

STALKING:

KNOW IT. NAME IT. STOP IT.

- 720 ILCS 5/12-7.3 Stalking
- 720 ILCS 5/12-7.4 Aggravated stalking
- 720 ILCS 5/12-7.5 Cyberstalking

Stalking is a huge concern that faces 6.6 million Americans every year. One in six women and one in nineteen men say they have been a victim of stalking at some point in their life where they have felt that they or someone they know will be harmed or killed. Majority of stalking victims are stalked by someone they know. Two-thirds of stalkers make contact with their victim at least once a week using different methods. Twenty percent of all stalking cases involved a weapon to threaten or cause harm to the victim. One-third of all stalkers have previously stalked someone else before.

Stalking in today's times has evolved and made it easier for victims to be stalked. Not only can one be stalked in person, but now they can be stalked online. Illinois has taken a stance and added the offense of Cyberstalking. They have also added something to the courts called a stalking-no contact order. It is very similar to an order of protection but this allows someone to obtain an order without a prior relationship being established.

What can you do if you are a victim of stalking?

- Report it!
 - In the court system documentation is everything. Report every incident within the jurisdiction to make a paper trail.
- Keep a log of incidents. Include location, date, time, witnesses, were the police called and if so the police report number
- Do not communicate back with the stalker
- Save all letters, texts, voicemails and emails

Develop a safety plan

- Know every exit possible in any place you go regularly.
- Know where the Police Station is. If a stalker is following you call 9-1-1 and head to the police station. Advise the dispatcher so an officer is ready for you.
- Have a safe place to go if you don't feel safe at home.
- Alert people of the situation. Police, Friends, Family, Security, Bosses
- Travel different routes when going places. Never be routine.

There are many more tips out there that you can do if you think you are a victim of stalking. The biggest tip we can give you is **REPORT EVERYTHING!** Documentation is the biggest key in court cases. Don't ever think "It was probably nothing" or "I told them to stop, so they will".

For more information visit <http://victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center/resources/national-stalking-awareness-month> .