

*"Family abuse" means any act involving violence, force or threat including, but not limited to, any forceful detention that results in bodily injury or places one in reasonable apprehension of bodily injury and which is committed by a person against such person's family or household member.*

If you think you need protection, Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court may issue a *Family Abuse Protective Order* to help keep a victim of family abuse safe from further acts of violence.



For online help preparing forms for a Family Abuse Protective Order in Virginia, go to I-CAN! at

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/courts/jdr](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/courts/jdr)  
or

[www.courts.state.va.us](http://www.courts.state.va.us)  
Programs and Services,  
Assistance With Family Abuse  
Protective Orders

*A PC with Internet Explorer 5.5 or greater can run I-CAN! and Windows 95, 98, NT, 2000, XP operating system versions are supported. Adobe Acrobat 4.0 or greater is required for the forms printing. I-CAN! does not function using Netscape Navigator. I-CAN! will not print on Apple computers.*

## Where can I get help in Fairfax County?

### 24-Hour Hot Lines

Fairfax County Women's Shelter 703-435-4940;  
TTY 703-435-1235  
Fairfax County Victim Assistance Network 703-360-7273;  
TTY 703-799-8253  
Virginia Family Abuse and Sexual Assault Hot Line  
1-800-838-8238

### Basic Needs Help Line (8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., M - F)

Coordinated Services Planning 703-222-0880;  
TDD/TTY 703-803-7914

### Emergency Shelters

Fairfax County Women's Shelter 703-435-4940;  
TTY 703-435-1235  
Bethany House 703-658-9500

### Supportive Services

Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource  
Project 202-464-4477  
Center for Multicultural Human Services  
703-533-3302  
Boat People SOS 703-538-2190  
Foundation for Appropriate and Immediate  
Temporary Help 571-323-2198  
Fairfax County Victim Assistance Network 703-360-7273  
Fairfax County Police Department,  
Victim Services Section 703-246-2141  
Korean Community Service Center of  
Greater Washington 703-354-6345  
The Women's Center 703-281-2657

### Magistrate's Office (Emergency Protective Orders/Criminal Warrants/Bond)

Fairfax County Adult Detention Center (24 hours)  
703-246-2178  
Adult Detention Center - Bond Information  
703-246-2100  
Mount Vernon Governmental Center (24 hours)  
703-780-8580  
Mason Governmental Center (Video Magistrate -  
limited basis) 703-256-8053

### Protective Orders and Legal Assistance

Court Services - Juvenile and Domestic Relations  
District Court 703-246-3040  
Legal Services of Northern Virginia 703-246-4500  
Tahirih Justice Center (VAWA, T and U visas,  
gender-based asylum) 703-575-0070  
Fairfax County Bar Association  
Lawyer Referral Service 703-246-3780  
(Unless otherwise noted, all TTY 711. If you would like this  
information in an alternate format, call 703-246-3040.)

# Family Violence Hurts Everyone



## I-CAN! *can help*

A Family Abuse Protective Order can help keep victims safe from further acts of violence.

If you need help preparing a Protective Order, go online to

I-CAN! at:

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/courts/jdr](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/courts/jdr)

Fairfax County  
Juvenile and Domestic Relations  
District Court



A Fairfax County, Va., publication  
July 2007

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What are Family Abuse Protective Orders?

In Virginia, there are three kinds of Protective Orders that can protect you and others in your family or home:

- > Emergency Protective Order (may last only 72 hours).
- > Preliminary Protective Order (lasts 15 days or until a full hearing).
- > Protective Order (may last up to two years).

## What if I need help now and no judge is available?

Go to the Magistrate's Office and ask for an Emergency Protective Order (see back for contact information). An Emergency Protective Order could last only 72 hours. If you need longer protection, you *must* ask the court for a Preliminary Protective Order.

## How do I get a Preliminary Protective Order?

You must fill out court forms and file them with a local Court Services Unit for review. A judge will then review your forms and may ask you questions. The judge will decide if you receive a Preliminary Protective Order.

## How long does a Preliminary Protective Order last?

It lasts 15 days or until the full hearing. The full hearing is when both you and the other person get to tell your stories to the judge. The judge will tell you when the full hearing is and it will be written on the order.

## What if I don't go to the full hearing?

If you do not go to the full hearing, your Preliminary Protective Order ends in 15 days or the date of the hearing.

## What if the other person does not come to the hearing?

You should go to court on that day anyway and ask the court to issue a new Preliminary Protective Order with a new date for a full hearing.

## How long does a Protective Order last?

It can last for up to two years.

## When do Protective Orders take effect?

A sheriff's deputy or court official must give the Protective Order to the person you want protection from. A Protective Order is not valid until that person gets a copy. This is called "personal service."

## How do I know if the person I want protection from has been served?

Call the Sheriff's Office's Civil Enforcement Division at 703-246-3227, TTY 711, and ask if the person has been served.

## What if the person I want protection from does not obey the order?

The police can arrest the person and file criminal charges.

## What if the person comes to my house or workplace?

Call the police and tell them you have a Protective Order.

## What if I need to change part of the Protective Order?

You *must* fill out and file new court forms.

## What if the other person and I own a home or a car together?

The Protective Order does not change ownership to any real or personal property.

## What is a "no contact" order?

No contact means the other person cannot contact you:

- > In person.
- > By phone, beeper, fax, mail or e-mail.
- > Through someone else.

The other person cannot send you anything, such as gifts or flowers. If you must sometimes contact the other person, tell the judge at the hearing.

## What if I feel my children are in immediate danger from the person I want protection from?

Ask the judge to order the person you want protection from not to have contact with your children.

## What if I want custody of the children or restricted visitation with the person I want protection from?

You must ask the judge for temporary custody or visitation.

## What if I need financial support for the children?

You must ask the judge for temporary child support.

## What does temporary mean?

Temporary means the court will only make short-term custody and visitation orders in a Protective Order. The judge cannot do this until the full hearing. If you have court papers about child custody or visitation, take them to the hearing.

## What is custody?

Custody includes both physical and legal custody. "Physical custody" means where the child lives; "legal custody" means who makes important decisions about the health, education and welfare of the child.

## What is visitation?

Visitation is a right given by the court to a parent or other relative to visit with a child. If just one parent has custody (known as sole custody), the other parent may get visitation rights.

## What is child support?

Child support is the legal obligation or responsibility of a parent to contribute to his or her child's basic living expenses.

## What if I need long-term custody/visitation or child support orders?

You must fill out other court forms; ask the Court Services Unit about these forms. A fee may be charged to file for long-term custody/visitation or support. Keep in mind that temporary orders will cease if the Protective Order is dismissed or expires.

## What if I am worried about my children's safety at school or day care?

Ask the judge to order the person you want protection from not to contact the children at school or day care. Give copies of the Protective Order to babysitters, school officials and day care providers.

## What if I am concerned about my children's pickup or return?

Ask the judge to order a safe place for the children to be picked up or returned. Ask the judge to order a person other than the person you want protection from to pick up or return the children, such as that person's parent or friend.

## What if my children and I need a safe place to stay?

Contact a local domestic violence shelter (see back for contact information) or the Virginia Family Abuse and Sexual Assault Hot Line at 1-800-838-8238.