

**Part 1: Complete court forms**

You will need to complete at least three forms to ask for a domestic violence restraining order:

**Required forms:**

- [Form DV-100](#);
- [Form DV-109](#); and
- [Form DV-110](#).

**Optional forms:**

If you have a child or children with the other side, you can ask for additional protection, like child custody orders. To make these requests, you must complete two more forms:

- [Form DV-105](#); and
- [Form DV-140](#).

If you want to ask for child support or spousal support, make the request on form DV-100 (see item (24) or (25) ) and complete one more form:

- [Form FL-150](#).

**Most court forms are public documents. What does "public" mean?**

When you file papers with the court, those papers become "public." This means that anyone may ask the court to see the information you put on your papers. Also, the person you are asking for protection from will see all the information on your court papers, because you will have to have these papers personally delivered to the them. This is called "personal service," and more information is available on [form DV-200-INFO, What Is "Proof of Personal Service"?](#)

**How old must I be to ask for my own restraining order against someone?**

To ask for a restraining order, you must be 12 years old or older. In some cases, the judge may ask that an adult (someone 18 years old or older), like a trusted relative, help you in your case.

**Tips for completing form DV-100****Required relationship**

At item (3), you must have one of the listed relationships between you and the person you want protection from. If none apply, go to <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/restraining-orders> for information on other types of restraining orders you might qualify for.

**Describe the abuse**

At items (5)–(7), you must describe the abuse that happened. This part is important, because a judge will decide whether to give you a restraining order based on the information you give. For more information of what abuse means under the law, see form [DV-500-INFO, Can A Domestic Violence Restraining Order Help Me?](#)

**I don't want people to see my address**

You may not want someone to be able to see certain information, like your address. You do not have to give the address to where you live on form DV-100, item (1). You can use a different address, like a friend's address or P.O. box. Just be sure to get the person's permission to use their address first, because any papers the court or other side mails to you will go to the address you list in item (1). And make sure that person will tell you right away if you get mail from the court.

**I don't want people to see information I provide about a child (minor)**

You can ask the court to make some of the information you provide about a child private (confidential). If the court makes information about a child private, the public will not be able to see this information on your court papers. See [form DV-160-INFO](#) for help with asking the court to make a child's information private.



### What if the other side has firearms (guns) or ammunition?

In item (9), list information you have about any firearms (guns), firearm parts, or ammunition that the other side might own or have access to. This information is important to the judge. The judge can notify law enforcement about any firearms, including illegal or untraceable firearms called "ghost guns." Once notified, law enforcement must do what they can to get the firearms if there is a restraining order in place.

### What does "Other orders" (item (14)) mean?

This section allows you to make any special requests that you need to prevent more abuse by the other side.

### What is the difference between "Pay Debts Owed for Property (item (22)) and "Pay Expenses Caused by the Abuse (item (23))?"

If you want the other side to pay a debt owed for property, like a car or mortgage, you can make this request at item (22). If you want the other person to pay you back for damage that happened because of their abuse, like breaking your cellphone or for medical bills, you can make this request at item (23).

### What is "Spousal Support" (item (25))?

If you are married to the person you want protection from or in a registered domestic partnership, you can ask a judge to order them to pay you spousal support. The amount of spousal support depends on different factors, including how much you make versus how much the other side makes. It is important to know that in California, you cannot get spousal support for "common law" marriages, where parties have lived like a married couple but never legally married. California does not recognize "common law" marriage.

### What is a "Batterer Intervention Program" (item (27))?

In most cases, it is a year-long program that helps a person recognize abusive behavior so that they will stop the abuse. Unlike anger management programs, the goal of batterer intervention programs is to stop a person from using power and control in their relationships. If ordered to complete the program by a judge, the restrained person will have to pay program fees. The program will keep track of progress and attendance.

## Part 2: File your court papers

Filing is when you turn in your completed court papers to the court. To file your court papers, you can call the court clerk to see find out which courthouse to go to. If you want to file online (e-file), check your local court's website for more information. To find your local court or their website, go to:

[www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm](http://www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm).

## Part 3: Get your papers from court

After you turn in your court papers, you will need to get them back from the court. Your papers will be ready the same day or the next business day. Ask the court clerk when your court papers will be ready. You may have to return to the courthouse to pick up your papers if the court cannot return them to you electronically. Look at your papers to see if the judge granted you a temporary restraining order, on form DV-110.

- ▶ If the judge **granted** you temporary protection and you want it to last longer, make sure you attend your court hearing (listed on form DV-109).
- ▶ If the judge **did not** grant you a temporary restraining order, the judge can grant you a restraining order at your court hearing (listed on form DV-109).



**Part 4: Have someone serve your papers**

You must have an adult personally give a copy of all your court papers to the person you want a restraining order against. It cannot be you or anyone listed on the restraining order. Serving papers can be a dangerous situation. If you want the sheriff to serve your papers, they will do so for free. For more information on service, read [form DV-200-INFO](#), *What Is "Proof of Personal Service"?*

**Part 5: Get ready for and go to your court hearing**

At your court hearing, the judge will decide whether to grant you a long-term restraining order that can last up to five years. You have the option of attending your hearing in-person or remotely (by phone, or videoconference if available). For information on how to attend your hearing remotely, go to the court's website. Some courts may require advance notice. At the hearing, you and the other side will have the opportunity to tell your side of the story. For more information, read [form DV-520-INFO](#), *Get Ready for the Restraining Order Court Hearing*. If you need more time to prepare your case, you may ask for a new court date. Read form [DV-115-INFO](#), *How to Ask For a New Hearing Date*, for more information.

**Information about the process is also available online**

<https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/DV-restraining-order/process>.

**Where can I find free help?**

Free legal help is available at your court's self-help center. Find your local court's self-help center at [www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp](http://www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp). Self-help center staff will not act as your lawyer but may be able to give you information to help you decide what to do in your case, and help you with the forms. Staff may also refer you to other agencies who may be able to help you.

**What if I am worried about my safety?**

The National Domestic Violence Hotline provides free and private safety tips. Help is available every day, 24 hours a day, and in over 100 languages. Visit online at [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org) or call 1-800-799-7233; 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).