


A woman's hands are shown holding a purple mug with a silver rim. The background is blurred, showing another person. The image is split diagonally by a pink and red geometric shape.

Are you a victim of  
**Domestic  
Abuse?**

Help us to help you

Many victims  
feel trapped  
and powerless  
but there  
is a  
way out



You are not alone, join others who  
are thinking the same way.



Did you know that  
**approximately 60%**  
**of all women suffer**  
from some type of  
gender violence?

Source: INEC – last official survey, Dec. 2011

Domestic abuse can affect anyone regardless of age, gender or social background, and is not limited to acts of physical violence. It can include a range of other abusive behaviours, such as psychological, sexual, emotional, verbal, or financial.

Domestic abuse is never the victim's fault. It is a form of power and control. Some victims suffer many incidents before they feel able to report the problem.

Ecuador's 2008 Constitution states that everyone has the right to personal integrity and to live a life free of violence.

## HOW TO GET IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION MEASURES

- Call **911 (emergency services)** or go to the **nearest police station (Unidad de Policía Comunitaria UPC)** to report what happened and to ask for protection. A panic button (“botón de pánico”) can be activated by the police in your mobile telephone. The police will register your home address.
- Following a police report and formal denunciation, the Judge (**Unidad Judicial**) may order a restraining order (“**boleta de auxilio**”) to avoid further intimidation from the perpetrator. By law, this should be issued immediately. If it takes longer, it is your right to demand that this regulation is followed.
- When an infraction is reported, the police domestic violence unit (DEVIF) will be responsible for issuing the perpetrator with a formal notification of your protection measures and a restraining order.
- Depending on the circumstances, the police may be able to help you re-enter your home and request the Judge to issue the perpetrator with an eviction order (“**orden de desalojo**”).



**Freephone: 1800 828282**  
for general assistance and guidance  
on gender violence issues.



## WHAT STEPS TO FOLLOW IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

1. **Evidence** is important. Where possible, try to record any physical violence (photos or video-sound recording).
2. Approach a **hospital emergency** unit, or one of the **First Medical Assistance Response Centres** (“**Salas de Primera Acogida**”) for a preliminary medical assessment. The staff are specially trained in assisting victims of gender violence. However, these centres are at a limited number of public hospitals nationwide ([goo.gl/8bCP28](http://goo.gl/8bCP28))  
The medical report should be included in any formal denunciation.
3. To report the abuse, you can go directly to a **Community Police Unit (UPC)**, to one of the available **Judicial Units** (“**Unidades Judiciales**”) in your area (ideally the **Unidad Judicial contra la Violencia a la Mujer**) or directly to the **Prosecutor’s Office** (“**Fiscalía**”) to give your testimony.  
[www.goo.gl/R5mJbi](http://www.goo.gl/R5mJbi)  
[www.fiscalia.gob.ec](http://www.fiscalia.gob.ec)  
[www.funcionjudicial.gob.ec](http://www.funcionjudicial.gob.ec)

“A house  
where a  
woman  
is unsafe  
is not  
a home”

- WOMAN, LIBERIA

4. The Judge and/or Prosecutor will order a **physical-forensic examination** (“exámen médico legal”) and a **psychological–social assessment**, to establish the **level of aggression** (\*) against the victim, which will provide important evidence for the case (“**informe pericial**”).
5. Following a risk and vulnerability assessment, you can request **protection measures** from UPC/Judge. If required, you may be able to ask for police home guarding through a victim & witness protection system (“**protección de víctimas y testigos**”).
6. A “**flagrant**” **criminal offence** (“flagrancia” meaning “caught in the act”) needs to be reported within 24 hours, for the legal process to be completed within 30 days. You can do this also by calling 911.
7. When reporting a case to the Prosecutor, you have the right to a **simultaneous interpreting** service (“**perito traductor**”) at no cost.
8. You can request free legal aid from a Public Defence lawyer via the “**Defensoría Pública**” (Call 151). However, only a few may speak English and they are only available for judicial cases.  
[www.goo.gl/wa8CLB](http://www.goo.gl/wa8CLB)  
[www.defensoria.gob.ec/](http://www.defensoria.gob.ec/)

(\*) *ranging in severity from an “Infraction” (“contravención”) to a criminal offence (“delito”). A “contravención” is defined by injuries that incapacitate the victim for less than 3 days. These are handled by the “Unidad Judicial contra la Violencia a la Mujer” (or UJ Penal de Garantías, UJ Multicompetente, UJ Niñez y Familia). A “delito” is a more severe offence, which incapacitates the victim for more than 3 days. These are handled by the Prosecutor’s Office.*

9. A Judge will be appointed to take your **formal statement** (“**versión**”).
10. If an **infraction** is established, a hearing will be arranged within 7 days and maximum 30 days.
11. Once the incident has been **reported** and your **statement taken**, if there is an alleged criminal offence, the investigation (“**indagación**”) will be led by the Prosecutor. This can take up to 12 months before a hearing (“**formulación de cargos**”) is arranged.
12. If a **criminal offence** is established, a judicial process will begin (“**instrucción fiscal**”) for up to 90 days. This may be extended up to 120 days.
13. A trial (“**etapa de juicio**”) may be called. The **criminal court** (Juzgado de Garantías Penales) will be responsible for this stage. You will have to provide a statement and attend a court hearing (“**audiencia de juzgamiento**”) when requested. This may take 6 months to 1 year. You have the option to appeal.
14. If you are **under 18**, you must be **accompanied by a parent or guardian throughout the whole process**.
15. If you have left Ecuador, a **local lawyer can represent you**, and if needed, a further statement can be done through Skype or video conference.

**5 British** and  
**2 Canadian**  
**domestic**  
**violence**  
**victims**  
**in Ecuador**  
were **assisted** by  
their **Embassies** in  
2015 and 2016

## TO RECEIVE FREE LEGAL ADVICE

**Physical and psychological** abuse are legal offences under the **Ecuadorean Criminal Code (COIP)**. “**Femicidio**” (femicide) is legally punishable by 22 to 35 years’ imprisonment.

- Call 1800 828282 (182 - as of Nov 2017) for general information and advice on gender violence and to be redirected to the institutional public-private protection system. However, do be aware that it is unlikely there will be English speaking officers available.
- Contact the Public Defence Domestic Violence Unit (Defensoría Pública - Violencia Intrafamiliar). Call 151 (option 2) for legal advice. For further information visit:  
[www.defensoria.gob.ec](http://www.defensoria.gob.ec) / [www.goo.gl/wa8CLB](http://www.goo.gl/wa8CLB)
- If a minor is involved (under 18), call the National Child Protection Police Unit (DINAPEN) who support children and adolescents at risk. Tel: 02 2950 214 (Pichincha Unit) or call 911 and ask for a DINAPEN police officer on duty – “de turno”.



# WHAT ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN?

Contact the **National Child Protection Police Unit (DINAPEN)** to report that your child or children are at risk and ask for guidance.

Quito: 02 2950 214 or call 911 and ask for an officer on duty.

[dinapenquito.direccion@policiaecuador.gob.ec](mailto:dinapenquito.direccion@policiaecuador.gob.ec)

Contact **Quito Municipality's protection board** ("Junta Metropolitana de Protección") or "**Juntas Cantonales de Protección de Derechos**" in other provinces to request protection measures for children and adolescents. Only applicable for infractions.

*Concerns around child protection and safeguarding are priority issues for the British and Canadian Embassies.*





## Over half of all children living in homes with domestic violence are also directly harmed

*130,000 children (in the UK) live in households with high-risk domestic abuse (Source: Radford, L. et al (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today)*

If you and your children are at risk, the Judge (Unidad Judicial Niñez y Familia) may be able to assign you a **temporary shelter** (“**casa de acogida**”).

Ecuador, the UK and Canada are signatories to the **Hague Convention for Child Abduction**. The Central Authority in Ecuador (Ministry of Justice & Human Rights) is responsible for enforcing this international regulation.

By law, if they are travelling only with one parent, **Ecuadorian dual national children** must have the other parent’s permission to leave Ecuador. This is issued by a **Public Notary**, or, if there is disagreement, by a **Court for Family, Women, Children and Adolescents** (Unidad Judicial).

**Sole parental-responsibility/custody** (“**patria potestad**”) **cases** may take 6 months to 1 year to be completed.

## WHAT CAN THE BRITISH OR CANADIAN EMBASSIES DO FOR YOU?

The British and Canadian Embassies take any reports of domestic violence seriously. We aim to be polite, patient, sensitive and non-judgmental.

You can contact our Global Response Centres (24/7) for assistance:

British Embassy: +593(0)2 3972 200  
ecuador.consulate@fco.gov.uk (within office hours)  
www.gov.uk/world/ecuador

Canadian Embassy: +593 (0)2 245 5499 / +1 613 996-8885  
quito.consular@international.gc.ca sos@international.gc.ca  
www.ecuador.gc.ca

- A Consular Officer may be able to accompany you to report the incident to the Police/Prosecutor's Office and to **help you get guidance from a competent authority or support groups.**
- A Consular Officer can also help you contact family or friends, if you wish.
- The British/Canadian Embassies **cannot represent** you legally or give you legal advice, but can provide you with a list of English-speaking private lawyers.
- The Embassies can also provide you with a list of private doctors.

# WHAT HAPPENS IF I GO BACK TO THE UK OR CANADA? CAN I FOLLOW UP THE CASE THERE?

Once the judicial process has started, it will continue in Ecuador, even if you have left the country, as it is the **obligation of the Ecuadorean Prosecutor's Office to investigate the crime.**

You can **appoint a representative** (lawyer, relative or any person you trust) to act on your behalf. To do that you will have to sign a **Power of Attorney ("Poder Judicial")**. If you prepare this from the UK it needs to be legalised (apostilled) or authenticated if you are in Canada.

Your representative will be able to ask the authorities for details and updates on your case and submit documents or make requests to the Judge on your behalf.



# Support Agencies

To get guidance and free legal, psychological and social assistance

*Disclaimer: This informative document is provided for your convenience. However, neither the British or Canadian Embassies can make any guarantee in relation to its content or the probity of the agencies listed, nor can they be held responsible for the advice provided.*



**CEPAM GYE**, a local NGO which assists women. [Facebook.com/CepamGye](https://www.facebook.com/CepamGye)  
Guayaquil: Tel: 04 2447 347 [sos@cepamgye.org](mailto:sos@cepamgye.org) / [@CepamGuayaquil](https://www.instagram.com/CepamGuayaquil)  
Santa Elena: Mobile: 099 1113 526



**CEPAM Quito**, a local NGO which assist women. [Facebook.com/CepamQuito](https://www.facebook.com/CepamQuito)  
Tel. 02 2224 994 [info@cepam.org.ec](mailto:info@cepam.org.ec) / [@CepamQuito](https://www.instagram.com/CepamQuito)



**Fundación Casa de Refugio Matilde**, a local NGO in Quito that supports women at risk. Tel: 02 2625 316 / 2234 734 Mobile: 099 669 6723 (24 hours)  
[casamatilde.coordinacion@gmail.com](mailto:casamatilde.coordinacion@gmail.com) / [casaderefugio\\_matilde@yahoo.com](mailto:casaderefugio_matilde@yahoo.com)  
[www.fundacionmatilde.org](http://www.fundacionmatilde.org) / [facebook.com/refugiomatilde](https://www.facebook.com/refugiomatilde) / [@refugiomatilde](https://www.instagram.com/refugiomatilde)



**Centros de Equidad y Justicia** (Equality and Justice Centres) from Quito Municipality. Centres in Quitumbe (S), La Delicia (N), Eloy Alfaro, La Mariscal or at Tumbaco and Los Chillos valleys Tel: 3952300 ext 17424



**National network of support centres for victims of gender violence**, including temporary shelters for women at risk, supported by the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights (Red Nacional de Centros de Atención Integral y de Casas Acogida para Víctimas de Violencia Intrafamiliar y/o Sexual):  
[www.justicia.gob.ec](http://www.justicia.gob.ec) / [www.goo.gl/a5t1gE](http://www.goo.gl/a5t1gE) (map)



Download “**Junt@s**” Smartphone application, a helpful tool to get help in case you are a victim of gender violence.

Help us to  
**help you**



British Embassy  
Quito

Canada



**Freephone: 1800 828282**

for guidance on gender violence  
(182 – from Nov 2017)

