

# FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

when you are subjected to threats and violence in close relationships

*Are you subjected to threats and/or violence by a related party but don't leave because of lack of financial opportunities?*

This brochure gives you information on how to apply for financial assistance in order to create the conditions for living a life without threats and / or violence.

## **The information is aimed at:**

- those who are subjected to threats and / or violence by family members and are in need of financial assistance
- those who work at a shelter or other sheltered accommodation and meet women subjected to violence
- those who work within the public sector and who need easily accessible information on the laws and regulations that apply to financial assistance in the event of violence in close relationships

## **Violence and abuse of women in close relationships**

The Social Services Act states that the social services “must ensure that women who are or have been victims of violence or other abuse by close relatives may be in need of support and help in order to change their situation”. Even children who have witnessed violence or other abuse by or against related parties should receive the support and help they need (Chapter 5, Section 11 of the Social Services Act).

## **Financial assistance**

Those who are unable to support themselves have the right to financial assistance. According to the law and through the assistance, the individual shall be guaranteed a reasonable standard of living and the assistance must be framed in such a way that it strengthens the individual's ability to live an independent life. The right to assistance refers to “livelihood” (financial support) and “lifestyle in general” (Chapter 4, Section 1 of the Swedish Social Services Act). This may include, e.g. housing costs, food, clothing, healthcare or medicines. The financial support is based on both a national standard, a level that applies throughout the country, and reasonable costs outside the national norm (Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare, 2018).

The law states that if there are particular circumstances in an individual case, the social services can calculate these costs to a higher level (Chapter 4, Section 3 of the Swedish Social Services Act). Particular circumstances may be that you have been subjected to violence, threats and/or other abuse in a close relationship (SOSFS 2013:1, 2014: 4).

## **Particular circumstances - higher level**

The social services can calculate financial assistance to a higher level if you are subjected to violence or other abuse by a related party and you therefore have temporarily high costs, for example:

- food, clothing and shoes or telephone

### **You can also get help with:**

- emergency needs
- higher living costs
- purchase of items that you have left in the home and cannot access
- purchase of necessary home equipment if you need to move to other housing
- facilitating establishment elsewhere

Normally, when you apply for financial assistance, joint assets you have with your partner are often taken into account. However, social services should make exceptions to this principle if you have been subjected to violence or abuse by your partner (SOSFS 2013: 1).

## **Which municipality should you turn to?**

You primarily turn to the municipality where you live but if you are staying in another municipality you have the right to apply for emergency support in that municipality.

## **Asylum seekers**

In the event that you are subjected to violence or other abuse by a related party during the asylum period, the municipality you live in is ultimately responsible for obtaining the support and the help you need. The municipality must examine your application for assistance, in cases where you apply for contributions that are not covered by the LMA (National Board of Health and Welfare, 2016; Law on the reception of asylum seekers etc.).

## **How do you apply?**

You always have the right to apply for assistance and to have it examined. Your administrative officer in the municipality decides on assistance according to the requirements of the individual, taking into account your needs and circumstances. In your application, emphasize that you have been subjected to violence in a close relationship and why you need financial assistance to a higher level. Your application should be in writing. Feel free to accept help from people who know your situation or from a women's shelter.

## **Decision from social services**

You always have the right to receive a written decision from social services. If you are not satisfied with the decision, you can appeal.

An appeal must be in writing and lodged within 3 weeks of the date you received the decision. Read the decision carefully, write in your own words why you oppose the reasons in the decision and submit the appeal on time. Write down what you want to say and describe your situation in as much detail as possible. Describe your feelings and experiences clearly and provide examples.

Even in this process you can ask for help if you need it!

# WOULD YOU LIKE TO FIND OUT MORE AND GET PRACTICAL HELP?

ALVA women's shelter spreads knowledge about women's rights under the Swedish Social Services Act when they are subjected to threats and violence in a close relationship. We want to strengthen women in their opportunities to influence their situations themselves. We also provide advice and support to other involved parties.

## **Don't hesitate to contact us!**

We welcome both individuals and authorities to contact ALVA women's shelter for more information or advice and support:

**Phone: +46 303 33 22 40**

**Phone: +46 705 08 44 31**

**info@alvakvinnojour.se**

**www.alvakvinnojour.se**



GENOMFÖRS MED BIDRAG FRÅN  
JÄMSTÄLLDHETSMYNDIGHETEN