

# STALKING

is a legal term for repeated harassment

**Simply** speaking, stalking involves one person's obsessive behavior toward another person, causing the recipient to fear for his or her safety.

**Legally** speaking, the crime of stalking is defined as any person who willfully, maliciously and repeatedly follows or harasses another person **and** who makes a credible threat intended to cause that person to fear for their safety, or for the safety of their immediate family.

## Who are stalkers?

Stalking is gender neutral – both men and women can be perpetrators and victims. Statistically, however, 75-80% of the cases involve men stalking women. Many stalkers are young to middle-aged and have above-average intelligence. They come from all walks of life and every economic background.

There is no single psychological profile for stalkers. Anyone can be a stalker, just as anyone can be a victim.

## Why do they stalk?

Stalkers usually fall into one of three groups: intimate partner stalkers, delusional stalkers and vengeful stalkers.

**Intimate partner stalkers** are typically known as “the person who just can't let go” of another person. Victims often describe them as “possessive” or “obsessive.”

**Delusional stalkers** have little, if any, contact with their victims. They have a false belief that connects them to their victims. This type of stalker believes he/she is having a relationship with the victim, even though they may never have met.

**Vengeful stalkers** become angry with their victims over some insult, real or imagined. They stalk to “get even.”

## What should I do if I am stalked?

### Make sure you are safe.

It's important to know where you feel safe. Depending on the situation, safe places might be police stations, homes of family or friends unknown to the stalker, domestic violence shelters or public areas that may discourage the stalker from creating a disturbance.

### If you feel your life is in danger, call 9-1-1!

Get the police involved if you feel threatened or unsafe. Some stalking victims don't like to be called victims. Some say, “I won't let myself be victimized,” or “I'm not going to change my life because I'm being stalked.”

When a person is stalked, their life has changed. Not accepting this may actually help the stalker.

Many people are reluctant to call the police due to feelings of guilt or fear of looking foolish. Don't be one of them. Stalkers don't stop stalking because someone is nice. The police would rather take the time to investigate a possible stalker than a murder.

## STOP THE STALKER

Tell the stalker “no” – once and only once – and never give the satisfaction of a reaction. The more you respond, the more the stalker will think his/her actions will get a response.

If you already have a dog, it can provide some security. For more information on other security measures you can take, call your local police department.

### In Berkeley call the Community Services at 981-5808.

Have a witness with you if possible. Tell the stalker in no uncertain terms and don't waste your energy trying to be polite. If you convey anything other than “NO WAY,” the stalker will assume you mean, “keep trying.”

Never give out your phone number or address. Get a post office box and use it for all correspondence.

If the stalker gets your home phone number, you have a choice:

- Don't change the number – let an answering machine pick up messages using someone else's voice. Keep the tape as evidence.
- Get a new, unlisted number and give the number only to people you trust and who won't give it to the stalker.

Don't accept packages at home or work unless you personally ordered them.

Of all stalking victims, 51% are ordinary citizens, 13% are former employers of stalkers, 17% are highly recognizable celebrities and 32% are lesser known entertainment figures.

- Consider telling your employer about the situation. You can have co-workers screen all calls and visitors.
- Consider whether a restraining order might help. Get some advice. Law enforcement personnel and others familiar with the stalking problem can assess what precautions are necessary based on the threat to you.

**Some Internet Resources:**

[www.antistalking.com](http://www.antistalking.com)  
[www.stalkingvictims.com](http://www.stalkingvictims.com)  
[www.lovemenot.org](http://www.lovemenot.org)

To report a possible stalking in Berkeley, please call 981-5900.

After reporting, and for further advice, call a Detective Unit



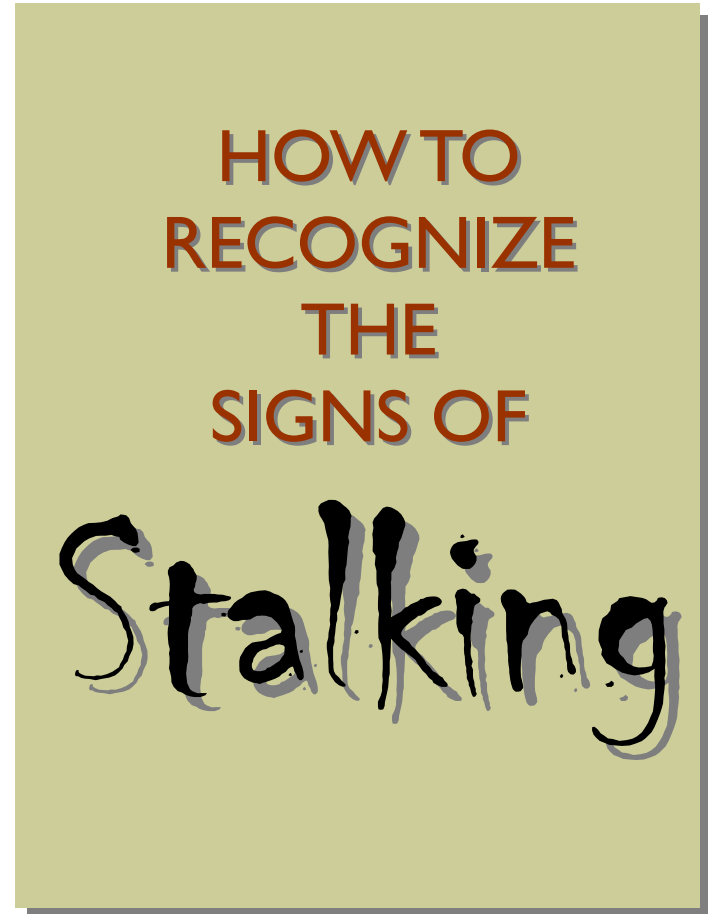
THE MORE YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR SITUATION, THE BETTER YOU'LL BE ABLE TO HANDLE IT. YOU MAY NEVER UNDERSTAND YOUR STALKER BUT YOU'LL KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT.

Take Back  
Control  
of Your Life!

**Sex Crimes and  
Domestic Violence  
Detective Unit**

Sexual Assault:	981-5735
Domestic Violence Prevention:	981-5736
Homicide:	981-5741

[www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/police](http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/police)



**BERKELEY POLICE  
DEPARTMENT**



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