

9. Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women

Violence against women, including spousal violence, sexual crimes, prostitution, trafficking in persons, sexual harassment and stalking behavior, constitutes a serious violation of the human rights of women. This is an issue to be resolved in the process of formation of a gender-equal society. The international community also attaches great importance to this issue, as is seen in the 1999 inauguration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women by the United Nations, which will be held each year on November 25.

Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims

In accordance with the Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (hereinafter the Act) and the Basic Policy Concerning Measures for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (hereinafter the Basic Policy), which has been developed in accordance with the Act, and the Second Basic Plan for a Gender-equal Society approved by the Cabinet in December 2005, measures are being undertaken to prevent spousal violence, provide protection to victims of violence and self-reliance support for them.

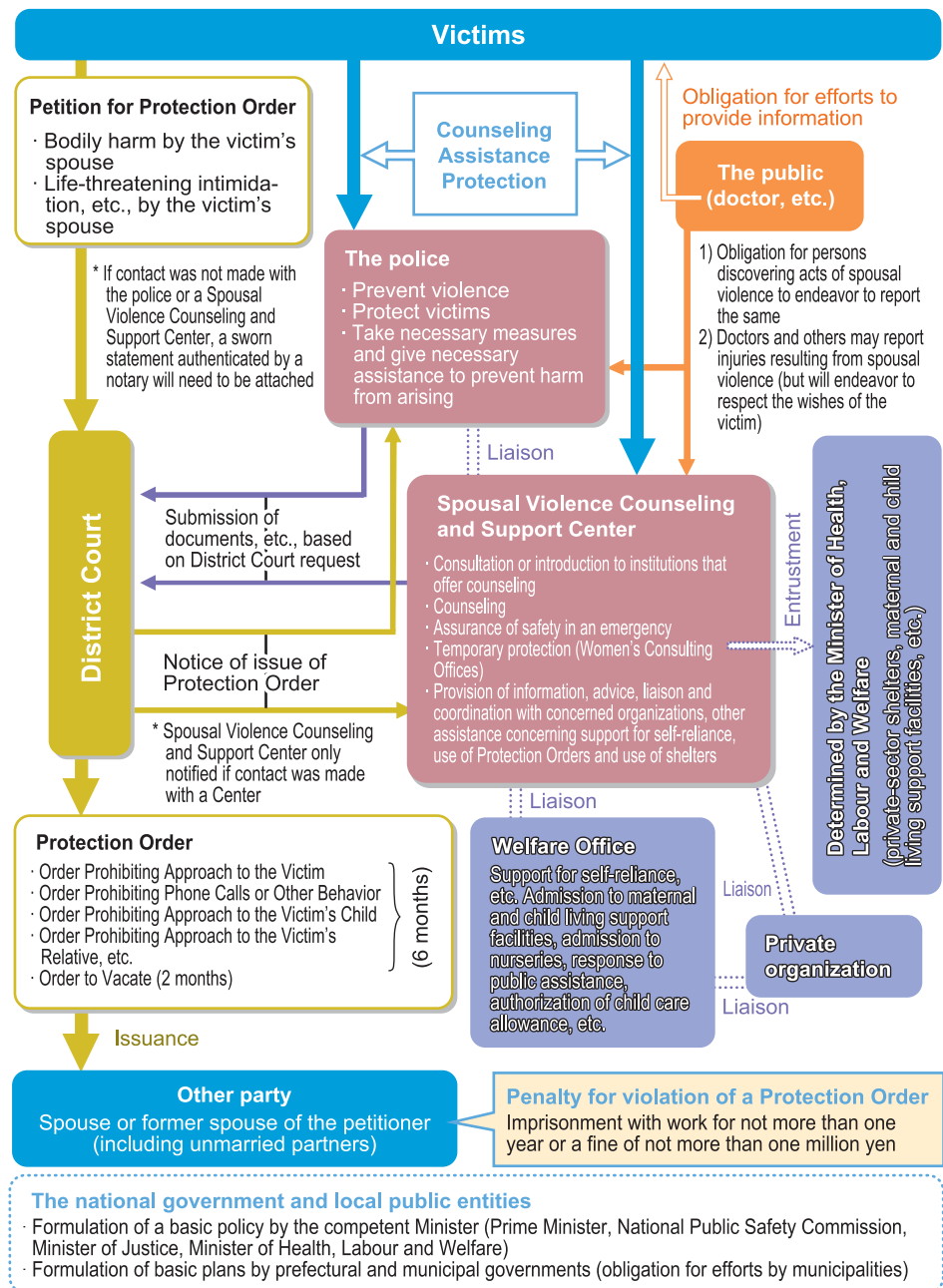
In July 2007 the amendments to the Act were enacted and the revised Act came into force in January 2008.

In accordance with the principle of the Act, the Basic Policies were also revised in conjunction with the enforcement of the revised Act.

The focus of amendments of 2007 to the Act is as follows:



Symbol for the Elimination of Violence against Women



Focus on revising the law in 2007

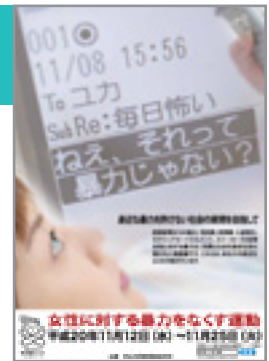
- Obligation on the municipalities to make an effort to adopt the basic plan and establish Spousal Violence Counseling and Support Centers
- Expansion of the Protection Order System

Example

 - Protection Orders for victims who has been received life-threatening intimidation
 - Establishment of orders prohibiting phone calls or other behavior
 - Orders prohibiting a spouse from approaching the relatives of the victim
- Notification in connection with the issuing of Protection Orders by courts to the Spousal Violence Counseling and Support Centers

Campaign for Eliminating Violence against Women (from November 12 through November 25 every year)

The Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality Conducts a campaign for Eliminating of Violence against Women and, in collaboration with local public authorities, women's groups and other organizations, further strengthen efforts for elimination of violence against women, including a program to enhance social awareness.



Information for Victims of Spousal Violence

- **Website (<http://www.gender.go.jp/e-vaw/index.html>)**

Information about laws and organizations to assist victims of spousal violence is provided on the website of the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office, which is regularly updated.

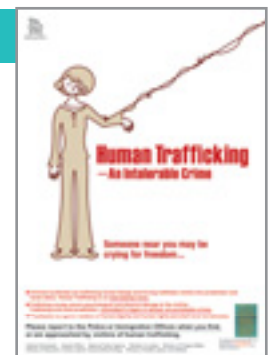
The website lists an outline of legal information, including the basic policy based on the Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims as well as the basic plan being implemented by local public authorities, together with a summary of notices from the relevant ministries to local public authorities on the enforcement of relevant laws and assistance for victims.

Examples of measures by local public authorities and initiatives by corporations to assist victims are also introduced.

Measures against Trafficking in Persons

Trafficking in persons is a grave violation of human rights, where victims are forced to engage in prostitution and harsh labour. To prevent and eradicate trafficking in persons and to support victims, the Inter-Ministerial Liaison Committee was established in April 2004 and the National Action Plan was adopted in December the same year.

In the light of the current situation that awareness of trafficking in persons is a grave violation of human rights is not necessarily high enough, the Cabinet Office produced posters and leaflets about measures against trafficking in persons, in accordance with the Action Plan, and distributed them to local public authorities and police/airport/port authorities for display, so that every citizen may become interested in and more aware of the existence of the problem of trafficking in persons.



Training Programs

- **Training**

“Training Programs for Spousal Violence Counselors of Women’s Facilities” including Spousal Violence Counseling and Support Centers all over Japan, are being organized. The program to dispatch advisors who have expertise and experience about spousal violence in order to support victims of spousal violence is also being implemented, to expand counseling services for victims.

- **Research and study**

Research and various studies are being undertaken to implement correct measures to respond to violence against women.

In fiscal 2006 and 2007, a study was conducted in collaboration with local public authorities on measures to raise awareness especially among young people on the prevention of violence, from the viewpoint of preventing violence and preventing becoming either an assailant or a victim of violence against women. Based on the outcome of the study, education materials for raising awareness among young people will be produced in fiscal 2008.

Also, as part of the model project to support victims of spousal violence to become independent, a pilot program to support victims and their children living in local communities will be drawn up and developed as an experiment. Results of the pilot program will be compiled for analysis for practical implementation.