

West Cork Whisper

West Cork Women Against Violence Project Newsletter

48th Edition

July, August, September 2012

WOMEN'S AID LAUNCH 2011 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE REPORT

Women's Aid is the largest domestic violence support service in Ireland and they recently launched their 2011 domestic violence report. The Women's Aid National Freephone Helpline answered 11,169 calls in 2011. Women using its support services disclosed 13,504 incidents of physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse. In an additional 2,946 calls, a 25% increase on the previous year, it was disclosed that children were bearing witness to the most horrific abuse and violence against their mothers. This in itself is a recognised form of emotional abuse with detrimental effects to children's well-being.

Director of Women's Aid, Margaret Martin stated: "Domestic violence remains a serious problem in Irish society. This year we are particularly concerned about the increasing number of disclosures to Women's Aid of children being directly abused or exposed to domestic violence. Domestic violence is the most common context in which children experience abuse. In 2011, 44% of all callers to the Women's Aid National Freephone Helpline disclosed that children were being directly abused or were present in the home where domestic violence was happening. Women have told us that their children were being hit, smacked, constantly shouted at, and in some cases, sexually abused. Many children will witness their mother being shouted at, threatened, physically assaulted and at times will see their



mother being raped. Where they do not directly see the abuse occurring they may overhear abusive incidents, or will see the aftermath of it such as bruises, broken bones, damaged furniture and belongings. At times, the perpetrator of the abuse will deliberately target children as a way to hurt both them and their mother."

Women's Aid welcome the placing of Children First Guidelines on a statutory basis and the recognition that exposure to domestic violence is a form of emotional abuse of children. Women's Aid believes that this needs to be reflected in any changes to Family Law or Domestic Violence Legislation as well as in any Child Protection structures.

Margaret Martin, Director of Women's Aid, speaking directly to women living with abuse, said, "There is help available. I would like to say particularly to younger women that if something doesn't feel right in your relationship, then you should trust your instincts and get help now."

This report can be viewed on www.womensaid.ie

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Break the Silence on Domestic Violence

West Cork Women Against
Violence Project,
Harbour View,
Bantry, Co. Cork.

Freephone Helpline:
Tuesday 10am - 4 pm
Tel: 1800 203 136

Office: Tel: 027 53847
Open: 10am-1pm,
Monday - Friday

Outreach in Skibbereen:
every Friday 11am to 2pm
Tel: 028 23607

Website:
www.westcorkwomensproject.ie

Email: admin@westcorkwomensproject.ie

Applying for Domestic Violence Orders under the Domestic Violence Act 1996: *(This piece should be read with the flow-chart on opposite page)*

West Cork Women Against Violence Project provides support, information and, where possible, accompaniment for women who decide that they wish to apply for Legal Protection under Domestic Violence legislation. Any woman considering her legal options can contact W.C.W.A.V.P. for information on the grounds needed for applying for a Safety or Barring Order, as set out in the Domestic Violence Act 1996 and Civil Bill 2011. Applications are heard **in civil process** meaning the only individuals present are the applicant, respondent, judge, court clerk and solicitors only. ***Breaches of an Order are heard in the criminal court which is in open court.***

The following people may obtain protection under Domestic Violence Legislation:

Spouses: Against each other. **There is no time requirement for married couples** to be living together.

Co-habiting couples (including same sex couples) applying for:

SAFETY ORDER:

The couple must have a child in common or proven to have lived together.

BARRING ORDER:

The couple must have lived together for at least 6 months out of the preceding 9 months. A Barring Order will not be made against a co-habitee who owns the place of residency or has greater ownership rights than the applicant.

W.C.W.A.V.P. can provide emotional support during the process as well as continuing support after court whatever the outcome. ***We are concerned that incorrect information is being given out by some agencies which can be damaging to the woman as it gives false hope where the remedy may not be available to her.***

When in Contact with a Solicitor

Questions you may find helpful when employing a Solicitor:

- Have you experience in family law?
- What is your minimum fee? What is your fee per hour and what is covered?
- How many negotiation sessions are included?
- What is your rate for appearance in court?

Also, having outlined your situation:

- How much maintenance can I expect?
- If there is a separation agreement, will the amount of maintenance be written in?
- What are the advantages/disadvantages in having the amount written down?
- Can I expect to remain in the family home?
- Can I expect to get custody of my children?
- What access rights can I expect my husband/partner to be granted by the courts?

Remember

Your solicitor is there to represent you.
If you don't understand, don't be afraid to say so.
Keep in regular contact with your solicitor and ask how long each stage will take.

(Taken from Enough is Enough – Information for Women and children experiencing abuse – Kilkenny)

Tenancy Support Service West Cork

The Tenancy Sustainment and Support Service is to aid people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. As part of the service a 'Tenancy Support and Advice Clinic' is run across West Cork.

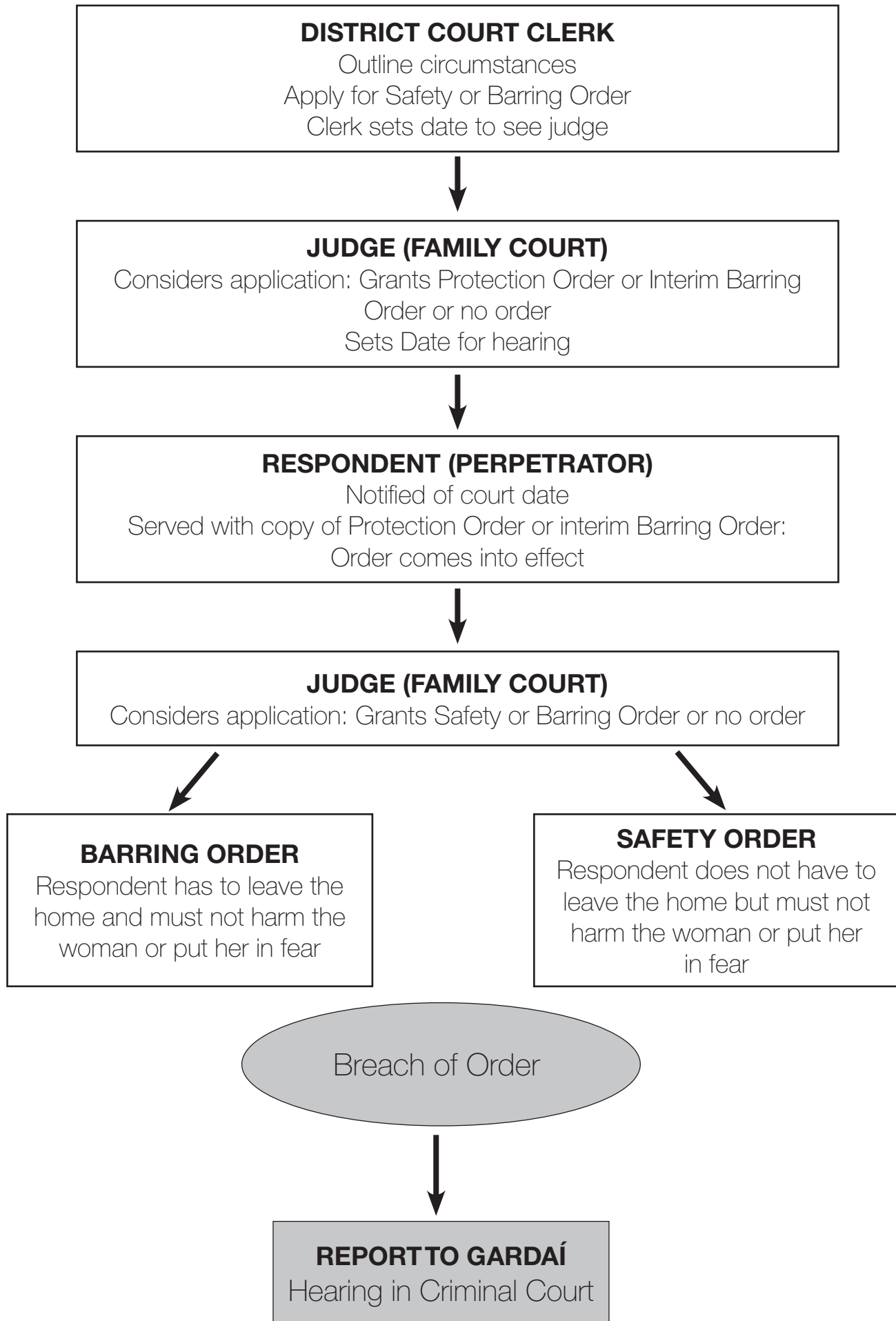
The clinic is a drop-in service for people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or need support and advice on their current housing. It is a roaming clinic and operates a service in Clonakilty, Dunmanway, Schull, Skibbereen, Bantry, and Castletownbere.

This service works with families/persons experiencing /at risk of homelessness or tenancy sustainment to ensure access to health and welfare services (both voluntary and statutory) and access to long-term supported housing.

For clinic times and locations contact
Julie Brosnan,
Tenancy Sustainment and Support Officer,
086 8279996,
Or, look at
www.westcorkhomelessness.com

We offer an appointment and court accompaniment service

APPLICATION PROCESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORDERS



We offer an appointment and court accompaniment service.

West Cork Citizens' Information Service

The Square, Bantry Ph: 076 1078390
 South Square; Macroom Ph: 026 42179

West Cork Citizens Information Service can provide you with information, advocacy and advice on all your rights and entitlements. The service is free, confidential and independent. Open daily, please call for times.

Monthly on 3rd Tuesday: 10.30am – 4.30pm
 For an appointment with the Legal Aid Board please phone the Legal Aid office on: 021 4551686

Appointments with F.L.A.C. are made by contacting West Cork Citizens Information Service via drop in or by phone.: 076 1078390

WEST CORK CRISIS PREGNANCY COUNSELLING

Lo Call 1890 252 359

Lines are open 9.30 – 3pm,
 Monday to Friday
 to arrange an appointment.

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR WOMEN:

West Cork Women against Violence Project,
 Bantry **Freephone 1800-203 136**

Women's Aid Freephone..... **1800-341 900**

Cuanlee Refuge, Cork **021-427 7698**

Legal Aid Board, Cork **021-455 1686**
021-427 5998

Mná Feasa
 (Domestic Violence Project) **021-421 1757**

OSS Cork **Freephone 1800-497 497**
 (Domestic Violence Resource Centre
 for men and women)

Sexual Assault Treatment Unit. **021-492 6297**

Sexual Violence Centre..... **Freephone 1800-496 496**

Domestic Violence Social Work **021-492 1728**

Y.A.N.A. North Cork **022-53915**

Kerry

Kerry Women's Refuge and Support Services
 (ADAPT) **066-712 9100**

Open Door Network **066-718 5472**

Kerry Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre **1800-633 333**

Legal Aid Board..... **066-712 6900**

Tralee Women's Resource Centre **066-712 0622**

INDICATORS FOR IDENTIFYING SAFETY RISK

It is recognised that abused women are the best judges of the level of risk in their lives at any particular time with many women being killed by their abuser. In assessing the safety of women, the following critical risk factors have been identified by Jacquelyn C. Campbell "Prediction of Homicide of and by Battered Women" in Assessing Dangerousness by Sexual Offenders, Batterers and Child Abusers, Sage Publications 1995

Access to/ownership of guns
 Use of weapons in prior abusive incidents
 Serious injury in prior abusive incidents
 Drug or alcohol abuse
 Obsessiveness/extreme jealousy/extreme dominance

Threats to kill
 Threats with weapons
 Threats of suicide
 Forces sex on partner

Kelliher, Patricia and O'Connor, Monica, Safety and Sanctions: Domestic Violence and the Enforcement of Law in Ireland. Commissioned and Published by Women's Aid, Dublin 1999

We offer an appointment and court accompaniment service