

01 DESCRIPTIONS

Stalking usually focuses on a person.

Stalking – a pattern of unwanted, fixated and obsessive behaviour which is intrusive. It can include harassment that amounts to stalking or stalking that causes fear of violence or serious alarm or distress.
Stalking can include;

- Following or watching a person.
- Monitoring a person's use of the internet, email, phone.
- Loitering in places a victim visits
- Breaking into a victim's home.

Harassment often focuses on disputes

Harassment – Unreasonable and oppressive behaviour that is repeated and may cause alarm, distress, fear of violence in the victim.

Harassment might include;

- Anti-social behaviour
- Bullying at school/workplace
- Sending abusive messages, unwanted gifts

02 VICTIM CONSIDERATIONS

Stalking - Does the victim feel physically/ emotionally and or psychologically affected by the behaviour? Does the victim have persistent fear of what might happen?

Harassment - Does the victim feel oppressed but not seriously alarmed or distressed by the behaviour?

Is the victim fearful about certain acts but not in a constant state of fear?

Ongoing safety and security of the victim – explain to the victim the benefits of a Civil Order. At the earliest opportunity obtain the victim's views regarding applying for such orders. Provide information to support an application to the prosecutor as early as possible.

Have you provided full safeguarding support for the victim?

03 SUSPECT CONSIDERATIONS

Stalking – Consider the Stalking mnemonic FOUR. Are the behaviours

Fixated
Obsessive
Unwanted
Repeated

Is the amount of time/ effort/ resources the suspect is investing consuming their daily life?

Is there a range of behaviours targeted at the victim?

Harassment – Is there evidence of repeated behaviour that is unreasonable but not fixated on the victim?

Is the behaviour generally focused on addressing a dispute (financial, neighbour, employment etc.) rather than targeted at an individual?

Is there evidence that this behaviour will stop should the underlying problem be resolved?

07 KEY MESSAGES

• Focus on risk first – your primary responsibility is to make people safe. Risk is dynamic and needs continual reassessment. Ensure the victim is part of a risk management plan.

- Investigate fully – make sure you understand the full history and any escalation.
- Listen to the victim, particularly their view about changing risk.
- The motivation of the suspect, the context and effect on the behaviour on the victim are all important factors to understanding and helping your decision making.
- Don't send the victim away believing that it is not a Police matter.
- Don't suggest the victim talk/meet with the Stalker to resolve issues.



The infographic features a central circular graphic with a multi-colored ring (green, blue, purple, red, orange, yellow) and a white center containing the Lancashire Constabulary crest and the text '7 MINUTE BRIEFING STALKING OR HARASSMENT'. Seven lines radiate from the ring to connect to seven surrounding text boxes, each representing a key point from the infographic.

7 MINUTE BRIEFING STALKING OR HARASSMENT

04 ASSESS THE RISK

Stalking or Harassment can be domestic related or committed by a person known or unknown. Once appropriate offences have been identified, complete the following:

Non-Domestic

Stalking or Harassment incident

- 11 Stalking/Harassment Screening Questions
- Complete Stalking or Harassment Investigation report
- Crime as appropriate

Domestic related

Stalking or Harassment incident

- Complete DASH including the 11 additional Stalking/Harassment screening questions
- Complete Stalking or Harassment Investigation report
- Crime as appropriate.

06 DIGITAL SAFETY/CYBER STALKING

Stalking.

80% of offences involve online offences includes, hacking social media, email, chat rooms etc. accounts Do not advise

- Victims to close their social media accounts
- Change their mobile number
- Block the perpetrator
- Avoiding using email or internet.

Paladin the National Stalking Advocacy Service and the College of Policing report evidence indicates blocking the perpetrator from telephones, media sites etc. generally leads to an escalation in behaviour by the perpetrator.

For further advise visit www.getsafeonline.org

05 CONSIDERATIONS

Patterns of behaviour – Ensure that the alleged incident is not considered in isolation. Interrogate Police systems and identify linked incidents, patterns of behaviour.

When Victim's report a second/ third incident or escalation ensure you take positive action regarding the new incident. Investigate each incident – don't just pass details to the original OIC.

Police Powers - Section 2b Protection from Harassment Act 1997 provides a power of entry and search relating to Stalking. A warrant from a magistrate is required to use this power.

Additional offences – where a suspect breaches bail, investigate as a continued stalking or harassment, and any other offences in addition to the breach of bail.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you require support advice speak with your BCU Stalking and Harassment SPOC, located in your Safeguarding Unit.

Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service: 0203 8664107 – paladinservice.co.uk

National Stalking Helpline 0808 802 0300 Stalkinghelpline.org