



EXTORTION - IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYBODY

Unfortunately, extortion can happen to anybody. Everybody must be aware of the warning signs as it can have serious consequences, including financial loss, emotional distress, reputational damage, and physical harm.



Source: SAPS

What is extortion?

Extortion is a criminal offence where an individual illegally obtains money, property, or services from another person by threatening harm or using coercive measures. These threats can involve physical violence, property damage, accusations of crime, or exposure to sensitive information.

What are common types of extortion?

Blackmail: Threatening to reveal sensitive information unless demands are met.

Protection rackets: Forcing individuals or businesses to pay for protection from harm often caused by extortionists.

Cyber extortion: Using online threats, such as data theft or cyber-attacks, to demand money or services.

Financial extortion: Forcing someone to make financial payments or hand over property through threats.

How do I protect myself?

Recognise the signs: Stay alert for any suspicious or threatening demands.

Stay calm: Do not react impulsively to threats.

Document everything: Keep records of all communications and demands.

Contact law enforcement: Report any instances of extortion immediately to the authorities.

Strengthen cyber security: Protect sensitive information online with strong passwords and encryption.

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

National Extortion Hotline – 0900 911 011

Crime Stop – 08600 10111

SAPS Emergency Number – 10111

Mobile Phone Emergency Number – 112 *134*10111#

What are the key elements of extortion?

Threat: The perpetrator uses a threat to instil fear in the victim.

Demand: The perpetrator demands money, property, or services.

Coercion: The act relies on forcing the victim to comply out of fear of consequences.

What are the signs of extortion?

Unsolicited demands: Requests for money or services without a legitimate reason.

Threatening behaviour: Use of intimidation, including verbal threats or menacing actions.

Pressure: Urgency or pressure tactics to force compliance.

Illegal proposals: Offering to withhold harm only in exchange for something of value.

What must I do if I am the victim of extortion?

Do not comply: Avoid giving in to demands, as it could worsen the situation.

Get support: Reach out to law enforcement, legal advisors, or support organisations.

Seek counselling: Victims may experience anxiety or stress; talking to a counsellor can help.

Report the crime: File a report with local authorities to initiate a legal response.