

What is a civil protection order?

Who can get one?

You can ask for a protection order if you are experiencing domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault, stalking, gun violence, or if you are a vulnerable adult experiencing abuse or neglect. Sometimes you can ask for a protection order on behalf of someone else who needs one.

It is a court order you can ask a judge to issue that is meant to protect you from another person. It is not part of a criminal case, but can be, if violated. A protected person gets a protection order against a restrained person.



What can it do?

It can order the restrained person to do or not do specific things. Some examples:

- ✓ Not contact you or your children
- ✓ Stay a certain distance away
- ✓ Move out of the home you share
- ✓ Give you temporary custody of children
- ✓ Let you have essential possessions
- ✓ Get treatment
- ✓ Not have guns

You can ask for the restraints you need.



How can I get one?

Fill out these court forms and file them with the court clerk:

- ✓ PO 001 *Petition for Protection Order*
- ✓ PO 003 *Law Enforcement and Confidential Information*

Or file XR 101 or 201 for an *Extreme Risk Protection Order*.

Some courts require additional forms. Check with local court. Get forms at courts.wa.gov/forms/.

It's free to file, except for some antiharassment petitions. You can ask the court to waive the antiharassment fee.



What if I need protection right now?

You can use the *Petition* form to ask for immediate protection. A judge will consider your request the same day you file, or the next working day if you file later in the day or when the court is closed.



Can I get help with the forms?

Ask the court clerk about local victim services organizations with advocates who can help you with the forms.



Where can I file?

You can file in District or Superior Court except *Vulnerable Adult Protection Orders* must be filed in Superior Court. Sometimes the District Court may have to transfer your case to Superior Court.

Choose a court in the county where the incident/s occurred, where you live now, or where you used to live if you moved because of the restrained person. Or you can file in the court that is closest to where you live or used to live, even if it is in another county.



Who sees what I file in court?

Once you file, your *Petition* is a public record that anyone can see. It will also be served on the restrained person and reviewed by the judge. Do **not** include confidential information with your petition. You can file some medical and financial documents under a sealed cover sheet. That keeps those records away from the public, but the restrained person will still see them.



Can I keep my address confidential?

Yes! You can keep your home address confidential. But you must give the court and the restrained person some other address where you can receive court papers. This could be an email, PO box, or other mailing address.



What if I don't speak English?

You have a right to an interpreter. Ask the court for help.

Get translated forms at <https://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/>

This information is a summary, not a complete list. For advice about your situation, talk to a lawyer.