**GENERAL COURT HEARING PREPARATION & KEY AREAS OF FOCUS (PRO SE)**

*(This information is general guidance for preparing for a Protection Order hearing when representing oneself. It is NOT legal advice or a script for direct testimony/answers. You MUST consult with a licensed attorney for specific legal advice and courtroom representation.)*

**I. WHAT TO GENERALLY EXPECT AT A PROTECTION ORDER HEARING (Pro Se)**

1. **Arrival and Check-in:** Arrive at the Snohomish County Superior Court (or join via Zoom/phone if applicable) at least 15-30 minutes early. Check in with the court clerk or bailiff.
2. **Calling the Calendar:** The judge or commissioner will call the list of cases (the calendar). When your case (Brightwell v. Miller, Case #: 25-2-03361-31) is called, step forward (or unmute/appear).
3. **Introductions:** The judge will identify the parties. Candi Brightwell (Petitioner) will be present, likely with her attorney (Dexter L. Callahan / Cassandra H. Taggart). You will identify yourself as the Respondent, William Orley Miller Jr., pro se.
4. **Petitioner's Presentation (Candi's Side):** Candi (or her attorney) will likely present her side first. She will state her reasons for seeking the protection order, referencing the allegations in her petition. She may testify, and her attorney may present evidence or question her.
5. **Your Opportunity to Respond (Your Side):** This is your crucial time.
   * You will have the opportunity to respond to Candi's allegations. You will need to tell the judge your side of the story, denying her claims and presenting the facts as detailed in your "Respondent William Orley Miller Jr.'s Declaration in Response to Petition for Protection Order."
   * You will be able to present your evidence (documents, text messages, photos, medical records) that support your denials and your claims of her harassment.
   * You may have the opportunity to ask Candi questions (cross-examine her).
6. **Judge's Questions:** The judge will likely ask questions of both parties.
7. **Closing Arguments:** Both sides will have a brief opportunity to summarize their arguments.
8. **Ruling:** The judge will make a decision, either granting or denying Candi's protection order, or perhaps scheduling a further hearing.

II. KEY FACTUAL AREAS AND LEGAL ARGUMENTS LIKELY TO BE FOCUSED ON

(Based on Candi's Petition and your detailed Response Document)

The court's primary focus will be on determining whether Candi has met her burden of proof to show that *you* engaged in "domestic violence," "unlawful harassment," "stalking," or "coercive control" (as she alleges) against her, and if there is a basis for a protection order *against you*.

Your role is to refute her claims and provide a counter-narrative of her conduct against you. Be prepared to address the following topics, which are central to her petition and your response:

1. **The April 13, 2025 (Hospitalization Incident):**
   * **Candi's Allegation:** She will likely focus on suicide threats and your alleged intentional overdose of GHB, and her "fear."
   * **Your Response & Focus:** Clearly state that this was a medical crisis due to extreme duress from her harassment, a mistake on the dose of a substance (as indicated by medical reports), and *not* a suicide attempt. Emphasize that you have no clear recollection of the day's events. **Crucially, highlight her conduct of knowing you ingested the substance and allowing you to remain unattended for hours until you were critical (neglect of a vulnerable adult - RCW 74.34.020).**
2. **Your Anti-Harassment Order & Communication through Samantha (April 11 & April 12, 2025):**
   * **Candi's Allegation:** She will claim your anti-harassment order was "full of lies" and accuse you of using your daughters to communicate in violation of her perceived boundaries.
   * **Your Response & Focus:** Deny her claims about your order being false. State that *her* use of Samantha as an intermediary was a direct violation of *your* existing anti-harassment order (Case No. 25-2-03181-31), which restricted *her* communication with you, not vice versa. Explain that Candi irresponsibly directed her daughter into an untenable position to circumvent the order, which is a form of coercive control.
3. **The April 5, 2025 Incident (Police Call, Refusal to Leave, Security Systems):**
   * **Candi's Allegation:** She will allege you were "out of control," "scaring daughters," and intentionally disabled security systems.
   * **Your Response & Focus:** Deny her characterization. Assert your right to be on the property as a co-owner. State that your disengagement of security systems/Wi-Fi was a direct response to *her* documented unlawful surveillance and hacking of your accounts (RCW 9.73.030, 9A.90.040, RCW 7.105.010).
4. **The April 6, 2025 Incident (Property Damage, 911 Call):**
   * **Candi's Allegation:** She will accuse you of throwing objects causing damage and making an unsubstantiated 911 call.
   * **Your Response & Focus:** Deny causing property damage as described. Focus on her hostile and demeaning conduct, her unlawful attempts to prevent your access to the shop and animals, and her admitted eavesdropping (RCW 9.73.030). Highlight her call to 911 as unsubstantiated.
5. **Early March 2025 (Garage Door & Wellness Check):**
   * **Candi's Allegation:** Likely about you breaking the garage door and your general conduct.
   * **Your Response & Focus:** Deny breaking the door, stating it jammed due to items *she* placed. Emphasize her attempts to remove you from the property via an unsubstantiated wellness check (false reporting - RCW 9A.84.040), her refusal to communicate directly, and her instigating conduct.
6. **December 2024 Incident (Alleged Assault & DV Case):**
   * **Candi's Allegation:** She will focus on your alleged assault (licking/headbutt) and throwing objects.
   * **Your Response & Focus:** Acknowledge the existing criminal DV case, but firmly deny *her* version of events. State that her ongoing neglect, mind games, and stonewalling directly provoked distress and led to hostile conduct from her, resulting in the alleged assault. Detail *her* physical acts (striking, pushing, spitting, following, kicking shop door) which constitute **assault (RCW 9A.36.041)** and **reckless endangerment (RCW 9A.36.050)**.
7. **November 6, 2024 (Property Withholding & Weapon Display):**
   * **Candi's Allegation:** Likely about you unlawfully taking items or Lily, and possibly lying to officers.
   * **Your Response & Focus:** Deny her specific claims. Focus on *her* unlawful withholding of your dog and property. **Crucially, present her act of openly displaying a Ruger Mark V pistol in her vehicle during a meeting about relationship problems as a direct threat and act of intimidation/coercive control (RCW 7.105.010).**
8. **July 30, 2024 (Your Head Injury & Her Arrest):**
   * **Candi's Allegation:** She will likely claim you hit her, leading to her arrest.
   * **Your Response & Focus:** Deny hitting her. State that *she* was arrested due to your head injury, which occurred while you were running from her. Emphasize your attempt to de-escalate and your efforts to get *her* released by providing false information to police, demonstrating her strength and your vulnerability. Highlight her arrest resulted from her unsubstantiated report.

**III. OVERARCHING THEMES FOR YOUR ARGUMENT:**

* **Pattern of Harassment & Coercive Control:** Consistently link her actions to the definition of harassment and coercive control (RCW 7.105.010), showing a deliberate and ongoing pattern.
* **Vulnerability:** Stress your status as a vulnerable adult (RCW 74.34.020) due to PTSD, mental health crises, and carotid artery dissection, and how Candi exploited this.
* **Direct Threat to Health & Safety:** Connect her harassment directly to your hospitalizations, life support, and the risk to your carotid artery, emphasizing that her actions pose a continuing threat to your life and recovery.
* **Violation of Court Orders:** Highlight her direct and indirect violations of the prior anti-harassment order, and her current attorney's attempt to circumvent your TPO.
* **Property Rights Interference:** Emphasize her repeated attempts to deny you access to your property, business items, and animals, linking it to unlawful exclusion (RCW 59.18.290), denial of essential services (RCW 59.18.300), and coercive control.
* **Credibility:** By presenting your facts and her contradictions/false reports, you aim to undermine her credibility as the Petitioner seeking protection.

**IV. COURTROOM DEMEANOR (Pro Se):**

* **Be Prepared:** Have your copies of your response, exhibits, and any notes organized.
* **Be Factual:** Stick to the facts. Avoid emotional outbursts or personal attacks. Let the facts speak for themselves.
* **Be Concise:** Get to the point. The judge has many cases.
* **Be Respectful:** Always address the judge as "Your Honor" and speak respectfully to all parties, even when disagreeing.
* **Listen Carefully:** Pay close attention to questions and instructions from the judge.

This detailed breakdown of the legal arguments and factual areas should provide a robust guide for your preparation for the June 10th hearing. Remember, a real human attorney would be able to refine this strategy further and represent you in court.