WHY IT MATTERS
Victims of domestic violence may be unable to leave an abusive partner or may be forced to return to an abusive partner for economic reasons. Victims of coerced debt may face massive barriers to economic self-sufficiency, including struggling to find a job or even obtaining a place to live after leaving an abusive relationship due to debt and detrimental effects on their personal credit scores.

WHAT IS ECONOMIC ABUSE?
Economic abuse involves maintaining control over financial resources, withholding access to money, or attempting to forbid a victim’s attendance to school/employment in an effort to create financial dependence.

COERCED DEBT
Coerced debt consists of non-consensual, credit-related transactions which occur in a violent relationship. Examples of coerced debt include, but are not limited to:
- Applying for credit cards, obtaining loans, or opening other financial accounts in a victim’s name
- Forcing victim to obtain loans
- Forcing victim to sign financial documents
- Use of threats or physical force to convince victims to make credit-related transactions
- Refinancing a home mortgage or car loan without a victim’s knowledge

DID YOU KNOW?
- Between 94-99% of domestic violence survivors have also experienced economic abuse.
- Between 21-60% of victims of intimate partner violence lose their jobs due to reasons stemming from the abuse.
- Victims of intimate partner violence lose a total of 8 million days of paid work each year.

IF YOU NEED HELP,
DIAL THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE AT:
1-800-799-SAFE
EMPLOYMENT-RELATED:³
- Preventing victim from attending job
- Demanding that the victim quits his/her job
- Preventing the victim from looking for jobs or attending job interviews

OTHER TYPES OF ECONOMIC ABUSE:³
- Deciding when/how victim can use cash, bank accounts, or credit cards
- Forcing victim to give abuser money, ATM cards, or credit cards
- Demanding that the lease/mortgage or assets be in the abuser’s name
- Using victim’s checkbook, ATM card, or credit cards without the victim’s knowledge
- Preventing victim’s access to bank account(s)

If you are in an abusive relationship, and are interested in taking steps toward financial self-sufficiency, please read the following tips, adapted from NCADV Hope and Power: For Your Personal Finances:⁵
- Avoid using credit and debit cards that can help an abuser track your whereabouts.
- Keep your personal and financial records in a safe location. Leave copies with a trusted friend, relative, or in a bank safety deposit box.
- Compile an emergency evacuation box with copies of your family’s important records and documents.
- Keep copies of car and house keys, along with extra money and emergency phone numbers.
- If you use the internet to explore domestic violence issues or for regaining financial independence, make sure your abuser cannot trace your activities.
- Take a financial inventory, listing assets and liabilities.
- If your partner controls the money, look for ways to find out more information about his/her income, financial property, real property, and debts.
- If you are considering leaving your relationship, calculate what it would cost you to live on your own, and consider starting to set aside your own money in a safe place, even if it is just a few dollars.
- Obtain a copy of your credit report from any of the three major credit bureaus, review the information, and report any fraud, disputed claims, or identity theft. Under FACTA (The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act) you can obtain a free copy of your credit report every 12 months.

REFERENCES