

## How to Claim Your Power: Recommendations If You Think You Are Being Stalked

Law enforcement often emphasizes that stalking is a crime of patterns, and your actions should focus on breaking those patterns while building a legal case. Here is a summary of advice from police departments and stalking experts (including the San Diego DA's office) on what to do—and what not to do.

**REMEMBER: California Penal Code § 647.4** (the stalking law) requires a "course of conduct." Police *need* that log of multiple incidents to make an arrest. One incident is a report; two or more is a crime!

### WHAT TO DO

Do	Details
<b>Trust Your Gut (Immediately)</b>	Police report that many victims "rationalize" away early behavior. If it feels wrong, it is wrong. Don't wait for a physical threat to start a log.
<b>The "One and Done" Rule</b>	Give one clear, documented "No." Example: "I am not interested in a relationship. Do not contact me again in any way. If you do, I will call the police." After this, cease all communication.
<b>Document Everything (The "Evidence Folder")</b>	Keep a Stalking Log: Date, time, location, description of the incident, and names of any witnesses.  Save EVERYTHING: Do not delete "creepy" voicemails, texts, or emails. They are evidence. Print out digital messages and save them in a safe, physical location.
<b>Create a "Safety Net"</b>	Vary your routine: Police suggest changing your commute, the time you go to the gym, and even which campus entrance you use.  Inform your "Circles": Tell campus security, your supervisor, and your friends. Show them a photo of the stalker so they don't accidentally give out your information.
<b>Use the "Blue Poles"</b>	On the all SWC campuses, use the Emergency Blue Poles immediately if you feel you are being followed. They give police your exact GPS location instantly.

## WHAT NOT TO DO: Common Pitfalls

<b>Do NOT</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>DO NOT Negotiate or "Reason"</b>	Stalkers view any response—even a negative one—as a "win" because they successfully forced you to interact with them. Reasoning rarely works and often escalates the behavior.
<b>DO NOT Confront Them Alone</b>	Never meet the person to "settle things." If you must meet (e.g., if you share a child), do so at a Safe Exchange Zone (often found at local police stations).
<b>DO NOT Post "Vague-Books"</b>	Avoid posting about the stalking on social media. Stalkers often monitor your accounts to see if their actions are affecting you. Silence is your best defense.
<b>DO NOT Handle Evidence Directly</b>	If you receive a strange package or letter, try to handle it as little as possible to preserve fingerprints/DNA, and put it in a clean plastic bag before giving it to the police.
<b>DO NOT Downplay "Small" Incidents</b>	To a police officer, a "gift" left on a windshield isn't a gesture; it's a proximity violation. Report these small things so they are on the record.