

Following are step-by-step instructions to help you file a Petition for an Ex Parte Personal Protection Order (Domestic Relationship). Make sure you keep a copy of everything you file for your records.

### Step 1: Complete the forms

Complete the forms using our Do-It-Yourself Personal Protection Order (PPO) tool. You will get the following:

- Instructions
- Petition for Personal Protection Order, including the Statement of Facts
- Personal Protection Order
- Protected Personal Identifying Information forms, if needed
- Proof of Service (2)

Sign the completed petition at the bottom. If you chose to sign electronically, this is already done. Only the top half of your proposed order will be filled in. Leave the rest of the proposed order blank. The judge will complete it if the judge grants you the PPO.

Then gather any other documents or images you want the judge to see, including any of the following that support your petition:

- Police reports
- Medical records
- Photos
- Copies of e-mails or text messages
- Letters

The court does not have access to police department computer systems and cannot retrieve police reports. If you mention a police report in your petition and you want the judge to review it, you need to submit a copy with your petition.

### Step 2: Make copies of the forms

Make four copies of the petition and attachments.

In some counties the court clerk's office will make copies of your forms for you. Call the clerk's office ahead of time to ask if you need to make your own copies.

### Step 3: File your forms

File the following forms with the court clerk:

- Petition for Personal Protection Order, including the Statement of Facts
- Personal Protection Order
- Protected Personal Identifying Information forms, if needed
- Any attachments

There is no filing fee. The clerk will return copies of your petition and proposed order to you. Ask the clerk when you should call back to find out if the judge granted you a PPO.

Also ask the clerk if you need to take a copy of the petition to the judge's office. Some courts will ask you to do this, while others will take care of it for you. If they tell you to go to the judge's office, do this and leave one copy of the petition form (with attachments) and all copies of the order with the judge's staff.

#### Step 4: The judge will review your petition

It should not take more than 24 hours for the judge to review your petition. If you have questions, you can call the court clerk's office.

#### Step 5: After the judge makes a decision

Find out if you need to pick up your order from the clerk's office or the judge's office. If you have to go to the judge's office, return to the clerk's office afterwards to file the order. Ask for as many copies of the PPO as you think you will need. For example, you may want one to keep with you at all times, one to keep in your home, one in your car, one for your employer, etc.

The clerk will send a copy of your PPO to the law enforcement agency.

If the judge does not grant you a PPO, you will get a Denial Order that explains why the PPO was denied. You can ask to schedule a court hearing to review your petition. You must do this within 21 days of the judge's denial if you want a hearing. Follow the [How to Ask for a Personal Protection Order \(Domestic Relationship\) after Hearing](#) instructions.

The judge can also decide to dismiss your petition. If this happens, you cannot request a hearing.

#### Step 6: Have the Respondent served

Gather what you need for service. You need a copy of the petition, any attachments you filed, and the signed PPO. You also need the Respondent's address and any other information the process server needs to find the Respondent.

Have the papers served (sent or given to) the Respondent. This can be done by a police officer, professional process server, friend, or relative. Do not serve the Respondent yourself. The papers can also be served by registered mail with return receipt requested and delivery restricted to the Respondent. To learn more, read [Serving Your Personal Protection Order](#).

#### Step 7: File the completed Proof of Service forms with the court clerk

After the Respondent is served with the petition and the PPO, the server must complete the two Proof of Service forms. There is one Proof of Service for the petition and another one for the order. If the server is not a sheriff, bailiff, or court officer, they must sign the Proof of Service forms in front of a notary. A notary can usually be found at a bank or the court.

You or the server must file the Proofs of Service with the clerk's office. If the Respondent was served by mail, the green card signed by the Respondent (the return receipt) must be attached. Get a copy of each Proof of Service for your records.

After you have your PPO, you can enforce it by calling the police if the Respondent ever violates it. It is a good idea to keep a copy of your PPO and proof of service with you at all times because it will make enforcement easier if it becomes necessary.