

What is Coercive Control?

Coercive control is a criminal offence of coercive or controlling behaviour against an intimate partner or family member.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive control includes acts of:

- Assault
- Threats
- Humiliation
- Intimidation
- Other abuse – used to harm, punish or frighten

A range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependant by

- Isolating them from sources of support
- Exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain
- Depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance or escape
- Regulating everyday behaviour

Support for Victims

If you or someone you know is experiencing coercive control or relationship abuse support is available through Victims First.



Victims First provides free emotional and practical support to all victims and witnesses of crime or abuse, as well as family members of victims. It is available across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire and can provide help regardless of whether or not the crime has been reported to the police.

When contacting Victims First, a Victims First Officer will discuss your emotional and practical needs and put a tailored support plan in place. This could involve referring victims to a specialist service such as services for victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse.

The type of assistance available includes telephone and face to face support, advocacy including help to access other services, support through the criminal justice system (if you have reported the crime to the police) and therapeutic counselling.

A Young Victims Service is also available to anyone under 18 which works with young people to help them cope with the effects of crime.

You can contact Victims First on 0300 1234 148 or make an online referral at www.victims-first.org.uk