



Cyberstalking

Responding to Cyberstalking

Cyberstalking is when someone repeatedly monitors, harasses, tracks, or threatens you online, often across multiple platforms, and creates credible fear for your personal safety.

Cyberstalking may involve:

- Repeated unwanted messages across platforms
- Threats of physical harm to you, your family, or pets
- Obsessive monitoring of your activity or location
- Impersonation or surveillance
- Doxxing or threats to expose private information
- Escalation from online behavior to offline intimidation

Cyberstalking is a crime and often escalates.

If you believe you are in immediate danger, call 911.

Cyberstalking – Do This First

Act Quickly

Treat this as a serious safety issue. Cyberstalking is not a “report and move on” situation.

- Act quickly if:
 - Threats reference real-world locations
 - The stalker knows your address, workplace, or routines
 - They mention showing up in person
 - Behavior escalates in frequency or intensity

If any of the above are present, call 911.

Stop Engagement Completely

- Do not respond, argue, warn, or confront
- Do not negotiate or attempt to reason
- Do not announce blocking or reporting

If contact creates immediate danger or makes you feel unsafe, prioritize safety and seek help even before all evidence is collected.

Engagement often reinforces stalker behavior and increases risk.





Preserve Evidence Meticulously

Cyberstalking cases depend heavily on documentation.

- Screenshot or save:
 - Messages
 - Emails
 - Comments
 - Profiles
 - Usernames
 - URLs
- Record:
 - Dates and times
 - Platforms used
 - Escalation patterns
 - Any offline connections mentioned
- Do not edit, crop, or alter evidence if possible.

Contain and Protect

Preserve evidence first. If there are threats, child sexual exploitation, stalking, or extortion, report to law enforcement or NCMEC as appropriate. Then use the platform's reporting tools, block or restrict contact if needed for safety, and keep messages, usernames, profile links, and other account data.

Keep messages, profile data, report confirmations, and case numbers with your evidence. Always immediately report any messages containing:

- Threats of violence
- Child sexual abuse material (CSAM) or sending sexually explicit messages or photos
- Taking a photo or video of someone in a place where he or she would expect privacy
- Stalking and hate crimes

Lock Down Accounts (Carefully)

After preserving evidence, and after urgent law-enforcement/NCMEC reporting if needed:

- Block the stalker across platforms
- Enable platform protections against new or linked accounts
- Increase privacy settings
- Remove public visibility of:
 - Location
 - Contact information
 - Routines or schedules

Avoid announcing changes publicly.

Protect Your Physical Safety

- Tell trusted people what is happening





- Vary routines if advised
- If applicable, notify:
 - Employers
 - Schools
 - Building management
- Save emergency contacts in your phone

Cyberstalking frequently crosses into offline harm.

Report the Crime

When to Report Immediately

Report as soon as threats or stalking behavior is established. Do not wait.

- National Reporting
 - FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)
<https://www.ic3.gov>
- Ohio Resources
 - Ohio Attorney General – Identity Theft & Cybercrime Help
<https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov>
Hotline: 800-282-0515
- Geauga County
 - Geauga County Sheriff's Office
<https://www.geaugasheriff.org>
 - Call your local police department to file a report
 - Use 911 for active or escalating threats

Law enforcement can:

- Document stalking patterns
- Assess risk escalation
- Support protective orders
- Coordinate safety planning

If the Stalker Is Someone You Know

If cyberstalking involves:

- A former partner
- A coworker or classmate
- A family member
- Someone with access to your physical location

Do not confront them alone.

Recommended steps:





- Preserve evidence quietly
- Seek law-enforcement guidance early
- Create a safety plan before blocking or reporting
- Consider legal protections if advised

Emotional & Crisis Support

Cyberstalking can cause fear, anxiety, sleep disruption, and isolation. Seek support if needed.

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
- If you may hurt yourself or feel unable to stay safe, call or text 988.

You are not overreacting. Your safety matters.

Recovery – Ongoing Safety

- Continue documenting any new contact
- Monitor for impersonation or surveillance
- Reassess privacy and safety regularly
- Lean on trusted support systems
- Stalking often follows patterns, early action can reduce risk.

How to Reduce Cyberstalking Risk

- Limit public sharing of location and routines
- Trust your instincts, fear is a signal
- Silence and documentation are protective tools
- Ask for help early, stalkers rely on isolation

