | Terms of Use | Accessibility Statement | Rate This Website

© 2020. Government of Singapore



Please scan the QR code or enter <https://www.msf.gov.sg/dfcs/familyservice/default.aspx> into your browser to find your nearest family service centre.

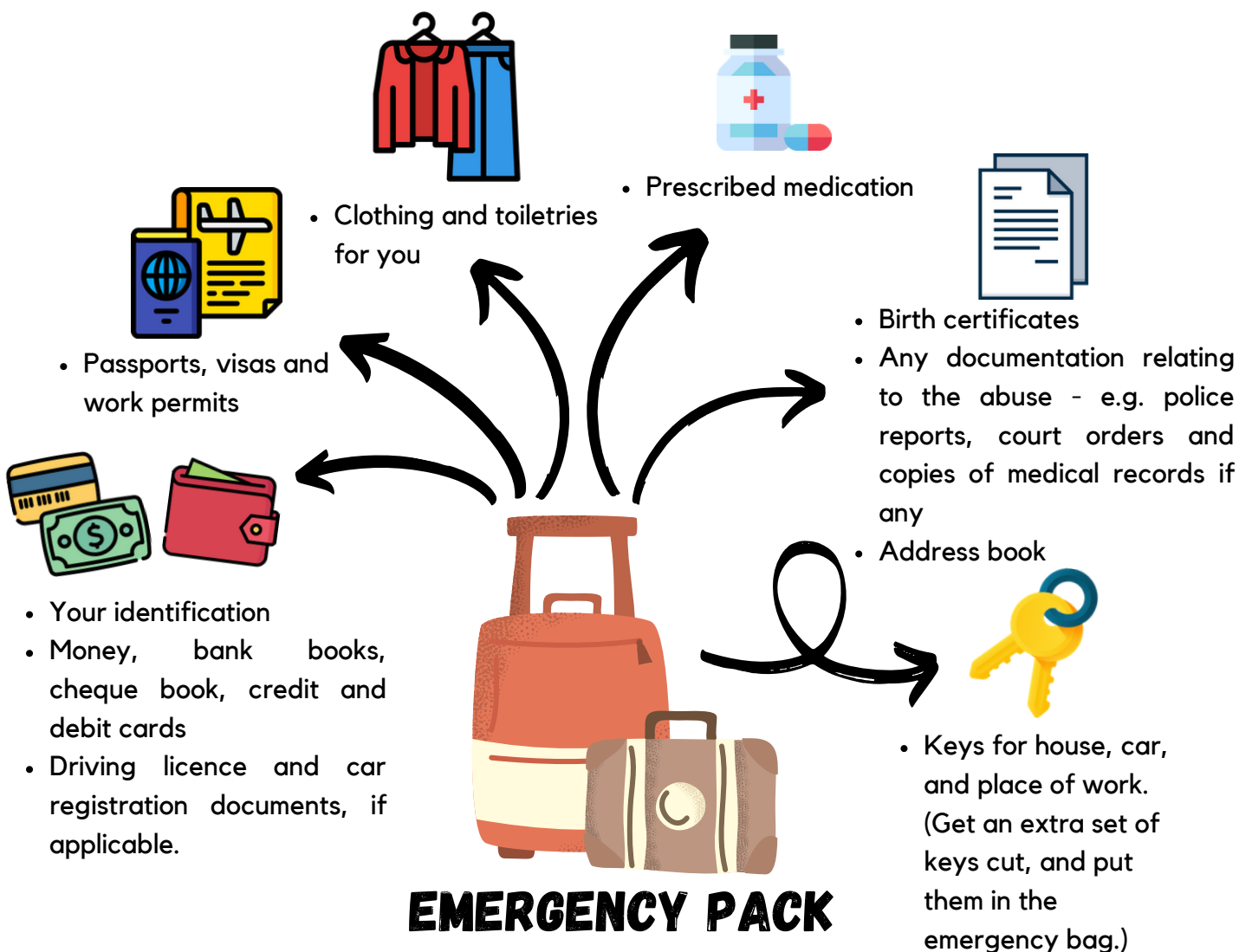


## **SAFETY PLAN & EMERGENCY PACK**

If you are facing family violence frequently, having a safety plan and preparing an emergency pack can go a long way in protecting oneself if faced with domestic abuse. Here are some steps that you may take to protect yourself.

These are options and resources to keep in mind:

- Keeping a list of emergency numbers, including the numbers of the nearest police post, hospital, hotline numbers, crisis centers, family, friends and neighbours
- Teach your children to call the emergency number ("999" for police)
- Plan where to go in a situation of emergency (to the home of a relative or a friend that you can trust)
- Pack an emergency bag and hide it somewhere safe (at a family member or friend's house)



## Conclusion

This e-brochure was made with the support of SMU School of Law and Cornerstone Community Services. The team consists of Ivy Hu, Darius Tan and Amanda Chia. We would like to express our gratitude towards our faculty advisors, Professor Zhang Wei and Professor Chan Wing Cheong, and lawyers Ms Seow Ling from Eden Law Corporation and Ms Ada Chua from Rajah & Tann Singapore LLP for their advice and valuable inputs. We would also like to thank the Ministry of Social and Family Development, Family Justice Courts and AWARE for allowing to include some of their online resources. We hope that you will find this e-brochure on Family Violence useful.

## Credits



During our research, we came across several websites which were informative and helpful. We would like to thank the owners of these websites for the information provided. The reference to these websites can be found in this link: <https://linktr.ee/sloc2020>