

The Domestic Violence Court

Advocacy Program provides a range of comprehensive services for victims of domestic violence. The program offers support and advocacy and is designed to assist victims throughout the court process.

Services include (*but are not limited to*):

- Information and referrals (shelter, counseling, access to legal services)
- Bilingual assistance
- Crisis intervention
- Safety planning
- Court accompaniment to hearings
- Court advocacy and assistance in applying for civil protective orders
- Information about the criminal justice system

About Protective Orders

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

Emergency Protective Orders

(Last 72 hours. May last longer if the expiration date falls during a holiday)

Preliminary Protective Orders

(Last 15 days or until a final hearing)

Protective Orders

(May last up to two years)

You may request a protective order, even if the batterer is not arrested or charged. A protective order is a civil procedure, not a criminal case. The abuser will not receive any jail time as a result of the order.

However, if the order is violated, the abuser can be charged with a violation of the order, which can result in jail time (*Virginia Code* 16.1-253.2)

Remember, a protective order does not guarantee your safety. It is recommended that you notify the police or sheriff's department if it is violated, so the abuser can be charged or arrested.

Frequently Asked Questions about Protective Orders

How do I get a Preliminary Protective Order?

You must make an appointment, in person or by phone, with Domestic Relations Services, to fill out a protective order petition. They can be reached at **703-246-3040**.

How long does a Preliminary Order last?

After a judge grants the Preliminary Protective Order, it will remain valid for 15 days or until the Permanent Protective Order hearing is scheduled.

When do protective orders take effect? The respondent must be served with the emergency, preliminary or permanent protective order before it becomes valid. This is called "personal service."

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

To inquire about service of a protective order, you may contact the Sheriff's Department at **703-246-3230** and ask if it has been served.

What if I don't go to the final protective order hearing?

If you cannot attend the Protective Order hearing and need to reschedule, please contact the **Clerk's Office at 703-246-3367**. If you do not attend the final hearing and do not notify the court, your Preliminary Order *will expire* on that date.

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

You should still appear in court on that day. The hearing may be heard without the respondent. If the respondent has not been served, you may ask the court to reissue the Preliminary Protective Order with a new date for a full hearing.

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

Contact the police immediately. The police can arrest the person and file criminal charges.

IF YOU FEEL YOU ARE IN IMMINENT DANGER OR ARE EXPERIENCING AN EMERGENCY CALL 911

How a Protective Order Can Protect Your Children

What if I believe my children are in immediate danger? Ask the judge to order the respondent not to have contact with your children.

What if I'm worried about my children's safety at school or day care? If your child is added on the protective order, you may give copies of the protective order to babysitters, school officials and day care providers.

What if I want custody of the children or restricted visitation with the respondent?

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 protective order hearing. If you have court papers about child custody or visitation, take them to the hearing.

What if I need to change part of the Protective Order? You **must** return to Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court and fill out a Motion to Amend form in order to make changes to the protective order.

If you have any questions about protective orders, please contact Domestic Relations Services at 703-246-3040 or the Domestic Violence Court Advocate at 703-246-7609.



Safety Planning for Victims of Domestic Violence

SAFETY WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE

- Find a safe place to stay.
- Put aside emergency money.
- Have a bag packed with important documents.
- Contact a domestic violence program.
- Let someone you trust know about your situation and where you will be staying.

SAFETY IN YOUR OWN HOME

- Change your locks.
- If possible, change your phone number.
- If you feel comfortable, talk to your neighbors and/or landlord.

SAFETY AND YOUR CHILDREN

- If your child is listed on a protective order or custody order, give a copy to your child's school or day care provider.
- Find a safe place to exchange children during visitation.

CHECKLIST OF ITEMS TO TAKE WITH YOU IF YOU PLAN TO LEAVE AN ABUSIVE SITUATION:

- Identification/Drivers license
- Social Security cards/Birth certificates for both you and your children
- Records (medical, school, bank, etc)
- Keys (house, office, car)
- Medications
- Important documents (Protective Orders, Custody, Divorce papers, etc.)
- Address book
- Passports/Green cards/Visas
- Lease/rental/mortgage papers
- Welfare identification
- Current unpaid bills
- Change of clothes for yourself and your children

Trust your instincts and your decisions. You are the only one who can best determine how to keep yourself and/or your children safe.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES

JDRDC Domestic Relations Services	703-246-3040
JDRDC Clerk's Office	703-246-3367
Fairfax County Sheriff's Office (Civil Enforcement Section)	703-246-3230
Magistrate	703-246-2178
Legal Services of Northern Virginia	703-246-4500
Potomac Legal Aid	703-532-2525
Commonwealth Attorney	703-246-2776
Department of Family Services	703-324-7500
Coordinated Services Planning	703-222-0880
Women's Shelter	703-435-4940
Victim Assistance Network	703-360-7273
Northern Virginia Family Service	703-385-3267
Progreso Hispano	703-799-8830
AYUDA	202-387-4848
Foundation for Appropriate & Immediate Temporary Help (FAITH)	571-323-2198
Tahirih Justice Center	703-575-0070
The Women's Center	703-281-2657
Virginia State Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-838-8238	
National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)	

POLICE DEPARTMENT NON-EMERGENCY

Fairfax County	703-691-2131
City of Fairfax	703-385-7924
Town of Herndon	703-435-6846
Town of Vienna	703-255-6366
Fairfax County Police Department Victim Services Section	703-246-2141

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 911

Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program



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4000 Chain Bridge Road
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Phone: (703) 246-7609**



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