

Top National Family Law Attorney Sees Increase in Domestic Violence During Pandemic

Provides tips on how to recognize a potentially dangerous situation

WASHINGTON, May 10, 2021 – Natalia Wilson, managing partner with Ain & Bank, a top national family law firm, reports seeing an increase in domestic violence during the pandemic. “Never before have we experienced as many cases of domestic violence as we have over this past year,” stated Wilson. “The majority of these violence cases are being perpetrated by people without any prior record of violence.” Wilson has represented the person alleging abuse as well as people defending against domestic violence allegations.

One of the most interesting facts about increased domestic violence during the pandemic is that many hotlines experienced a significant drop in calls; however, experts knew that domestic violence didn’t decrease. “With many of the calls we’ve received, clients or potential clients could not find a safe place to make a phone call,” Wilson explained. “When families and domestic partners were locked down together, it became impossible with many families for one member to find the privacy to make a call for help.”

A study published this past December in the New England Journal of Medicine, “[A Pandemic within a Pandemic—Intimate Partner Violence during Covid-19](#),” also backs up this premise. Another [study](#) looked at the increase in violence by analyzing tweets during the pandemic and found a surge in domestic violence and child abuse.

“I was recently contacted by a prospective client’s therapist to help a client who is in a domestic abuse situation,” said Wilson. The therapist called with the permission of the client. “Again, this was someone who was at home and does not have privacy to make calls on their own.”

Once clients are in a safe location, Wilson works to help in determining financial resources, client assets and next steps to ensure the client is able to move ahead safely and with the resources needed to resume life on his/her own. “We work closely with the client to determine the best mechanisms to navigate the situation, which may include private agreements,” Wilson added. “We want to make sure families are able to move ahead as peacefully and safely as possible.”

Here are five types of domestic abuse that could lead to violence:

- **Constant put downs or berating.** People occasionally get on each other’s nerves and say things they shouldn’t but, if a spouse is regularly putting down the other spouse or berating him/her, it’s a sign that something is wrong with the relationship. Couples are supposed to be loving and protective of their spouse.
- **Control.** When a spouse wants to control the other either through finances or by cutting them off from friends and family, this is a red flag. Controlling spouses will also check up

on the other spouse while at work or out with friends and may regularly question work activities, ask about co-workers and even make false accusations.

- **Anger.** While it's not unusual for someone to become frustrated or occasionally angry, if that anger escalates to punching walls or objects, throwing things, it is out-of-control anger and may escalate over time to physical abuse.
- **Aggression towards pets or children.** If a partner shows aggression, anger, physical or verbal abuse towards children or pets, the spouse should take steps to ensure safety of those who are vulnerable in the household.
- **Emotional manipulation and/or threats.** Abuse doesn't have to be physical to be abuse and non-physical abuse may escalate to physical abuse and sometimes death. If your partner is threatening you, seek help. Contact police for your safety. Reach out to a family attorney and learn your rights. A partner that has firearms in the home is particularly a danger. Don't wait to see if it will escalate.

"Family law attorneys can help you if you're in one of these types of situations," Wilson explained. "But they cannot ensure your safety. Your first call should be to law enforcement if there is an emergency situation." "When you reach out to a family lawyer, he or she can advise you on next steps and help safely exit a toxic intimate partner relationship and will work with you to ensure that your finances are protected."

Wilson also suggests that "if you or someone you know is a victim of abuse, please contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-SAFE (7233.) Make sure you find a safe place to make the call."

For more information on the firm, visit www.ainbanklaw.com.

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