Coercive Control and Financial Abuse Checklist

A private, printable checklist for people in Queensland. Companion to the Ferrall & Co. article *Coercive Control and Financial Abuse Checklist for Queensland*.

Your safety comes first

If you are in immediate danger, call **000**. Keep this document somewhere your partner cannot see it, such as with a trusted friend or at work. If someone monitors your phone or computer, use a device they cannot access.

Where to get help

Service	Contact	Hours
Police (emergency)	000	24/7
Queensland Police Policelink (non-urgent)	131 444	24/7
DVConnect Womensline (Qld)	1800 811 811	24/7
DVConnect Mensline (Qld)	1800 600 636	9am to midnight, 7 days
1800RESPECT (national)	1800 737 732 or text 0458 737 732	24/7

How to use this checklist

Tick any statement that describes your relationship, now or in the past. One tick does not prove abuse, and no number of ticks is a test. What matters is whether the behaviour forms a pattern that leaves you fearful, isolated or dependent. Take your ticks to a support service or a family lawyer to talk through your options.

1. Coercive control red flags

My partner or former partner:

- ☐ Tells me when I can leave the house or who I can see
- ☐ Monitors where I am and who I am with
- ☐ Demands my phone PIN or passwords and checks my messages or search history
- ☐ Limits my access to social media or other ways of contacting people
- ☐ Tries to cut me off from friends and family, or starts arguments when I visit them
- ☐ Stops me from accessing support services, including medical care
- ☐ Puts me down, insults or humiliates me, in private or in front of others
- ☐ Uses the silent treatment or other manipulation to get their way
- ☐ Is overly affectionate after being abusive, then the cycle repeats
- ☐ Threatens to self-harm to make me do what they want
- ☐ Makes me feel I must tiptoe around them to avoid their anger

2. Financial abuse red flags

My partner or former partner:

- ☐ Controls how household money is managed and gives me no say
- ☐ Restricts my access to bank accounts or financial information, including my own money
- ☐ Changed a bank PIN or password and will not share it
- ☐ Makes me ask for money for every purchase, however small
- ☐ Monitors my spending and makes me justify ordinary purchases

- [ ] Hides assets or financial information from me
- [ ] Opened accounts or took on debts in my name without my knowledge
- [ ] Pressured or forced me to sign loans or financial agreements
- [ ] Interferes with my study, job hunting or work, or causes problems at my workplace
- [ ] Threatens to leave me without money or housing
- [ ] Uses my financial dependence to keep me in the relationship

3. Is there a pattern?

- [ ] The behaviour has become more frequent over time
- [ ] I feel increasingly isolated
- [ ] Their actions have made me more dependent on them
- [ ] I feel I cannot make decisions for myself
- [ ] I am afraid of how they will react

4. Record what happens (only if it is safe)

Evidence of behaviour over time is often relevant to police, the courts and your lawyer. Do not put yourself at risk to collect it. Store copies away from shared devices and accounts, or with someone you trust.

- [ ] A dated log of incidents (use the table below or a private note)
- [ ] Copies or screenshots of threatening or abusive messages and emails
- [ ] Statements or letters showing debts or accounts opened in my name
- [ ] Photos of damaged property or injuries
- [ ] Names of anyone who saw or heard what happened

Date	What happened	Witnesses or evidence	Copy kept at

5. Safety plan

Safety plans work best when made with a domestic violence support service. DVConnect and 1800RESPECT can help you build one, whether you are staying, planning to leave or have already left.

- [ ] I have spoken with a trusted friend, family member or support worker
- [ ] I have contacted DVConnect or 1800RESPECT about a safety plan
- [ ] I know where I could stay (family, friends or a refuge arranged through DVConnect)
- [ ] I have a way to access some money, or a trusted person who can help

- [ ] I have spoken to a lawyer before moving money from joint accounts
- [ ] I have arranged transport, or someone who can collect me from a safe place
- [ ] Copies of key documents are with someone I trust (ID, birth certificates, bank and Medicare cards, Centrelink details)
- [ ] I have a spare phone with emergency numbers saved, if I can get one
- [ ] I have a plan for my children and pets

6. When to get legal advice early

Speak with a family lawyer promptly if your partner is:

- [ ] Building up significant debts or liabilities in your name
- [ ] Threatening to move interstate or overseas with your children
- [ ] Transferring, hiding or wasting money or assets to avoid a property settlement

7. What the law says (Queensland)

Law	What it covers	Key facts
Criminal Code (Qld) s 334C	Coercive control as a criminal offence	In force from 26 May 2025. Applies to an adult in a domestic relationship who engages in a course of domestic violence conduct on more than one occasion, intending to coerce or control. Maximum penalty 14 years. Applies only to conduct from 26 May 2025.
Family Law Act 1975 (Cth) s 4AB	Definition of family violence in family law	Economic or financial abuse is expressly listed as family violence, with examples in s 4AB(2A), following the Family Law Amendment Act 2024 (commenced 10 June 2025).
Family Law Act 1975 (Cth) s 79	Property settlement	Courts consider the economic effect of family violence on a party's current and future circumstances. The property changes apply to new and existing proceedings, except where a final hearing had commenced before 10 June 2025.
Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 (Qld)	Protection orders	Coercive and controlling behaviour, including economic abuse, can support an application for a domestic violence protection order in the Magistrates Court.

Sources: Queensland Government (qld.gov.au, coercive control laws); Family Law Amendment Act 2024 (Cth), legislation.gov.au; Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia, Family Law Act changes from June 2025.

Talk to Ferrall & Co. Lawyers

Free, confidential 30 minute initial consultation about coercive control, economic abuse, protection orders, parenting and property matters.

Phone (07) 5491 2159 | admin@ferrallco.com.au | ferrallco.com.au/contact
Echelon Centre, Level One, 65-67 Bulcock Street, Caloundra QLD 4551
Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm, Friday 8:30am to 3pm

Disclaimer: This checklist provides general information only and is not legal advice. It is not a diagnostic tool. Family law outcomes depend on your circumstances. Speak with a family lawyer before making decisions about your matter. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.