

## Information on questioning in criminal proceedings

When you make a statement to the police, the report (minutes of the questioning) is sent to the public prosecution department. Here you will be further questioned and then later again in court. This information should help you to be prepared:

### General advice:

- When you receive an appointment for police questioning you are obliged to attend. If you have to postpone the appointment, then you should give notification by telephone no. 055 646 69 20.
- You must inform the public prosecution department before the interview date if you wish a trusted person to accompany you to the interview (identification is required). It is preferable if you could notify as soon as possible after receiving the summons (at the latest 2 to 3 working days before the questioning) the name of the trusted person who will accompany you.
- If you do not wish the accused person to be present in the same room at the questioning, you can make a further request before the appointment with the public prosecution department, so that other arrangements can be made.

### Procedure:

- Arrive on time at the reception desk of the public prosecution department and show them your identification.
- At the start of the questioning, all the people present will be introduced.
- Firstly you will be informed of your rights and duties.
- Take your time and answer all the questions precisely.
- Ask if you do not understand a question. Be frank if you have to think before giving an answer or if you do not have an answer. Have the courage to give a detailed statement.
- In cases of domestic abuse questioning can be unpleasant. If the questions are related to the actual issue, try to answer them. Should the questions have nothing to do with the issue, then you are not obliged to give an answer, for example 'Have you ever been unfaithful to your husband?'.

- The public prosecutor may repeat questions to determine the sequence of the violent incident. This is not to put you under pressure.
- You can ask at any time to take a break.
- After being questioned by the public prosecutor, your lawyer or the lawyer of the accused person can ask questions.
- Finally you have to read the transcript of the questioning and sign every page. If there is anything written which is not exactly what you said, you should speak out straightaway. You can then make a handwritten correction in the transcript.

### **Helpful tips**

- Dress so that you feel comfortable but nonetheless smart and suitably dressed for the occasion.
- Take something to drink with you (plastic bottle) and if required glucose sweets or a small hand massage ball to knead.
- Plan a rest period after the questioning just for yourself or together with the person accompanying you. You can also meet with your counsellor from the advisory centre after the questioning (please arrange this beforehand).
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No questioning is the same. It is not conducted rigidly according to a catalogue of questions therefore the procedure can be slightly different than described here. If you do not feel confident we are pleased to give advice. We wish you success.

This information sheet on separation and divorce is based on the legal information on the website of the BIF support centre for women in marriages and partnerships.