

# Family violence during COVID-19

Help is still available even if you are infected or in isolation

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## Family violence

Family violence is an abuse of power in a family or other trusting relationship where people rely on each other. When someone experiences family violence, their well-being, security and survival are threatened.

Rates of family violence increase during and following natural disasters, public health crises and economic downturns. It is important to know where you can turn if you are experiencing family violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Call 911 if you or someone you know is in immediate danger.**

Police and RCMP will respond even if you have COVID-19 or are in self-isolation or quarantine and experiencing symptoms.

## Child abuse

With the added stress and time together caused by a public health crisis like COVID-19, families with unhealthy relationships are more likely to experience child abuse. If you suspect child abuse, it is your duty to report it.

Children's Services will respond to cases throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Call **1-800-387-KIDS (5437)** to report.

## Elder abuse

As older adults are more at risk during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is an increased need for them to practice social distancing and self-isolation. This may make them more vulnerable to abuse.

The **Family Violence Info Line (310-1818)** can assist with information on elder abuse shelters and community resources. To learn more, visit [alberta.ca/seniors-and-housing.aspx](https://alberta.ca/seniors-and-housing.aspx).

### Family Violence Info Line

Call **310-1818**.

Available 24/7 in over 170 languages.

Chat online with the info line at [alberta.ca/SafetyChat](https://alberta.ca/SafetyChat), available daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. in English.

## Social isolation

We are asking all Albertans to practice social distancing to help protect themselves and limit the spread of COVID-19. To protect yourself and others, keep at least six feet away from others when going out for groceries, medical trips and other essential needs.

Isolation is a risk factor for family violence. Many people who experience family violence use the support of friends and family to manage their situation.

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To learn more visit [alberta.ca/EndFamilyViolence](https://alberta.ca/EndFamilyViolence)

Social distancing and self-quarantine or isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic can make it more challenging to access valuable relationships, but there are ways to stay connected.

If you are in self-isolation, quarantine, lockdown or experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, stay connected through phone, text, video chat or social media.

## Find your supports

### Personal supports

Being connected with friends and family helps people be more resilient. Consider different ways to stay with important people in your network.

Remember to support people in your community who are caring for others.

### Supports for Albertans

Women's shelters, child advocacy centres, sexual assault centres and many other family violence supports are adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic to continue to offer support.

The **Family Violence Info Line** is available toll-free to all Albertans. They can connect you with resources available near you and help you make a safety plan. Call **310-1818** to get help 24/7 in over 170 languages.

An anonymous web chat is available daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at [alberta.ca/SafetyChat](https://alberta.ca/SafetyChat).

## What you can do

You can help support someone experiencing family violence by:

- Recognizing if someone is acting differently, seems out of character or is afraid or fearful
- Empathizing with the person experiencing family violence
- Asking what they need and how you can help them
- Listening to what they want and finding ways to stay connected

## COVID-19 supports

More information about the Alberta government's response to COVID-19 can be found at [alberta.ca/COVID19](https://alberta.ca/COVID19).