

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013
THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

C O N T E N T S

Preamble

Sections

1. Short title, extent and commencement
2. Definitions
3. Government to ensure effective implementation of the Act
4. Constitution of Commission
5. Domestic Violence
6. Punishment
7. Petition to the Court
8. Counseling
9. Right to reside in a household
10. Power to grant interim order
11. Passing of protection orders and residence orders
12. Monetary relief
13. Custody orders
14. Duration and alteration of interim, protection and residence orders
15. Penalty for breach of an interim or protection order by the respondent
16. Appeal
17. Protection Committee
18. Duties and functions of Protection Committee
19. Powers, privileges and immunities of Protection Committee
20. Delegation of functions and powers
21. Protection Officer
22. Duties of Protection Officer
23. Assistance of service provider
24. Powers of service provider
25. Procedure
26. Protection of actions taken in good faith

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013
THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

- 27. Act not in derogation of any other law**
- 28. Revision**
- 29. Power to make rules**
- 30. Removal of difficulties**

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

[19th March, 2015]

An Act to make provisions for protection against domestic violence.

WHEREAS it is expedient to institutionalize measures which prevent and protect women, children and any vulnerable person from domestic violence and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto;

It is hereby enacted as follows:

1. (1) This Act may be called the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013. **Short title, extent and commencement.**
- (2) It extends to the whole of the Province of Sindh.
- (3) It shall come into force at once.

2.(1) In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,- **Definitions.**

- (a) "aggrieved person" means any woman, child or any vulnerable person who is or has been in a domestic relationship with the respondent and who alleges to have been subjected to any act of domestic violence by the respondent;
- (b) "child" means any person under the age of eighteen years living in a domestic relationship with the respondent and includes any adopted, step or foster child;
- (c) "Code" means the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (Act V of 1898);
- (d) "court" means the court of Judicial Magistrate of first class;
- (e) "domestic relationship" means a relationship between persons who live, or have at any point of time lived together in a household when they are related by Consanguinity, marriage, kinship, adoption, or are family members living together;
- (f) "domestic violence" has the same meaning as assigned to it in section 5;

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

- (g) "Government" means the Government of Sindh;
- (h) "household" means a household where the aggrieved person lives or at any stage has lived in a domestic relationship either singly or along with the respondent and includes such a household whether owned or tenanted either jointly by the aggrieved person and the respondent or owned and tenanted by either of them, any such household in respect of which either the aggrieved person or the respondent or both jointly or singly have any right, title, interest or equity and includes such a household which may belong to the joint family of which the respondent is a member, irrespective of whether the respondent or the aggrieved person has right, title, interest in such a shared household;
- (i) "informer" means a person who has credible information that an offence is being committed under this Act and who has no interest adverse to the aggrieved person or to the accused;
- (j) "monetary relief" means a monetary relief which a court may order under section 12;
- (k) "notification" means a notification published in the Official Gazette;
- (l) "prescribed" means prescribed by the rules made under this Act;
- (m) "Protection Committee" means a Committee constituted under section 17;
- (n) "Protection Officer" means an officer appointed by Government under section 21;
- (o) "Protection order" means an order passed in terms of section 11;
- (p) "respondent" means a person who is or has been in a domestic relationship with the aggrieved person and against whom relief has been sought under this Act;
- (q) "residence order" means an order granted in terms of section 11;

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

- (r) "service provider" means any such government facility or registered voluntary organization established for the protection of aggrieved person providing legal, medical, financial or any other assistance;
- (s) "vulnerable person" means a person who is vulnerable due to old age, mental illness or handicap or physical disability or for other special reason.

(2) Words and phrases not defined in this Act shall have the same meaning as assigned to them in the Pakistan Penal Code, 1898 (Act XLV of 1898) and the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1860, (Act V of 1860).

3. Government shall ensure that -

- (a) this Act and the contents thereof receive wide publicity through electronic and print media in Urdu and local languages;
- (b) the Government officers, the police and the members of the judicial service are given periodic sensitization and awareness training on the issues addressed by this Act; and
- (c) effective protocols are formulated by the concerned Ministries and Departments dealing with health, education, employment, law and social welfare to address the issue of domestic violence and that the same are periodically revised.

Government to ensure effective implementation of the Act.

4. (1) Government shall constitute a Commission which shall consist of a Chairperson and such number of members as may be prescribed.

Constitution of Commission.

(2) The Commission shall –

- (a) review from time to time the existing provisions of the law on domestic violence and suggest amendments therein, if any;
- (b) call for specific studies or investigation into specific incidence of domestic violence;

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

- (c) look into complaints and take *suomoto* notice of matters relating to domestic violence and the non-implementation of the law; and
- (d) participate and advise on the planning process for securing a safe environment free of domestic violence.

5. Domestic Violence includes but is not limited to, all acts of gender based and other physical or psychological abuse committed by a respondent against women, children or other vulnerable persons, with whom the respondent is or has been in a domestic relationship including but not limited to -

**Domestic
Violence.**

- (a) "abet" as defined in Pakistan Penal Code (Act XLV of 1860) hereinafter referred to in this section as the said Code;
- (b) "assault" as defined in section 351 of the said Code;
- (c) "attempt" as defined in section 511 of the said Code to commit any of the offenses enumerated in this section;
- (d) "criminal force" as defined in section 350 of the said Code;
- (e) "criminal intimidation" as defined in section 503 of the said Code;
- (f) "Emotional, psychological and verbal abuse" means a pattern of degrading or humiliating conduct towards the victim, including but not limited to –
 - (i) obsessive possessiveness or jealousy constituting serious invasion of the victim's privacy, liberty, integrity and security;
 - (ii) insults or ridicule;
 - (iii) threat to cause physical pain;
 - (iv) threat of malicious prosecution;
 - (v) blaming a spouse of immorality;

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

- (vi) threats of divorce;
 - (vii) baselessly blaming or imputing insanity, or citing barrenness of a spouse with the intention to marry again;
 - (viii) bringing false allegation upon the character of a female member by any member of the shared household; and
 - (ix) willful or negligent abandonment of the aggrieved person;
- (g) "harassment" as defined in section 509 of the said Code;
- (h) "hurt" as defined in sections 332, 333, 335, 336A, 337, 337B, 337C, 337E, 337J, 337K, 337L of the said Code;
- (i) "mischief" as defined in section 425 of the said Code against the property of the aggrieved person;
- (j) "physical abuse" means any hurt caused by any act or conduct as defined in section 5(f) of this Act;
- (k) "stalking" includes, but is not limited to –
- (i) accosting the aggrieved person against his or her wishes; and
 - (ii) watching or loitering outside or near the building or place where the-aggrieved person resides or works or visits frequently;
- (l) "sexual abuse" includes any conduct of a sexual nature that abuses, humiliates, degrades or otherwise violates the dignity of the aggrieved person which may include –
- (i) compelling the wife to cohabit with anybody other than the husband;
 - (ii) any kind of sexual abuse including sexual harassment of a member of the family;

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

- (m) "trespass" means entry into aggrieved person's residence either temporary or permanent without his or her consent, and includes workplace or frequently other place where the parties do not share the same residence;
- (n) "wrongful confinement" as defined in section 340 of the said Code; and
- (o) "economic abuse" includes deprivation of economic or financial resources or prohibition or restriction to continue access to such resources which the aggrieved person is ordinarily entitled to.

6. (1) The offences under section 5 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (g), (h) (i) and (n) shall be punishable as provided under the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860. **Punishment.**

(2) The offences under section 5(f) shall be punishable with imprisonment of minimum six months or with fine to be paid as compensation to the aggrieved person which shall not be less than ten thousand rupees or with both.

(3) Whosoever stalks a person under section 5(k) shall be punished with simple imprisonment of not less than one year or with fine to be paid as compensation to the aggrieved party which shall not be less than twenty thousand rupees or with both.

(4) The offences under section 5(l) shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description not less than two years or with compensation to the aggrieved party which shall not be less than fifty thousand rupees or with both.

(5) The offences under section 5(m) shall be punishable with imprisonment for either description for a term not less than one month or with fine or with both.

(6) Any person who commits the offences under section 5(o) shall be liable to pay compensation under section 12(1)(a).

7. (1) An aggrieved person or other person authorized by the aggrieved person in this behalf or informer may present a petition to the Court within whose jurisdiction - **Petition to the Court.**

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

- (i) the aggrieved person resides or carries on business; and
- (ii) the last place where the respondent and aggrieved person last resided together.

(2) The court shall fix the first date of hearing, which shall not exceed seven days from the date of the receipt of the petition by the court.

(3) On receipt of petition from an aggrieved party, the court shall, with or without issuing an interim order, issue a notice upon the person complained against calling upon him to show cause within seven days of receipt of notice as to why a protection order shall not be made against him for committing an act or acts of domestic violence as alleged in the petition.

(4) The petition made under sub-section (1) shall be disposed of within a period of ninety days and any adjournment given during the hearing of the petition shall be granted for reasons to be recorded in writing by the Court.

8. (1) The court, at any stage of the proceedings under this Act, may direct the respondent or as the case may be, aggrieved person to undergo mandatory counseling with an appropriate service provider.

Counseling.

(2) Where the court has issued any direction under sub-section (1), it shall fix the next date of hearing of the case within a period not exceeding thirty days.

9. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, the aggrieved person shall not be evicted from the household without consent, whether or not he or she has any right, title or beneficial interest in the same.

Right to reside in a household.

(2) The aggrieved person shall not be evicted from the household or any part of it by the respondent save in accordance with law.

10. (1) In any proceeding under this Act, the court may pass such interim order at any time and stage of the petition as it deems just and proper.

Power to grant interim order.

(2) If the court is satisfied that a petition *prima facie* discloses that the respondent has committed an act of domestic violence or that there is a likelihood that the respondent may

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

commit an act of domestic violence, it may issue order on the basis of an affidavit of the aggrieved person or any other evidence or material, before the court as prescribed under sections 11, 12 and 13 against the respondent.

11. (1) The court on being satisfied that domestic violence has *prima facie* taken place may pass a protection order in favour of the aggrieved person and prohibit the respondent from –

Passing of protection orders and residence orders.

- (a) committing any act of domestic violence;
- (b) aiding or abetting in the commission of acts of domestic violence;
- (c) entering the place of employment of the aggrieved person or, if the aggrieved person is a child, his or her educational institution or any other place frequented by the aggrieved person;
- (d) attempting to communicate in any form, whatsoever with the aggrieved person, including personal, oral or written, electronic or telephonic or mobile phone contact;
- (e) causing violence to the dependants, other relatives or any person who gives the aggrieved person assistance against domestic violence; and
- (f) committing any other act as specified in the protection order;

(2) In addition to the order under sub-section (1), or otherwise, the court on being satisfied that domestic violence has taken place may pass a residence order to –

- (a) restrain the respondent from dispossessing or in any other manner disturbing the possession of the aggrieved person from the household;
- (b) restrain the respondent or any of his relatives from entering the household; and
- (c) direct the respondent to secure alternative accommodation for the aggrieved person or if the circumstances so require to pay rent for the same.

(3) The court may impose any additional conditions or pass any other direction which it may deem reasonably necessary to protect and provide for the safety of the aggrieved person or any child of such aggrieved person.

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

(4) The court may require from the respondent to execute a bond, with or without sureties, for preventing the commission of domestic violence.

(5) While making an order under sub-sections (1), (2) or (3), the court may also pass an order directing the officer in charge of the nearest police station to give protection to the aggrieved person or to assist the aggrieved person or the person making an application on his or her behalf in the implementation of the order.

(6) While making an order under sub-section (2), the court may impose on the respondent obligations relating to the discharge of rent or other payments, having regard to the financial needs and resources of the parties.

(7) The court may direct the officer in charge of the police station in whose jurisdiction the court has been approached to assist in the implementation of the protection order.

(8) The court may direct the respondent to return the possession to the aggrieved person of any property, valuables or documents to which the aggrieved person is entitled.

(9) The court shall in all cases where it has passed any order under this section, order that a copy of such order, shall be given to the parties to the application, the officer in charge of the police station in the jurisdiction of which the court has been approached as well as to the service provider located within the local limits of the jurisdiction of the court.

12. (1) The court may, at any stage of the trial of a petition filed by the aggrieved person, pass interim order directing the respondent to pay monetary relief to meet the expenses incurred and losses suffered by the aggrieved person and such relief may include, but is not limited to –

Monetary relief.

- (a) compensation to the aggrieved person for suffering as a consequence of economic abuse to be determined by the court;
- (b) loss of earning;
- (c) medical expense;
- (d) the loss caused due to the destruction, damage or removal of any property from the control of the aggrieved person; and

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

(e) the maintenance for the aggrieved person as well her children, if any, including an order under or in addition to an order of maintenance under family laws.

(2) The respondent shall pay monetary relief to the person aggrieved within the period specified in the order made in terms of sub-section (1) and in accordance with terms thereof.

(3) The court may, upon failure on part of the respondent to make payment in terms of the order under sub-section (2) direct an employer or debtor, of the respondent, to directly pay the aggrieved person or to deposit with the court a portion of the wages or salaries or debt due to or accrued to the credit of the respondent, which amount may be adjusted towards the monetary relief payable by the respondent.

13. The court may, at any stage of the petition for protection order or for any other relief under this Act grant temporary custody of an aggrieved person who is –

Custody orders.

- (a) a child to a person under the Guardians and Wards Act 1890 (VIII of 1890); and
- (b) an adult to a service provider or some other person in accordance with the will of the aggrieved person:

Provided that in any case where a complaint of sexual abuse of a child has been made and the court is prima facie satisfied that such allegation is true, the court shall grant custody of the aggrieved child to the non-respondent parent or guardian or the person making an application on his or her behalf.

14. (1) The interim order made under section 10 and the protection order made under section 11 shall remain in force until the aggrieved person applies for discharge of such order.

Duration and alteration of interim, protection and residence orders.

(2) If the court on receipt of an application at any stage from the aggrieved person or the respondent is satisfied that there is a change in the circumstances requiring alteration, modification or recalling of any order made under this Act, it may, for reasons to be recorded in writing pass such order, as it may deem appropriate.

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

(3) The residence order shall remain in force until such time it is altered.

(4) Nothing contained in sub-sections (1) and (2) shall prevent an aggrieved person from making a fresh application after the previous order has been discharged.

15. (1) A breach of protection order, or of the interim protection order, by the respondent shall be an offence and shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year or with fine which may extend to twenty thousand rupees, or with both.

Penalty for breach of an interim or protection order by the respondent.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code the offence under this section shall be cognizable, bailable and compoundable.

16. Any person convicted by a court under sub-section (1) of section 15, may file an appeal to the court of Sessions within thirty days of the passing of the order of sentence and the court of sessions shall decide the appeal within sixty days.

Appeal.

17. (1) Government shall, by notification in the official Gazette, constitute Protection Committees for the purposes of this Act.

Protection Committee.

(2) A Protection Committee shall comprise a Social Welfare Officer who shall be the convener, medical practitioner, a psychologist, psycho-social worker and an official appointed by the court, a female police officer not below the rank of Sub-Inspector and two women members from civil society and the Protection Officer who shall also act as the Secretary of the Protection Committee.

18. The Protection Committee may –

Duties and functions of Protection Committee.

- (a) inform the aggrieved person of her or his rights provided under this Act or any other law for the time being in force and the remedies and the help that may be provided;
- (b) assist the aggrieved person in obtaining any medical treatment necessitated due to the domestic violence;
- (c) if necessary, and with the consent of the aggrieved person, assist the aggrieved person in relocating to a safer place acceptable to the aggrieved person, which may include the house of any relative or family friend or other safe place or if any, established by a service provider;

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

- (d) assist the aggrieved person in the preparation of and filing of any petition or report under this Act, the Code or any other law for the time being in force;
- (e) keep official record of the incidents of domestic violence in its area of jurisdiction, whether on the basis of information received or *suomoto* inquiry, irrespective of whether or not action is taken under this Act. Such record shall include –
 - (i) the first information received about the incident of domestic violence;
 - (ii) the assistance, if any, offered or provided by the Protection Committee to the aggrieved person;
 - (iii) where applicable the reason for not taking action under this Act when an incident was brought to the notice of the Protection Committee;
 - (iv) where applicable, the reason for the aggrieved person's refusal to take assistance from the Protection Committee;
 - (v) the names and contact details of the service provider, if any, from whom the aggrieved person sought help;
 - (vi) maintenance of the record of applications, protection orders and the service providers operating in the area of jurisdiction; and
 - (vii) perform any other duties that may be assigned to the Protection Committee under this Act or the rules made there under.

19.(1) Members of the Protection Committee shall be deemed to be public servants within the meaning of section 21 of the Pakistan Penal Code (Act XLV of 1860).

Powers, privileges and immunities of Protection Committee.

(2) The Protection Committee may file an application for obtaining a protection order under section 11, if so desired by the aggrieved person.

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

(3) The Protection Committee may procure the assistance of any person or authority, and any person or authority so requested by the Protection Committee, shall be under legal obligation to provide the desired assistance to the Protection Committee.

20. The Protection Committee may delegate any of its functions and powers to any of its member or members.

Delegation of functions and powers.

21.(1) Government shall, by notification in the official Gazette, appoint a gazetted officer to act as Protection Officer, for the purposes of this Act.

Protection Officer.

(2) The Protection Officer shall possess such qualifications and experience as may be prescribed under the rules.

22. It shall be the duty of the Protection Officer –

Duties of Protection Officer.

- (a) to make a domestic incident report to the Protection Committee, in such form and in such manner as may be prescribed, upon receipt of a complaint of domestic violence and forward copies thereof to the Protection Committee within the local limits of whose jurisdiction domestic violence is alleged to have been committed and to the service providers in that area;
- (b) to make an application in such form and in such manner as may be prescribed to the court, if the aggrieved person so desires, claiming relief for issuance of a protection order;
- (c) to ensure that the aggrieved person is provided legal aid;
- (d) to maintain a list of all service providers providing legal aid or counseling, shelter homes and medical facilities in a local area within the jurisdiction of the court;
- (e) to make available a safe place of residence, if the aggrieved person so requires and forward a copy of his report of having lodged the aggrieved person in a shelter home to the Protection Committee;

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

- (f) to get the aggrieved person medically examined, if he or she has sustained bodily injuries and forward a copy of the medical report to the Protection Committee having jurisdiction in the area where the domestic violence is alleged to have been taken place;
- (g) to ensure that the order for monetary relief under section 12 is complied with and executed in accordance with the procedure prescribed; and
- (h) to perform such other duties as may be prescribed.

23.(1) In any proceeding under this Act, the court may secure the services of a service provider.

Assistance of service provider.

(2) Service provider shall have all the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the Protection Committee.

24. A service provider shall have the power to –

Powers of service provider.

- (a) record the domestic incident in a prescribed form if the aggrieved person so desires, and forward a copy thereof to the Protection Officer having jurisdiction in the area where the domestic violence took place;
- (b) get the aggrieved person medically examined and forward a copy of the medical report to the Protection Officer within the local limits of which the domestic violence took place;
- (c) ensure that the aggrieved person is provided shelter in a safe place of residence, if he or she so requires and forward a report of the lodging of the aggrieved person in a safe place of residence to the Protection Committee within the local limits of the place where the domestic violence took place; and
- (d) provide the aggrieved person with any aid or assistance if he or she may so require.

25. Save as otherwise provided in this Act, all proceedings taken and offences committed under the provisions of this Act, shall be governed by the Code.

Procedure.

SINDH ACT NO.XX OF 2013

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PREVENTION AND PROTECTION) ACT, 2013

26. No suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against any Protection Committee, Protection Officer or service provider for anything which is done in good faith or purported to be done under this Act. **Protection of actions taken in good faith.**
27. The provisions of this Act shall be in addition to, and not in derogation of, any other law for the time being in force. **Act not in derogation of any other law.**
28. Chapter XXXII of the Code shall apply to an order passed under sections 10, 11, 12 and 13. **Revision.**
29. Government may by notification in the Official Gazette make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act. **Power to make rules.**
30. If any difficulty arises in giving effect to any provision of this Act, Government may make an order not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act to remove the said difficulty. **Removal of difficulties.**