

## What steps can I take?

- In acute situations of threat, call the emergency police number (133) or the European emergency number (112) immediately.
- You can also go to any police station.
- To protect yourself against further attacks of your privacy, you can take legal steps.

## Each case of STALKING is individual.

There are no general rules of behaviour that are applicable in cases of stalking. To make full and effective use of the legal options available to you, take advantage of the option of receiving advice from specialised organisations.

The Lower Austria Centre for Protection Against Violence (Gewaltschutzzentrum Niederösterreich) provides you with support every step of the way, including when applying for an interim injunction and subsequently with psychosocial and legal support throughout the criminal proceedings.

## Gewaltschutzzentrum Niederösterreich Lower Austria Centre for Protection Against Violence

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Zwettl – Krems	02822 / 530 03



Recognised victim protection organisation  
on behalf of

 Bundeskanzleramt

 Bundesministerium  
Inneres

 Bundesministerium  
Justiz

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## Stalking

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## • What does STALKING mean?

- Stalking is a form of violence that is recognised as a punishable criminal offence in Art. 107a of the Criminal Code under the term “persistent pursuit” and is subject to a prison term of up to one year.
- Stalking is not usually a clearly defined individual action; instead, it consists of a series of actions carried out over a longer period of time.
- Stalking develops primarily as a result of (former) relationships.
- Stalking is a gender-neutral crime; however, it mainly affects women. Common motives are the exercising of power, dominance and control.

## • Acts of stalking may come in many different forms, such as:

- Phone calls, texts, letters, emails and much more at all times of day and night
- Cyber violence via social media channels (e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, ...)
- Spreading photos from extremely personal areas of private life
- Physical presence as well as following and lying in wait, e.g. outside the apartment, the place of work, the supermarket, ...
- Malicious gossip or slander, e.g. towards employers

## • The aim of stalking is

to use all possible means to draw attention to oneself and to make or maintain contact against the will of the affected person in order to, for example, reverse a breakup or retaliate against perceived slights.

## • How should I react?

- The situation must be taken seriously.
- In specific situations of threat, it is essential that you call the emergency police number 133 or the European emergency number 112.

## • 1. Abstinence

- Make it clear to the person stalking you just **once** and **unequivocally** that you do not wish to have any further contact. Remain consistent in no longer reacting to any further attempts by this person to contact you.
- **No discussions “between you and me”!**
- If you experience telephone harassment or other acts of stalking, e.g. via smartphone, PC etc. (so-called cyber stalking), seek advice on technical protection measures (withheld phone numbers, malicious caller ID, answering machines, email addresses etc.).
- Do not accept any deliveries you have not ordered yourself.
- If you are followed by a car, drive straight to the nearest police station.

## • 2. Transparency

Inform your private and professional circles that you are being stalked and ask those close to you not to disclose any information about you. This makes you stronger and the stalker weaker.

## • 3. Documentation

Although it may be difficult, you should document, gather and save information on all acts of stalking. Important: **who, when, what, where** (date, time, place, type of incident, potential witnesses, etc.). Documentation makes it easier to track the development of the stalking behaviour and can also serve as evidence if legal steps are taken.

## • 4. Consistency

Observe the above-mentioned actions **consistently** and with **perseverance** and do not react to the harassment of the person stalking you, since this is the only way that an end to the stalking is likely.

