JUSTLY - GUERNSEY

Domestic Abuse - accusation

Trinity Chambers

Justly Guide: What To Do If You've Been Accused of Domestic Abuse (Guernsey)

Being accused of domestic abuse is serious. Whether or not you believe the allegation is accurate, it's vital to understand your legal position, your rights, and your responsibilities — and to act carefully and calmly.

1. Don't Panic — Get Informed

If you've been told you're under investigation or have received a police notice or a legal letter:

- Read everything carefully — keep copies of all communications.
- Do not retaliate or confront the other person. This can harm your case.

This is a legal process — not just a personal dispute. Take it seriously.

2. Are the Police Involved?

Yes — I've been contacted or arrested.
You have the right to:

- Legal representation (a duty advocate or private lawyer)
- Remain silent (you don't have to answer questions without advice)
- Know the allegations against you

Ask for a lawyer before saying anything in interview.

No — but I've been told there's an allegation.
Don't assume it will go away. It may escalate. Seek legal advice early.

3. Understand What the Law Says

Domestic abuse allegations can include:

- Physical harm or threats
- Emotional manipulation or coercion
- Financial control
- Sexual coercion or intimidation

Even if you see the situation differently, the perception of harm matters in law.

4. Seek Legal Advice Quickly

You may be eligible for **legal aid** depending on income. Even if not, consult a lawyer experienced in domestic allegations.

They can help:

- Respond to police or court notices
- Prepare for interviews or hearings
- Apply for contact with children (if relevant)
- Challenge orders or incorrect statements

5. Avoid Further Contact (Unless Cleared to Do So)

If there's a non-molestation order, bail condition, or police instruction:

- Do not message, call, or meet the person involved
- Even indirect contact (via friends or social media) can breach the law
- Breaches may lead to arrest or prosecution

6. Prepare for Possible Outcomes

The process may involve:

- A police investigation
- Temporary separation or access restrictions
- Court hearings (especially if children or housing are involved)
- In some cases, criminal charges

Keep records of all communication, behaviour logs, and any evidence that supports your version of events.

7. Protect Your Wellbeing

These situations are emotionally intense. You may feel shock, anger, or fear. It's OK to:

- Seek mental health or counselling support
- Speak to a trusted person (who won't inflame the situation)
- Use neutral support services for guidance

8. Key Services

- Trinity Chambers / Legal Firms – For defence representation
- Citizens Advice Guernsey – For legal aid applications or process explanations
- Health and Social Services – If the accusation affects your parenting or housing

9. The Path Forward

Allegations do not equal guilt. But handling the situation with dignity and legal awareness is essential.

Be respectful of the process
Get proper legal advice early
Avoid escalation or contact
Take care of your own emotional state