



PERMANENT MISSION OF PORTUGAL
GENEVA

The Ambassador

Geneva, 06 April, 2020

Excellency,

Dear Ms Anita Ramasastry

I have the honour to to send herewith a brochure with the measures adopted by the Portuguese Government to prevent domestic violence and to ensure the safety and support to victims of domestic violence against the increased risk of violence during the confinement that is necessary to contain the COVID-19.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Rui Macieira
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Portugal



Her Excellency
Ms. Anita Ramasastry
Chair of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures
UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
nrondeux@ohchr.org

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - SAFETY IN ISOLATION

The Portuguese Government adopted measures to ensure the safety and support of victims of domestic violence against the increased risk of violence during the confinement that is necessary to contain the COVID-19.

1. Broad dissemination of information about support services and helplines, safety advices and alerts:

- Campaign #SegurançaEmIsolamento, on social media, television, radio and press – to remind victims that they can always ask for help, to let them know about support services and to alert the community to be vigilant, to help and to report. These materials are also available in different languages as well as in sign language.
- Telephone contacts of existing services in each district and municipality.
- Safety advices for victims of domestic violence during confinement.
- Advice for neighbours to be vigilant and to help.
- Display and distribution of the above information in areas that remain open to the public, in partnership with distribution companies, public transport, gas stations, pharmacies, municipalities, etc.

2. Strengthening and diversification of channels for victims to seek help:

Reinforcement of information and support channels for victims by the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG):

- National helpline - 800 202 148. It is a toll-free line, available 24/7.
- Availability of a new e-mail address violencia.covid@cig.gov.pt accessible to victims and professionals.
- Launch of the new SMS 3060 line by the Vodafone Foundation, free and confidential, so that victims can send written requests for help.

3. Functioning and strengthening victim support structures and services:

- All services in charge of supporting, sheltering and transporting victims, provided by the National Support Network for Victims of Domestic Violence, are considered essential services and remain active.
- Support and reinforced coordination of the National Support Network for Victims of Domestic Violence by the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) that also issues recommendations/clarifications in this context of emergency.
- Opening of two new emergency shelter facilities with 100 vacancies.
- Definition of a specific procedure between the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) and the National Institute of Medical Emergency (INEM) to respond to suspected cases of COVID-19 within the National Support Network for Victims of Domestic Violence.
- All services within the National Support Network for Victims of Domestic Violence adopted contingency plans (including isolation rooms) and action plans with urgent measures such as:
 - Creation/reinforcement of remote communication/support tools such as video call, SMS, Messenger, WhatsApp and email.
 - Strengthening of the helpline services.
 - Increased monitoring of all cases.
 - Appointment of a team for urgent requests and situations.
 - In person assistance in urgent situations, with alternating teams.
 - Close cooperation with other services and municipalities to respond to urgent requests for shelter.
- Partnerships with several entities and companies to guarantee that all services of the National Support Network for Victims of Domestic Violence continue to access essential goods and resources during this emergency period, such as food, medicines, personal care products, cleaning products and IT equipment.
- In the context of the PT2020 funds, and as an exceptional measure, reimbursement decisions will be automatic following 30 working days after the claim is made by the beneficiaries.