



BENUE STATE OF NIGERIA

**A LAW TO PROHIBIT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSONS IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC LIFE, AND PROVIDE MAXIMUM PROTECTION AND EFFECTIVE REMEDIES FOR VICTIMS AND PUNISHMENT OF OFFENDERS AND FOR PURPOSES CONNECTED THEREWITH**

[28 May 2019]

ENACTED by the House of Assembly of Benue State of Nigeria as follows-

**PART I**

1. This Law may be cited as the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law, 2019 and shall come into force on the 28 day of May, 2019.

2. In this Law:

"Abandonment of women, children and other persons" means deliberately leaving women, children and other persons under the perpetrator's care, destitute and without any means of subsistence;

"Accredited Service Provider" means Governmental, Non-governmental, Faith Based voluntary and Charitable Associations or institutions providing shelter, homes, counseling, legal, financial medical or other assistance to victims of domestic violence and which are registered with the appropriate Government Ministry under the provisions of Law;

"Circumcision of a girl or woman" means cutting off all or part of the external sex organs of a girl or woman other than on medical ground;

"Civil proceeding" means -

- (a) Proceedings for the making, variations or discharge of a Protection Order, Safety Order or Interim Protection Order;
- (b) Proceedings by way of appeal or case stated which are related to proceeding to which paragraph (a) applies; or
- (c) Proceedings under this Law for compensation or award;

"Court" means both the Magistrate Court and the High Court;

"Damage to property" means the willful destruction or causing of mischief to any property belonging to a person or in which a person has a vested interest;

"Dangerous weapon" means any instrument or machine directed toward a person with the intention of inflicting bodily harm on such person and includes a gun, knife, stick, whip or other household appliance capable of inflicting bodily harm on a person;

"Domestic relationship" means a relationship between any person and a perpetrator of violence constituted in any of the following ways-

- (a) they are or were married to each other, including marriages according to any Law, or custom or religion;
- (b) they live or have lived together in a relationship in the nature of marriage, although they are not or were not married to each other;
- (c) they are the parents of a child or children or are the persons who have or had a parental responsibility for that child or children;
- (d) they are family members related by consanguinity, affinity or adoption;
- (e) they are or were in an engagement, dating or customary relationship, including actual or perceived romantic, intimate or sexual relationship of any duration; or
- (f) they share or recently shared the same residence;

"Domestic violence" means any act perpetrated on any person in a domestic relationship where such causes harm or may cause imminent

harm to the safety, health or wellbeing of any person;

**"Economic abuse"** means -

- (a) forced financial dependence;
- (b) denial of inheritance or succession right;
- (c) the unreasonable or deprivation of economic or financial resources to which any person is entitled or which any person requires out of necessity including -
  - (i) household necessities,
  - (ii) mortgage bond repayments, or
  - (iii) payment of rent in respect of a shared residence; or
- (d) the unreasonable disposal or destruction of household effects or other property in which any person has an interest;

**"emergency monetary relief"** means compensation for monetary losses suffered by any person arising from an act of violence and does not in any way constitute a Maintenance Order, including -

- (a) loss of earnings;
- (b) medical and dental expenses;
- (c) relocation and accommodation expenses;
- (d) Household necessities; or
- (e) Legal fees related to obtaining and serving the Protection Order.

**"Emotional verbal and psychological abuse"** means a pattern of degrading or humiliating conduct towards or person, including -

- (a) Repeated insults;
- (b) Ridicule or name calling;
- (c) Repeated threats to cause emotional pain; or

- (d) The repeated exhibition of obsessive possessiveness, which is of such a nature as to constitute a serious invasion of such person's privacy; liberty, integrity, security;

**"Forced isolation from family and friends"** means includes preventing a person from living the home or from having contact with family, friends or the outside community;

**"Harassment"** means engaging a pattern of conduct that induce fear of harm or impairs the dignity of a person including -

- (a) Stalking;
- (b) Repeated making telephone calls or inducing another person to make telephone calls to a person, whether or not conversation ensues; and
- (c) Repeatedly sending, delivering or causing delivery of information such as letters, telegrams, packages, facsimiles, electronic mails, text messages or other objects to any persons;

**"Harmful traditional practices"** means all traditional behaviour, attitudes or practices, which negatively affect the fundamental rights of women, girls or any person and includes harmful widowhood practices, denial of inheritance or succession rights, female genital mutilation or female circumcision. Forced marriage and forced isolation from family and friends;

**"incest"** means an indecent act or an act which cause penetration with a person who is, to the knowledge of the perpetrator his or her daughter or son, granddaughter or grandson, sister or brother, mother or father, niece or nephew, aunt/uncle, granduncle, grandmother or grandfather;

**"Indecent exposure"** means the intentional exposure of the genital organs or a substantial part thereof, with the intension of causing distress to the other party;

**"Intimidation"** means the altering or conveying of a threat or causing any person to receive a threat, which includes fears, anxiety or discomfort;

**"Perpetrator"** means any person who has committed or allegedly committed an act of violence as defined under this law;



**"Person"** is as defined in Section 18 of the Interpretation Act CAP. 123, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004;

**"Physical abuse means the acts or threatened acts of physical aggression or towards any person such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating;**

**"Political violence"** means any act or attempted out of violence perpetrated in the cause of political activities such as elections, and includes any of the following acts –

- (a) thuggery;
- (b) mugging;
- (c) use of force to disrupt meetings; or
- (d) the use of dangerous weapons that may cause bodily harm or injury;

**"Protection officer"** means an officer appointed to under Section 43 of this Law in relation to and for the purpose of this Law;

**"Protection Order"** means an official legal document, signed by a judge that restrains an individual or state actors from further abusive behaviour towards a victim;

**"Sexual abuse"** means any conduct which violates, humiliates or degrade the sexual integrity of any person;

**"Sexual assault"** means the intentional and unlawful touching, striking or causing of bodily harm to any individual in a sexual manner without his or her consent;

**"Sexual exploitation"** occurs where a perpetrator, for financial or other reward, favour or compensation invites, persuades, engages or induces the services of a victim, or offers or performs such services to any other person;

**"Sexual harassment"** means unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex or gender which is persistent or serious and this may include physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct;

**"Sexual intimidation"** means –

- (a) any act or circumstance which amounts to demand for sex or intercourse with either a male or a female under any guise, as a condition for passing examination, securing employment, business patronage, obtaining any favour in any form, as defined in this Law or any other enactment;
- (b) the actual demand for sexual intercourse with either a male or female under any guise, as a condition for passing examination, securing of employment, business patronage and or obtaining any favour in any form, as defined in this Law or any other enactment;
- (c) act of deprivation, withholding, replacing or shortchanging of entitlements privileges, rights benefits, examination or test marks or scores and any other form of disposition capable of coercing any person to submit to sexual intercourse for the purpose of receiving reprieve thereto; or
- (d) any other action or inaction construed as sexual intimidation or harassment under any other enactment in force in Nigeria;

**"Spouse"** means husband or wife recognized under the matrimonial Causes Act, Islamic and Customary Law;

**"Spousal battery"** means the intentional and unlawful use of force violence upon a person who is the perpetrator's spouse including the unlawful touching, beating or striking of the person against his or her will with the intention of causing bodily harm to that person;

**"Stalking"** means repeatedly –

- (a) watching or loitering outside or near the building or place where such person resides, works, carries on business, studies or happens to be ; or
- (b) following, pursuing or accosting any person in a manner which induces fear or anxiety;

**"State"** means Benue State of Nigeria;

**"State actors"** means group of persons, structured or organised institutions and agencies;

**"substance attack"** means the exposure of any person to any form of

chemical, biological or any other harmful liquid with the intention to cause grievous bodily harm, which includes acid attack, hot water, or oil;

*"trafficking"* means the supply, recruitment, procurement, capture, removal, transportation, transfer, harbouring, sale, disposal or receiving of a person, within or across the borders for use in sexual acts, including "victim" -

- (a) means any person or persons, who, individually or collectively rights, through acts or omissions that are in violation of this Law or the criminal laws of the country; and
- (b) includes the immediate family or dependants of the direct victim and any person who has suffered harm in intervening to assist a victim in distress;

*"violence"* means any act or attempted act, which causes or may cause any person physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, emotional or economic harm whether this occurs in private or public life, in peace time and in conflict situation;

*"Violence in the private sphere"* means any act or attempted act perpetrated by a member of the family, relative, neighbour or member of a community, which causes or may cause any person physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, emotional or economic harm;

*"Violence in the public sphere"* means any act or attempted act perpetrated by the State or non-state actors before, during and after elections, in conflict or war situations, which threatens peace, security and well-being of any person or the nation as a whole;

*"Violence perpetrated by non-state actors includes -*

- (a) wrongful arrest and detention;
- (b) assault;
- (c) use of force without lawful authority;
- (d) unlawful entry into the premises; or
- (e) demolition of property without due process;

*"Vulnerable groups"* means women, children, persons living under

extreme poverty, persons with disability, the sick and the elderly, ethnic and religious minority groups, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants and persons in detention.

## PART II — OFFENCES

3. (1) A person commits the offence of rape if- *Definition of rape*

(a) he or she intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person with any other part of his or her body or anything else;

(b) the other person does not consent to the penetration; or

(c) the consent is obtained by force or means of threat or intimidation of any kind or by fear of harm or by means of false and fraudulent representation as to the nature of the act or the use of any substance or additive capable of taking away the will of such person or in the case of a married person by impersonating his or her spouse.

(2) A person convicted of an offence under subsection (1) of this section is liable to imprisonment for life except -

(a) where the offender is less than 14 years of age, the offender is liable to a maximum of 14 years imprisonment;

(b) in all other cases, to a minimum of 12 years imprisonment without an option of fine; or

(c) in the case of rape by a group of persons, the offenders are liable jointly to a minimum of 20 years imprisonment without an option of fine.

(3) The Court shall also award appropriate compensation to the victim as it may deem fit in the circumstance.

(4) A register for convicted sexual offenders shall be maintained and accessible to the public.

4. (1) A person who willfully causes or inflicts physical injury on another person by inflicting physical injury on a person by means of

*Inflicting of bodily harm*



any weapon, substance or object, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
  - (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
  - (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his knowledge commits an offence under subsection (1) of this section, is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
  - (5) The Court may also award appropriate compensation to the victim as it may deem fit in the circumstance.
5. A person who coerces another to engage in any act to the detriment of that other person's physical or psychological wellbeing, commits an offence and is liable on
6. Conviction to term of imprisonment of 3 years.

- (1) A person who willfully or knowingly places a person in fear of physical injury commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (2) A person who attempts to commit the offence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not

exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

- (4) A person who receives or assists another who has committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an (4) accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
7. (1) A person who compels another, by force or threat, to engage in any conduct or act, sexual or otherwise, to the detriment of the victim's physical or psychological well-being commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.
- (2) A person who attempts to commit the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or both.
  - (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or both.
  - (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.
8. (1) The circumcision or genital mutilation of the girl child or woman is hereby prohibited.
- (2) A person who performs female circumcision or genital mutilation or engages another to carry out such circumcision or mutilation commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 4 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
  - (3) A person who attempts to commit the offence provided for in subsection (2) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

Offensive conduct

Prohibition of female circumcision or genital mutilation



- (4) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the offence provided for in subsection (2) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

Frustrating  
investigation

9. Any person who, with intent to defraud or conceal an offence or frustrate the investigation and prosecution of offenders under this Act or under any other enactment

- (a) destroys, alters, mutilates, or falsifies any book or document, dress or clothing which could serve as evidence or exhibits,
- (b) omits, or is privy to omitting, any material particular from any such document, book, dress or clothing, commits a felony and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

Willfully making  
false statement

10. A person who willfully makes false statement, whether oral or documentary, in any judicial proceeding under this Act or with the aim of initiating investigation or criminal proceedings under this Act against another person commits an offence under this Act and is liable on conviction to a fine of N200,000.00 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 12 months.

Forcible eviction  
from home

11. (1) A person who forcefully evicts his or her spouse from his or her home or refuses him or her access commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or both.

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the offence as provided for in subsection 1 of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection

(1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

12. (1) A person who deprives another of his or her liberty, except pursuant to a court order commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.

Depriving a person  
of his or her liberty

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit an offence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

13. (1) A person who causes mischief or destruction or damage to property of another with intent to cause or knowing that it is likely to cause distress or annoyance to the victim, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or both.

Damage to property  
with intent to cause  
distress

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the offence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of (3) imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her



knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

Forced financial  
dependence or  
economic abuse

14. (1) A person who causes forced financial dependence or economic abuse of another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the offence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

Forced isolation  
from family and  
friends

15. (1) A person who forcefully isolates or separates another from family and friends commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the offence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her

knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

Emotional, verbal  
and psychological  
abuse

16. (1) A person who causes emotional, verbal and psychological abuse on another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

17. (1) A person who subjects a widow to harmful traditional practices commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.

Harmful  
widowhood  
practices

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection



(1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

Abandonment  
of children,  
spouse and other  
dependants  
without means of  
sustenance

**18.** (1) A person who abandons a wife or husband, children or other dependent without any means of sustenance commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

Stalking

**19.** (1) A person who stalks another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on

conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

**20.** (1) A person who intimidates another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

Intimidation

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.

**21.** (1) A person who batters his or her spouse commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

Spousal battery

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N100,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.



Harmful traditional practices

**22.** (1) A person who carries out harmful traditional practices on another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 4 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

Access with harmful substances

**23.** (1) A person who uses chemical, biological or any other harmful liquid on another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of life imprisonment without an option of fine.

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence described in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 25 years without an option of fine.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence, as provided for in subsection (1) of this section, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 25 years without an option of fine.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 25 years without the option of fine.

**24.** (1) A person commits an offence if he intentionally administers a substance to, or causes a substance to be administered to or taken by, another person with the intention of stupefying or overpowering that person so as to enable any person to engage in a sexual activity with that person.

Administering a substance with intent

- (2) A person who commits an offence under this section is, in addition to any other offence under this Act, liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or a fine of N500,000.00 or both.

**25.** (1) A person who commits a political violence as defined under of this Act relating to political violence commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 4 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.

Political violence

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or both.
- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

**26.** (1) A state actor who commits political violence commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 4 years or to a fine not exceeding N1,000,000.00 or both.

Violence by state actors

- (2) A person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to a fine not exceeding N700,000.00 or both.



- (3) A person who incites, aids, abets, or counsels another person to commit the act of violence as provided for in subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding N500,000.00 or both.
- (4) A person who receives or assists another who, to his or her knowledge, committed the offence provided for in subsection (1) of this section is an accessory after the fact and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 years or to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 both.
- (5) The State shall be liable for the offence committed by its agents in the course of their official duties and the Court shall award appropriate compensation commensurate with the extent and amount of damage caused by the agents.

**27.** (1) A person who knowingly and willfully have carnal knowledge of another within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity and affinity contained in the Schedule to this Act with or without consent, commits incest and is liable on conviction to a minimum term of -

- (a) 10 years imprisonment without an option of fine;
- (b) where the two parties consent to commit incest, provided that the consent was not obtained by fraud or threat, 5 years imprisonment without an option of fine.

**28.**(1) A person who intentionally exposes his or her genital organs, or a substantial part thereof, with the intention of causing distress to the other party, or that another person seeing it may be tempted or induced to commit an offence under this Act, commits an offence termed "indecent exposure".

- (2) A person who intentionally exposes his or her genital organs, or a substantial part thereof, and induce another to either massage, or touch with the intention of deriving sexual pleasure from such acts commits an offence under this section.
- (3) A person who commits an offence under this section is liable to upon conviction a term of imprisonment of not less than 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N500,000 or both.

### PART III — JURISDICTION OF THE COURT

**29.** The High Court or Magistrate Court of a State shall have the jurisdiction to try offences and to hear and grant any application brought under this Law.

*Jurisdiction*

**30.** (1) An application for a protection order may, be made before the High Court following a complaint of violence by the complainant and such order, if granted, shall be effective throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria and no time limit or prescription shall apply in relation to a person seeking to apply for such protection order.

*Application for Protection Order*

- (2) Any complainant may, in the prescribed manner, apply to the Court for a protection order.
- (3) If the complainant is not represented by counsel, the police officer with whom a complaint of violence has been lodged shall inform the complainant of the remedies he or she may be entitled to under this Act including the right to lodge a criminal complaint against the respondent if a criminal offence has been committed under this Act.
- (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, the application may be brought on behalf of the complainant by any other person, including a police officer, a protection officer, an accredited service provider, a counselor, health service provider, social worker or teacher who has interest in the well-being of the complainant except in circumstances where the complainant is -
  - (a) a minor;
  - (b) mentally retarded;
  - (c) unconscious; or
  - (d) a person who the court is satisfied is unable to provide the required consent.
- (5) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, any minor, or any person on behalf of a minor, may apply to the Court for a protection order without the assistance of a parent, guardian or any other person and supporting affidavit by persons who have knowledge of the matter concerned may



accompany the application.

(6) The application and affidavits shall be filed in Court.

Consideration of  
application

**31.** (1) The Court shall as soon as is reasonably possible, consider an application submitted to it under section 30 (6) of this Act and may, for that purpose, consider such additional evidence as it deems fit, including oral evidence or evidence by affidavit, which shall form part of the record of the proceedings.

(2) If the Court is satisfied that there is *prima facie* evidence that the respondent is committing, has committed or that there is imminent likelihood that he may commit an act of domestic violence, the Court shall, notwithstanding the fact that the respondent has not been given notice of the proceedings contemplated in subsection (1) of this section, issue an interim protection order against the respondent, in the prescribed manner.

(3) An interim protection order shall be served on the respondent in the prescribed manner and must call on the respondent to show cause on the return date, specified in the order why a protection order should not be issued.

(4) A copy of the application referred to in section of this Act and the record of any evidence taken under subsection (1) of this section shall be served on the respondent together with the interim protection order.

(5) If the Court does not issue an interim protection order under subsection (2) of this section, the Court shall direct the Registrar of the Court to cause certified copies of the application concerned and any supporting affidavit to be served on the respondent in the prescribed manner, together with a prescribed notice calling on the respondent to show cause on the return date, specified in the notice, why a Protection Order should not be issued.

(6) The return dates referred to in subsections (3) and (5) of this section may not be less than 5 days after service has been effected upon the respondent.

**32.** (1) If the respondent does not appear on a return date contemplated in section 31 (3) or (5) of this Law, and if the Court is

satisfied that-

(a) proper service has been effected on the respondent, and

(b) the application contains a *prima facie* evidence that the respondent has committed, is committing or that there is an imminent likelihood that he may commit an act of domestic violence, the court shall issue a protection order in the prescribed form.

(2) If the respondent appears on the return date in order to oppose the issuing of a Protection Order, the Court shall proceed to hear the matter and consider -

(a) any evidence previously received under section 31 (1) of this Law; and

(b) such further affidavits or oral evidence as it may direct, which shall form part of the record of the proceedings.

(3) The Court may, on its own accord or on the request of the complainant, if it is of the opinion that it is just or desirable to do so, order that in the examination of witnesses, including the complainant, a respondent who is not represented by a legal practitioner-

(a) is not entitled to cross-examine directly a person who is in a domestic relationship with the respondent; and

(b) shall put any question to such a witness by stating the question to the Court, and the court is to repeat the question accurately to the witness.

(4) The Court shall, after a hearing as contemplated in subsection (2) of this Section, issue a protection order in the prescribed form if it finds, on a balance of probabilities, that the respondent has committed, is committing or that there is an imminent likelihood that he may commit an act of domestic violence.

(5) Upon the issuing of a protection order, the Registrar of the Court shall, in the prescribed manner, cause-

(a) the original of such Order to be served on the respondent:



and

- (b) a certified copy of such order, and the original warrant of arrest contemplated in section 35 (1) (a), to be served on the complainant.
- (6) The Registrar of the Court shall, in the prescribed manner, forward certified copies of any Protection Order and of the warrant of arrest contemplated in section 35 (1) (a) to the Police station of the complainant's choice.
- (7) Subject to the provisions of section 33 (7) of this Law, a Protection Order issued under this section remains in force until it is set aside, and the execution of such order shall not be automatically suspended upon the filing of an appeal.

Court powers  
in respect of  
Protection Order

**33.** (1) The Court may, by means of a Protection Order referred to in section 30 or 31 of this Law, prohibit the respondent from-

- (a) committing any act of domestic violence;
- (b) enlisting the help of another person to commit any such act;
- (c) entering a shared household provided that the court may impose this prohibition only if it appears to be in the best interests of the complainant;
- (d) entering a specified part of such a shared household;
- (e) entering the complainant's residence;
- (f) entering the complainant's place of employment;
- (g) preventing the complainant from entering or remaining in the shared household or a specified part of the shared household;
- (h) alienating or disposing the shared household or encumbering same;
- (i) renouncing his or her rights in the shared household except in favour of the complainant; or
- (j) committing any other act as specified in the protection order.

- (2) The Court may impose any additional condition, which it deems reasonably necessary to protect and provide for the safety, health or well-being of the complainant, including an order-
  - (a) to seize any arm or dangerous weapon in the possession or under the control of the respondent;
  - (b) that a police officer shall accompany the complainant to a specified place to assist with arrangements regarding the collection of personal property;
  - (c) directing the respondent to secure alternative accommodation for the complainant;
  - (d) order a temporal relocation to any safe place as may be deemed fit in the interest of the complainant; or
  - (e) approve a mediation channel upon submission by the complainant.
- (3) In ordering a prohibition under subsection 1 (c) of this section, the Court may impose on the respondent obligations as to the discharge of rent or mortgage payments having regard to the financial needs and resources of the complainant and the respondent.
- (4) The Court may order the respondent to pay emergency monetary relief having regard to the financial needs and resources of the complainant and the respondent, and such order has the effect of a civil judgment of a court.
- (5) The Court may issue any direction to ensure that the complainant's physical address is not disclosed in any manner, which may endanger the safety, health or well-being of the complainant.
- (6) If the court is satisfied that it is in the best interests of any child, it may-
  - (a) refuse the respondent contact with such child; or
  - (b) order contact with such child on such conditions as it may consider appropriate.



(7) The Court may not refuse to issue a protection order or impose any condition or make any order which it is competent to impose or make under this section, merely on the grounds that other legal remedies are available to the complainant

(8) If the Court is of the opinion that any provision of a protection order deals with a matter that should, in the interests of justice, be dealt with further under any other relevant law, including the Matrimonial Causes Act, Cap. M7 Laws of the Federation, 2004, Child's Rights Act, the Court shall order that such a provision shall be in force for such limited period as the court determines, in order to afford the party concerned the opportunity to seek appropriate relief under such law.

Police **34.** (1) A police officer, at the scene of an incident of violence or as soon thereafter as reasonably possible or to whom a report of violence has been made, shall have the duty of -

- (a) assisting a victim of violence to file a complaint regarding the violence;
- (b) providing or arranging safe transport for the victim to an alternative residence, safe place or shelter where such is required;
- (c) providing or arranging transportation for the victim to the nearest hospital or medical facility for treatment of injuries where such treatment is needed;
- (d) explaining to the victim his or her rights to protection against violence and remedies available in terms of this Law;
- (e) explaining to the victim that he or she has the right to lodge a criminal complaint in addition to any remedy provided under this Act; and
- (f) accompanying the victim to victim's residence to collect personal belongings.

(2) A police officer may, without an order from the Court or a warrant of arrest, arrest any person whom-

(a) he or she suspects upon reasonable grounds to have committed any of the offences under Part II of this Law; and

(b) a complaint has been made for having committed any of the offences under Part II of this Law.

(3) A Police Officer in carrying out his or her duties under this Law shall have the power to-

(a) remove or supervise the removal of a person excluded from a shared residence where the court has issued such an order under this Law;

(b) remove or supervise the removal of any dangerous weapon used in order to commit an act of violence as contemplated in this Law;

(c) collect and store fingerprints including DNA of accused and convicted offenders; and

(d) perform any other act considered necessary in order to ensure the safety and well-being of the complainant.

**35.** (1) Whenever a Court issues a Protection Order, the Court shall make an order-

Warrant of arrest  
upon issuing of  
Protection Order

(a) authorizing the issue of a warrant for the arrest of the respondent, in the prescribed form; and

(b) suspending the execution of such warrant subject to compliance with any prohibition, condition, obligation or order imposed under section 33 of this law.

(2) The warrant referred to in subsection (1) (a) of this section remains in force unless the protection order is set aside, or it is cancelled after execution.

(3) The Registrar of the Court shall issue the complainant with a second or further warrant of arrest, if the complainant files an affidavit in the prescribed form in which it is stated that such warrant is required for her or his protection and that the existing warrant of arrest has been-

(a) executed or cancelled; or



(b)lost or destroyed.

(4) A complainant may hand the warrant of arrest together with an affidavit in the prescribed form, where it is stated that the respondent has contravened any prohibition, condition, obligation or order contained in a Protection Order, to any Police officer.

(5) If it appears to the police officer concerned that, there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the complainant may suffer imminent harm as a result of the alleged breach of the protection order by the respondent, the police officer shall forthwith arrest the respondent for allegedly committing the offence referred to in Part II of this Law.

(6) If the police officer concerned is of the opinion that there are insufficient grounds for arresting the respondent under subsection (5), he or she shall hand a written notice to the respondent which-

(a)specifies the name, the residential address and the occupation or status of the respondent;

(b)calls upon the respondent to appear before a court, and on the date and at the time specified in the notice, on a charge of committing the offence referred to in section 33 (1); and

(c)contains a certificate signed by the police officer concerned to the effect that he or she handed the original notice to the respondent and that he or she explained the import thereof to the respondent.

(7) The police officer shall forward a duplicate original of a notice referred to in subsection (6) to the Registrar of the Court concerned, and the mere production in the Court of such a duplicate original shall be a prima facie proof that the original was handed to the respondent specified therein.

(8) In considering whether or not the complainant may suffer imminent harm, as contemplated in subsection (5), the Police Officer shall take into account the-

(a)risk to the safety, health or well-being of the complainant;

(b)seriousness of the conduct comprising an alleged breach of the protection order; and

(c)length of time since the alleged breach occurred.

(9) Whenever a warrant of arrest is handed to a police officer under subsection (4) of this section, the Police Officer shall inform the complainant of his or her right to simultaneously lay a criminal charge against the respondent, if applicable, and explain to the complainant how to lay such a charge.

**36.** (1) A complainant or a respondent may, upon written notice to the other party and the Variation or setting aside of protection court concerned, apply for the variation or setting aside of a Protection Order referred to in section 30 in the prescribed manner.

Variation or setting  
aside of Protection  
Order

(2) If the Court is satisfied that a good cause has been shown for the variation or setting aside of the protection order, it may issue an order to this effect, provided that the Court shall not grant such an application to the complainant unless it is satisfied that the application is made freely and voluntarily.

(3) The Registrar of the Court shall forward a notice as prescribed to the complainant and the respondent if the protection order is varied or set aside as contemplated in subsection (1) of this section.

**37.** Where a Protection Order has been made, any of the following persons may apply to have it discharged-

Discharge

(a) if the application for the order was made by a Commissioner in respect of any dependent person by -

(i)the commissioner,

(ii)the person who brought the application, or

(iii)the respondent to that application;

(b) if the application for the order was made by a Commissioner in any other case by virtue of section 30-

(i) the commissioner,



- (ii) the person who was the applicant for the order, or
- (iii) the respondent to that application;
- (c) in any other case-
- (i) the person who was the applicant for the order, or
- (ii) the person who was the respondent to the application for the order and the Court, upon hearing any such application, shall make such order, as it considers appropriate in the circumstances.

Offences relating to  
Protection Orders

**38.** (1) A respondent who contravened an Interim Protection Order, or while an Interim Protection Order is in force, refuses to permit the applicant or any dependant person to enter and remain in the place to which the Order relates or does any act for the purpose of preventing the applicant or such dependant person from so entering or remaining, commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding N300,000.00 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or both.

- (2) The provisions of subsection (1) shall be without prejudice to any punishment or sanction as to contempt of Court or any other liability, whether civil or criminal that may be incurred by the respondent concerned.
- (3) A person who, in an affidavit referred to in this Section, willfully makes a false statement in a material respect commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or, at the discretion of the Court, to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months.

Application and  
Forms of Protection  
Order

**39.** The affidavit, application and forms of Protection Order referred to in this part of the Law shall be in accordance with the Schedule to this Law.

Right of a Victim

**40.** (1) In addition to the rights guaranteed under Chapter IV of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 (as amended) or any other International Human Rights Instrument to which Nigeria is a party, every victim of violence, as defined in Section 2 of this Law, shall be entitled to the following rights-

- (a) to receive the necessary materials, comprehensive

medical, psychological, social and legal assistance through governmental agencies or non-governmental agencies providing such assistance;

- (b) to be informed of the availability of legal, health and social services and other relevant assistance and be readily afforded access to them;
- (c) to rehabilitation and re-integration programme of the State to enable victims to acquire, where applicable and necessary, pre-requisite skills in any vocation of the victim's choice and also in necessary formal education or access to micro credit facilities;
- (d) that any rules and or regulations made by any institution or organization prohibiting or restraining the reporting of offences or complaint with the provisions of this Act, shall, to the extent of the inconsistencies be null and void: and (e) no complainant of any offence under this Law shall be expelled, disengaged, suspended or punished in any form whatsoever by virtue of the action of compliance with the provisions of this Law.
- (2) Any head of institution who violates the provisions of this subsection is guilty of an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment for 6 months or a fine of N200,000 or both.
- (3) No person may be present during any proceedings under this Act except-
  - (a) officers of the Court;
  - (b) the parties to the proceedings;
  - (c) any person bringing an application on behalf of the complainant under section 28 (3);
  - (d) any legal practitioner representing any party to the proceedings;
  - (e) accredited service provider;
  - (f) witnesses;



- (g) not more than 3 persons for the purpose of providing support to the complainant;
- (h) not more than 3 persons for the purpose of providing support to the respondent; and
- (i) any other person whom the Court permits to be present provided that the court may, if it is satisfied that it is in the interests of justice, exclude any person from attending any part of the proceedings.
- (4) Nothing in this section limits any other power of the Court to hear proceedings in camera or to exclude any person from attending such proceedings.

#### PART IV – SERVICE PROVIDERS

Prohibition of  
publication of  
certain information

**41.** (1) No person shall publish in any manner any information which might, directly or indirectly, reveal the identity of any party to the proceedings. Prohibition of publication of certain

- (2) The Court, if it is satisfied that it is in the interest of justice, may direct that any information further information relating to proceedings held under this Act shall not be published provided that no direction under this subsection applies in respect of the publication of a bona fide law report which does not mention the names or reveal the identities of the parties to the proceedings or of any witness at such proceedings.
- (3) A person who contravenes the provisions of this subsection commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding N200,000.00 or both.

Registration and  
powers of Service  
Providers

**42.** (1) Subject to such rules as may be made, any voluntary association registered under the Registration and powers of service Companies and Allied Matters Act 1990 by the Corporate Affairs Commission or modes, any other law for the time being in force with the objective of protecting the rights and interests of victims of violence by any lawful means including providing of legal aid, medical, financial or other assistance shall register itself with the State Government as a service provider for the purposes of this Law.

- (2) The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development shall-
  - (a) keep a register of all accredited service providers and circulate same to all police stations, protection officers and the courts; and
  - (b) draw up guidelines for the operation of the accredited service providers.
- (3) A service provider so registered under subsection (1) shall have the power to-
  - (a) record the violence incidence report in the prescribed form if the aggrieved person so desires and forward a copy to the Magistrates and the Protection Officer having jurisdiction in the area where the violence took place;
  - (b) get the aggrieved person medically examined and forward a copy of the medical report to the Protection Officer and the police station within the locality of which the violence act took place; and
  - (c) ensure that the aggrieved person is provided shelter in a shelter home, if he or she so requires and forward a report of the lodging of the aggrieved person in the shelter home to the Police station within the locality of which the violence act took place.
- (4) No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against any service provider who is, or who is deemed to be acting or purporting to act under this Act, for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in the exercise of powers or discharge of functions under this Act towards the prevention of the commission of violence.

**43.** (1) The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development shall appoint such number of protection officers in each Area Council as it may consider necessary, to assist the Court in the discharge of its duties under this Act to co-ordinate the activities of the police and the accredited service providers in his or her Area Council to ensure that the victims or survivors of violence-

Protection Officers

- (a) have easy access to accredited service providers;



- (b) has easy access to transportation to an alternative residence or a safe shelter, the nearest hospital or medical facility for treatment, if the complainant so requires;
  - (c) are able to collect their belongings or properties from a shared household or her residence, if the complainant so requires;
  - (d) are able to access the court for orders under this Law; or
  - (e) has access to every possible assistance in the service of interim protection order on the respondent, and the enforcement of any order that may have been made by the court under this Law.
- (2) The Protection Officer may, upon the failure of the respondent to make payment ordered by the Court under this Law, direct an employer or a debtor of the Protection officers respondent or any bank in which the respondent operates any account; to directly pay to the complainant or deposit with Court a portion of the wages or salaries or debt due to or accrued to the credit of respondent or monies in any bank account operated by the respondent, which amount may be adjusted towards the emergency monetary relief payable by the respondent.

**44.** The authority vested with the enforcement of this Act shall appoint a person as the Coordinator for the prevention of domestic violence who shall submit annual report to the State Government on the implementation of this Law, a copy of which shall be deposited with the State Bureau for Statistics.

**45.** A Court may declare a person who has been convicted of a sexual offence a dangerous sexual offender if such person has-

- (a) more than one conviction for a sexual offence;
- (b) been convicted of a sexual offence which was accompanied violence; or
- (c) been convicted of a sexual offence against a child.

## PART V - REGULATORY BODY

**46.** The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development shall be responsible for administering the provisions of this Law and to collaborate with Agencies and stakeholders including Non-Governmental and Faith based organizations.

*Regulatory  
Authority*

## PART VI – CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENT

**47.** (1) Any offence committed or proceedings instituted before the commencement of this Act under the provisions of the -

- (a) Criminal Code,
- (b) Penal Code,
- (c) Any other law or regulation relating to any offence defined by this Law shall be determined and enforced as the provisions of the above mentioned Laws.

*Domestic violence  
protection officer  
Domestic violence*

*Dangerous sexual  
offender*