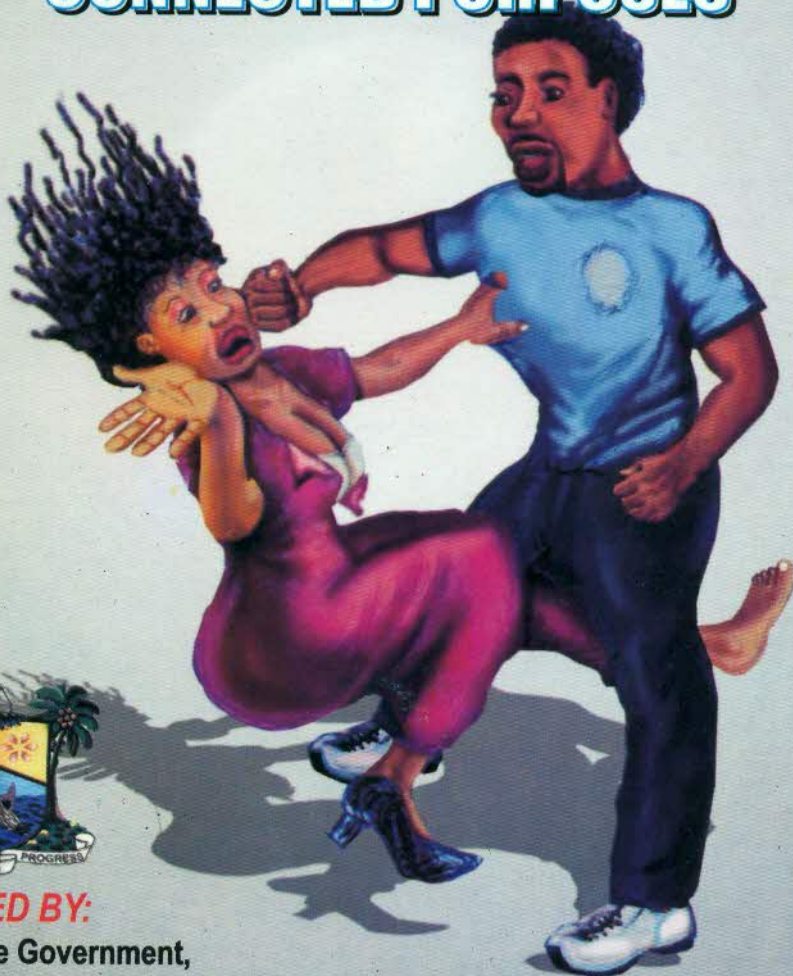


A LAW TO PROVIDE PROTECTION

Against
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
**AND FOR**
CONNECTED PURPOSES



PREPARED BY:

Lagos State Government,
Ministry of Women Affairs & Poverty Alleviation.

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**“A LAW TO PROVIDE PROTECTION
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND
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Edited by:

Funmi Falana

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND LEGAL AID (WELA)

“A Law To Provide Protection Against Domestic Violence And For Connected Purposes”

Edited by:
Funmi Falana
Women Empowerment and Legal Aid (WELA)
25, Adekunle Fajuyi Way, GRA, Ikeja-Lagos.
Tel: 08033052979

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Foreword

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW

Every society has standard rules of behavior which are aimed at ensuring peaceful co-existence of members and protecting the interest of those that are vulnerable due to physical, physiological, psychological or socio-economic weaknesses among others. These rules are stated and codified in documents for everyone to read and understand as ignorance is no excuse in law. This is what we have done with the *Domestic Violence Law*, which is the law that prescribes and regulates the behavior of every citizen of Lagos State in their domestic environment.

This Law is made not only to protect our women who are most times the target of domestic violence, but also to safeguard the interest of men, children, servants, maids and everyone who may be a victim of domestic violence. The legal process permitted within the ambit of the law for redressing such wrongs are prescribed, to avert the temptation of taking the laws into our own hands or seeking revenge without due recourse to legal procedures. Two wrongs only increase the casualties of the law. The Domestic Violence Law has been written in a simple and easy to understand language and the roles of every stakeholder has been stated and explained in a systematic and easy to be interpreted manner.

I therefore urge everyone to read, study and digest this legal document, and become an officer of the law by reporting any infringement so we can stem the tide of domestic violence in the State. It is our collective responsibility and it is for our collective good.

I thank everyone who has contributed in putting this together so we can all live together in peace and harmony.

Thank you.

Hon. Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire
Deputy Governor
Lagos State.

CHAPTER

1

About The Law



A Lagos State High Court or Magistrate Court

- i. This law is a Lagos State law.
- ii. The law is aimed at protecting people against domestic violence and acts of abuses in the home, regardless of sex, age or marital status.

- iii. It is not only a woman that can apply under this law. A man, a child, or a domestic worker can also apply.
- iv. It does not matter whether there is a validly contracted marriage between the victim and the perpetrator of the act as long as there is co-habitation or living together in a home setting.
- v. The law is not to dissolve a marriage. It is not a law of divorce.
- vi. It seeks to remove the perpetrator of an abuse from the venue pending the time the abuse is corrected.
- vii. Anyone who resides in Lagos State can apply under this law regardless of his/her state of origin or where he/she contracted the marriage.
- viii. The law provides for financial assistance by the state through the Office of the Public Defender/Legal Aid Council to victims of domestic violence who may be financially handicapped to seek redress in court under this law, therefore lack of



A Nuclear family

- ix. money cannot hinder an aggrieved person from seeking redress in court under the law. See section 13 (2) of the law.
- ix. The law prohibits publication of identities and information about parties to domestic violence cases, i.e. the case of domestic violence can be heard in private which helps to make it easier for both parties to bear their mind, as there is a yoruba adage that says "Eyan meji ki ti ile ejo bo ko se ore".

CHAPTER 2

What Is Domestic Violence?



A man beating a woman

Although this law does not define “Domestic Violence”; however “Domestic Violence” can be defined in general as a “violence which occurs in the home or between people who live or have lived together” .

ACTS THAT CONSTITUTE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Section 18(g) lists the acts that constitute “Domestic Violence.” These acts include, but not limited to the following:-

- i. physical abuse;
- ii. sexual abuse/exploitation including but not limited to rape, incest and sexual assault;
- iii. Starvation;



A starved child

- iv. Emotional, verbal and psychological abuse;
- v. economic abuse and exploitation;
- vi. denial of basic education;
- vii. intimidation;
- viii. harassment;
- ix. Stalking;
- x. hazardous attack including acid bath with offensive or poisonous substances;



An acid bath incident

- xi. damages to property;
- xii. entry into the complainant's residence without consent where the parties do not share the same residence;

- xiii. any other controlling or abusive behaviour towards a complainant, where such conduct harms or may cause imminent harm to the safety, health or well being of the complainant;
- or
- xiv. deprivation.



A child deprived of economic right

