

**What is a civil harassment restraining order?**

It is a court order that prohibits you from doing certain things and going to certain places.

**What does the order do?**

The court can order you to:

- Not contact the person who asked for the order
- Stay away from that person and the person's home and workplace
- Not have any guns as long as the order is in effect

**Who can ask for a civil harassment restraining order?**

A person who is worried about safety because he or she has been or is being:

- Stalked
- Harassed
- Assaulted, including sexually, *or*
- Threatened with violence

**I've been served with a request for civil harassment restraining orders. What do I do now?**

Read the papers served on you very carefully. The *Notice of Court Hearing* tells you when to appear in court. There may also be a *Temporary Restraining Order* forbidding you from doing certain things. You must obey the order until the hearing.

**What if I don't obey the order?**

The police can arrest you. You can go to jail and pay a fine.

**What if I don't agree with what the order says?**

You still must obey the order until the hearing. If you disagree with the orders the person is asking for, fill out Form CH-120, *Response to Request for Civil Harassment Restraining Orders*, before your hearing date and file it with the court. If you need to include attachments, you can use Form MC-025. You can get the forms from legal publishers or on the Internet at [www.courts.ca.gov](http://www.courts.ca.gov). You also may be able to find them at your local courthouse or county law library.

**Do I have to serve the other person with a copy of my response?**

Yes. Have someone age 18 or older—**not you**—mail a copy of completed Form CH-120 to the person who asked for the order (or that person's lawyer). (This is called "service by mail.")

The person who serves the form by mail must fill out Form CH-250, *Proof of Service of Response by Mail*. Have the person who did the mailing sign the original. Take the completed form back to the court clerk or bring it with you to the hearing.

**Should I go to the court hearing?**

Yes. You should go to court on the date listed on Form CH-109, *Notice of Court Hearing*. If you do not go to the hearing, the judge can make orders against you without hearing from you.



**How long does the order last?**

If the court issued a temporary restraining order before the hearing, it will last until your hearing date. At that time, the court will decide to continue or cancel the order. Any order issued at the hearing can last for up to five years.

**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 person who asked for the order at the court hearing?**

Yes. Assume that the person who is asking for the order will attend the hearing. Do not talk to him or her unless the judge or that person's attorney says that you can.

**Can I bring a witness to the court hearing?**

Yes. You can bring witnesses or documents that support your case to the hearing. But if possible, you should also bring the witnesses' written statements of what they saw or heard. Their statements must be made under penalty of perjury. You can use Form MC-030 for this.

**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, bring someone to interpret for you. You should ask someone age 18 or older to interpret for you.

**What if I have a gun?**

If a restraining order is issued, you cannot own, possess, or have a gun, other firearm, or ammunition while the order is in effect. If you have a gun or other firearm in your immediate possession or control, you must sell it to or store it with a licensed gun dealer, or turn it in to a law enforcement agency.

**Can I agree with the protected person to cancel the order?**

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

**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 court days before the hearing. Contact the clerk's office or go to [www.courts.ca.gov/forms](http://www.courts.ca.gov/forms) for *Request for Accommodations by Persons with Disabilities and Response* (Form MC-410). (Civ. Code, § 54.8.)