

These instructions cannot cover all of the questions that may arise in a particular case. If you do not know what to do to protect your rights, you should see a lawyer.

What is a civil harassment restraining order?

It is a court order that helps protect people from harassment.

Can I get a civil harassment restraining order?

You can ask for one if you are worried about your safety because someone:

- Is harassing you
- Is stalking you
- Has committed acts of violence against you, or
- Has threatened you with violence

How will the order help me?

The court can order a person to:

- Not harass or threaten you
- Not contact or go near you, *and*
- Not have a gun

You can also ask for protection for people who live with you and family members.

In a civil harassment case, the court cannot:

- Order a person to move out of your residence
- Order a person to pay child support to you
- Make orders for custody and visitation

If you need these orders, you should proceed under the Domestic Violence Protection Act. File Form DV-100.

The court also cannot:

- Order a person to pay money that he or she owes you
- Order someone to move out of rental property that you own
- Order someone to stop creating a nuisance that doesn't involve harassment

If you need these remedies, you must file a civil action.

How much does it cost?

That depends on the type of harassment. If the restrained person has used or threatened to use violence against you or has stalked you, you do not have to pay a filing fee; otherwise, you must pay the fee.

If you cannot afford to pay the filing fee, ask the clerk how to apply for a fee waiver. Form FW-001 is available for this purpose.

If the order is based on prior acts of violence, a credible threat of violence, or stalking, you are entitled to free service of the order by a sheriff or marshal. Also, if you are eligible for a fee waiver, you can ask the sheriff or marshal to serve the order for free. If you are not eligible for free service, you may pay the sheriff or marshal to serve the order.

What forms do I need to get the order?

You must fill out all of Form CH-100, *Request for Civil Harassment Restraining Orders*, and Form CLETS-001, *Confidential CLETS Information*. If you need attachments, you may use Form MC-025. You must also fill out items 1 and 2 on Form CH-109, *Notice of Court Hearing*, and items 1, 2, and 3 on Form CH-110, *Temporary Restraining Order (CLETS)*.

Where can I get these forms?

You can get the forms from legal publishers or on the Internet at www.courts.ca.gov. You also may be able to find them at your local courthouse or county law library.

What do I need to do to get the order?

You must go to the superior court in the county where the harassment took place or the person to be restrained lives. At the court, ask where you should file your request for a civil harassment restraining order. (A self-help center or legal aid association may be able to assist you in filing your request.)

At the court, give your forms to the clerk of the court. The clerk will give you a hearing date on the *Notice of Court Hearing* form, and if your request for immediate orders is granted, a copy of the *Temporary Restraining Order* signed by a judicial officer.



How soon can I get the order?

If you ask for a temporary restraining order, the court will decide within 24 hours whether or not to make the order. Sometimes the court decides sooner. Ask whether you should wait or come back later to get the signed *Notice of Court Hearing* and *Temporary Restraining Order*.

How long does the order last?

If the court makes a temporary order, it will last until your hearing date. At that time, the court will decide to continue or cancel the order. The order could last for up to five years.

How will the person to be restrained know about the order?

Someone age 18 or older—**not you** or anyone else to be protected by the order—must “serve” (give) the person to be restrained a copy of the order. The server must then fill out Form CH-200, *Proof of Personal Service*, and give it to you to file with the court. For help with service, ask the court clerk for Form CH-200-INFO, *What Is “Proof of Personal Service?”*.

What if the restrained person does not obey the order?

Call the police. The restrained person can be arrested and charged with a crime.

Do I have to go to court?

Yes. Go to court on the date the clerk gives you.

Do I need to bring a witness to the court hearing?

Witnesses are not required, but it helps to have more proof of the harassment than just your word. You can bring:

- Witnesses
- Written statements from witnesses made under oath
- Photos
- Medical or police reports
- Damaged property
- Threatening letters, e-mails, or telephone messages

The court may or may not let witnesses speak at the hearing. So, if possible, you should bring their written statements under oath to the hearing. (You can use Form MC-030, *Declaration*, for this.).

Do I need a lawyer?

Having a lawyer is always a good idea, but it is not required and you are not entitled to a free court-appointed attorney. Ask the court clerk about free and low-cost legal services and self-help centers in your county.

Will I see the restrained person at the court hearing?

If the person comes to the hearing, yes. But that person does not have the right to speak to you. If you are afraid, tell the court officer.

Can I bring someone with me to court?

Yes. You can bring someone to sit with you during the hearing. But that person cannot speak for you in court. Only you or your lawyer (if you have one) can speak for you.



What if I am deaf or hard of hearing?

Assistive listening systems, computer-assisted real-time captioning, or sign language interpreter services are available if you ask at least five days before the hearing. Contact the clerk's office or go to www.courts.ca.gov/forms for *Request for Accommodations by Persons with Disabilities and Response* (Form MC-410). (Civ.Code, § 54.8.)

For help in your area, contact:

[Local information may be inserted.]

What if I don't speak English?

When you file your papers, ask the clerk if a court interpreter is available. You may have to pay a fee for the interpreter. If an interpreter is not available for your court date, you should ask someone who is not listed as a person to be protected on your Request and who is over age 18 to interpret for you .

Can I agree with the restrained person to cancel the order?

No. Once the order is issued, only the judge can change or cancel it. You or the restrained person would have to file a request with the court to cancel the order.