Important Safety Measures

1. BE ALERT and aware of your surroundings, the people and things happening around you.
2. VARY ROUTES OF TRAVEL when you come and go from work or home.
3. PARK SECURELY and in well-lit areas and ask someone to escort you to your car.
4. BE AWARE of vehicles following you.
5. ALERT MANAGERS OR SECURITY at your place of business. Provide a picture or description of the stalker.
6. Have a SECURITY CHECK made by law enforcement of your home to ensure your home can be locked safely. Secure all doors and windows in both your home and vehicle.
7. Maintain an UNLISTED NUMBER. If Caller ID is available in your area, obtain the service for your phone.
8. DO NOT DISMISS ANY THREAT, written or verbal. Call the police or sheriff's department and save any documentation.
9. MAINTAIN PRIVACY, never give out personal information to anyone where the information can be overheard. Remove phone number and social security number from as many items as possible.
10. Develop a SAFETY PLAN for yourself and family members in case of emergency. Decide on a safe place to meet and someone to call if problems do arise.

Crime Victims’ Compensation Can Help
800-983-9933

Produced by: The Office of the Attorney General, Crime Victims' Compensation Division and The Texas Council on Family Violence

800-799-7233
National Domestic Violence Hotline
The Texas Legislature passed a new stalking law in January 1997. This brochure is designed to help stalking victims, help law enforcement and the judicial system apprehend, prosecute, and convict stalkers.

Questions About Stalking...

What is Stalking?
A stalker tries to control his or her victim through behavior or threats intended to intimidate and terrify. A stalker can be an unknown person, an acquaintance or a former intimate partner. A stalker's state of mind can range from obsessive love to obsessive hatred. A stalker may follow a victim off and on for a period of days, weeks, or even years. A stalking victim feels reasonable fear of bodily injury or death to self or to a family or household member or damage to property.

Stalking can be perpetrated by the stalker her/himself or by someone acting on her/his behalf. Stalking can take the form of verbal threats or threats conveyed by the stalker's conduct, by threatening mail, damage to property, surveillance of the victim, or following the victim.

How do I Know if I'm Being Stalked?
The stalker may, on more than one occasion:
1. Follow the victim and/or victim's family or household members, or
2. vandalize the victim's property,
3. inflict damage to property—perhaps by vandalizing the car, harming a pet or breaking windows at the victim's home, or
4. call or send threatening mail, or
5. drive by or park near the victim's home, office, and other places familiar to the victim.

Terroristic Threat
(Section 22.07, Penal Code):

What is terroristic threat?
Intent and conduct of perpetrator: Terroristic threat is not limited to stalking. A person intentionally threatens to commit an offense involving violence to any person or property with the intent to place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury.

Penalty: Class B misdemeanor.

Texas Stalking Law
Stalking (Section 42.072)

How is stalking proven?
1. Intent of stalker: Stalker has the intent or the knowledge that his/her actions will instill fear of death or bodily injury to the victim or a member of the victim's family or household. Threats can be explicit (e.g., stating that he is going to kill the victim) or implied (e.g., veiled threats, hurting family pet). Threats have to be aimed at a specific person; they cannot be general threats. Threats may be conveyed by the stalker or by someone acting or behalf of the stalker.
2. Conduct of stalker: Conduct has to occur on more than one occasion and be directed towards the victim and/or the victim's family or household members. More than one police report is not required. The acts may include threatening contact by mail or by phone, or damaging the victim's property.

Penalty: Class A misdemeanor
($4,000 and/or no more than one year in jail) unless there is a prior conviction for stalking, in which case the penalty is upgraded to a 3rd degree felony (2 to 10 years of jail time and possibly a fine of up to $10,000.) In addition the releasing officer is required to make a "reasonable effort" (one attempt) to get in touch with the victim when the stalker is being released or escapes from prison. It is the victims' responsibility to notify law enforcement officials of a change in the victims' phone number or address.

Important Phone Numbers

Police/Sheriff 911
Texas Council on Family Violence
800-525-1978
National Domestic Violence Hotline
800-799-7233
TDD
800-787-3224
Texas Women's Advocacy Project
Family Violence Hotline
800-347-4673
State Bar of Texas
800-204-2222
Texas Legal Services Center
512-477-6000
If you are a victim of stalking and need more help, advice and practical assistance call
Texas Women's Advocacy Project
800-777-3247 or
512-476-1866