

# How to Obtain an Order of Protection

You are about to ask for a Temporary Order of Protection as a victim of abuse. This sheet has information to guide you through the legal process and answer some of the questions you may have.

You are the PETITIONER. The Petitioner is the person alleging abuse and asking for protection. The RESPONDENT is the person you are asking the court to protect you from. A Temporary Order of Protection is an order, signed by a judge, which restricts or prohibits the Respondent from contacting you. Generally, a Temporary Order of Protection is good for 20 days.

If you are a minor, your parent, guardian, or other representative may file a petition for a Temporary Order of Protection on your behalf against the Respondent.

You have the right to appear in court on your own to request a Temporary Order of Protection. However, the following resources are available in your community to help you through this process:

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When signed by a Judge, a Temporary Order of Protection is valid immediately. After the judge signs the Order, these are the next steps:

- Your Petition and a copy of the Order must be given to law enforcement for service upon the Respondent.
- There must be a hearing within 20 days. If law enforcement cannot find the Respondent within 20 days, you will need to ask the court to set a new hearing date.
- At the hearing you must be prepared to explain to the court why you are asking for an Order of Protection, which includes bringing witnesses to the hearing who have knowledge about the facts in your Petition.

Stay in contact with the Clerk of Court for information about your case. The Clerk's number is: \_\_\_\_\_.

You should keep copies of your Order with you at all times. It is a good idea to always carry one in your purse or wallet, as well as having a copy at work and at your children's schools.