

Help with Finances

If you are leaving an abusive relationship, financial help is available.

This info sheet explains government-funded emergency supports, as well as child support and partner or spousal support.

It is a good idea to plan your finances as part of your safety planning process:

- Think about what your income and expenses will be if you were to leave.
- Calculate how much money you would need to support yourself and your children.
- Figure out if you need to apply for financial support through one or more of the options described in this info sheet.

Escaping Abuse Benefit

The Alberta government provides emergency funding to help people escaping family violence or domestic violence.

You can apply if **all** the following are true:

- You are living in an abusive family situation or have already left.
- You do not have enough money to leave an abusive family situation or start over.
- You do not qualify for other ongoing Alberta benefits.
- You are at least 18 years old.
- You live in Alberta.
- You are a Canadian citizen or permanent resident, refugee, or refugee claimant.

*You should NOT rely on this booklet for legal advice.
It provides general information on Alberta law only.*



For more information on safety planning, see the other info sheets in this series on **WillowNet** – a CPLEA website about violence and abuse laws in Alberta. www.willownet.ca



Visit the Government of Alberta's website for more information.

Escaping Abuse Benefit:
bit.ly/3wPp81r

Victims of Crime Assistance Program:
bit.ly/30wuXVR

Criminal Restitution:
bit.ly/3kE579h

The benefit is there to help you with expenses. You can use it to pay for the support you need to get to safety or start a new life. This could include emergency transportation, short term accommodation, emergency personal items, and more.

This benefit is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To apply, call **Alberta Supports**:

- 1.877.644.9992 (7:30am to 8pm on weekdays)
- 1.866.6445135 (weekends, holidays and after hours)

Victims of Crime Assistance Program

This program supports victims of crimes reported to police. Emergency assistance can help with:

- emergency safety and security losses and damages
- reimbursement for expenses related to attending court for specific events (such as sentencing or providing a victim impact statement)
- immediate access to short-term supports (such as counselling)

PLEASE NOTE | As of 2021, the Government of Alberta is reviewing this program. It may change.

Criminal Restitution

If you experienced domestic violence and pressed criminal charges, you may be able to ask for restitution if your spouse or partner is convicted of the charges.

Restitution is a court order that makes the person who caused harm pay another person's expenses directly related to the crime. These expenses can include those related to bodily harm, lost wages, counselling services, moving expenses, etc. You can only apply for restitution if the person who caused harm pleads guilty or if a judge or jury convicts them. You must apply before the person is sentenced.

Partner and Spousal Support

If you are married, you can apply for spousal support. If you are in an adult interdependent relationship, you can apply for partner support. Spousal or partner support are payments from one person to the other, usually from the person who makes more money to the person making less. You do not automatically get support. **You must prove you should get spousal or partner support.**

If you and your partner or spouse cannot agree on support, you will have to apply to court for a judge to decide.

You may be in an adult interdependent relationship with someone if:

- you and your partner have lived in a relationship of interdependence for at least three years, or
- you and your partner have lived in a relationship of interdependence and have a child together, or
- you and your partner signed an Adult Interdependent Partner Agreement.

A **relationship of interdependence** is one where you and your partner share one another's lives, function as an economic and domestic unit, and are emotionally committed to one another.

Child Support

Child support is money paid by one parent or guardian to the other for the child. It is the right of the child, not the parent receiving the money. Child support is usually paid monthly and is calculated using a set formula. Child support is the same for married and unmarried parents.

If you and your partner or spouse cannot agree on child support, you will have to apply to court for a judge to decide.

See CPLEA's **Financial Support booklet and video** for more information about how to apply: www.cplea.ca/family

Housing

Are you renting and wanting to end your lease early? See the **Renting and Ending Your Lease Early info sheet**, available at www.willownet.ca, for more information on how to do so.

Are you wanting to stay in your home and have the person causing harm move out? See the **Exclusive Possession info sheet**, available at www.willownet.ca, for more information.

If you have no where to go, call the **Alberta Council of Women's Shelters** at **1.866.331.3933** for help finding a shelter near you.



For more information about adult interdependent relationships, see CPLEA's **Living Together info sheet** at www.cplea.ca

See CPLEA's **Financial Support booklet and video** for more information about how to apply: www.cplea.ca/family



About CPLA

The Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta is dedicated to making the law understandable for Albertans. We provide legal information on a wide variety of topics through our websites, print resources, workshops and more. For more information, visit our website: www.cplea.ca

© 2021

Legal Resource Centre of Alberta Ltd., Edmonton, Alberta

Operating as: Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta

You should NOT rely on this booklet for legal advice. It provides general information on Alberta law only.

We would like to thank the Alberta Law Foundation and the Department of Justice Canada for providing operational funding, which makes publications like this possible.

**Alberta LAW
FOUNDATION**



Department of Justice
Canada

Ministère de la Justice
Canada

Resources

Find more information about domestic violence and the other info sheets in this series on **WillowNet** – a CPLA website about violence and abuse laws in Alberta. www.willownet.ca

- **Family Violence Info Line: 310.1818**
Get help anonymously. Available 24/7 in over 170 languages.
- **Victim Services Alberta: 780.427.3460 or www.alberta.ca/victims-services.aspx**
Connect with local supports.
- **Resolution and Court Administration Services: www.alberta.ca/rcas.aspx**
Get help finding court forms or information on the court process.
- **Community Legal Clinics in Alberta: www.lawcentralalberta.ca/clinics**
Get free legal advice if you earn a low income.
- **Legal Aid Alberta's Emergency Protection Order Program (EPOP): 1.780.422.9222 (Edmonton area) or 1.403.297.5260 (Calgary area) or www.legalaid.ab.ca/services/family-violence-matters/**
Get free legal help applying for an EPO.
- **Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta www.cplea.ca/family**
Learn more about family law in Alberta.



We want to know what you think!
To take our one minute survey:

- capture this QR code with your phone camera, or
- go to bit.ly/3g8tby9