

# Belmonte: report rape, domestic abuse cases

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Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte yesterday asked residents to report incidents of rape and domestic abuse after the local police reported an increase in cases of violence against women and children (VAWC).

In a report presented during a local peace and order council meeting, the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) reported a 66.67 percent increase in VAWC cases and 21.54 percent increase in rape cases during the first eight months of 2021 compared to the same period last year.

QCPD director Brig. Gen. Antonio Yarra said VAWC cases were comprised mostly of physical abuse, followed by psychological, economic and sexual abuses.

Police attributed the surge in VAWC cases to economic struggles and mobility restrictions due to the pandemic, which have forced families, including children, to stay at home.

“We have launched a campaign to make women aware of their rights and make them advocates so they will be encouraged to report abuses,” Yarra said.

Belmonte had ordered the QCPD, the city’s Protection Center as well as Gender and Development Office to act swiftly on reports about VAWC and other gender-based abuses.

She urged victims and their relatives to report such abuses to Hotline 122 or to the QCPD women’s desk and barangay officials.

“The number of VAWC cases is alarming. We should not let this go unnoticed. Homes are considered safe spaces and these should remain safe from violence. We need to convince the victims that there are people and institutions that can protect them,” Belmonte said.

Together with the QCPD, city hall will launch a unified information management system to facilitate the monitoring and hasten the investigation of VAWC incidents.

Last year, the local government reopened the QC Protection Center for survivors of gender-based violence and abuse. The facility is a one-stop shop that provides counseling, medical and legal assistance to the victims.

The city government has established the Bahay Kanlungan, a temporary shelter where victims of abuse are given safe refuge.