

GET READY FOR COURT

Don't miss your hearing!

If you miss it, your Temporary Ex Parte Protective Order may end.

Get ready.

- Fill out a Protective Order before you go to court and bring it with you.
- Bring any evidence you have, like photographs, medical records, or torn clothing. Also bring witnesses who know about the violence, like a neighbor, relative, or police. The judge may ask them to testify.
- If you had a Protective Order in the past, bring a copy of it.
- Bring proof of your and the other person's income and expenses, like bills, paycheck stubs, bank accounts, and tax returns.
- If the Proof of Service was returned to you, file it with the clerk and bring a copy to court. Proof of Service is a document that shows when and where the other person was given a copy of your Application for Protective Order.

Practice what you want to say.

Make a list of the orders you want and practice saying them out loud. Do not take more than 3 minutes to say what you want.

If you get nervous, just read from your application list. Use that list to see if the judge has made every order you asked for.

Get there 30 minutes early.

1. Find the courtroom.
2. When the courtroom opens, go in and tell the clerk or officer that you are present.
3. Watch the cases before yours so you will know what to do.
4. When your name is called, go to the front of the courtroom.

The judge may ask questions.

The other person or his/her lawyer may also ask you questions. Tell the truth. Speak slowly. Give complete answers. If you don't understand the question, say, "I don't understand the question."

Speak only to the judge unless it is your turn to ask questions. When other people are talking to the judge, wait for them to finish. Then you can ask questions about what they said.

What if I don't speak English?

When you first file your application, tell the clerk you will need an interpreter. Ask the clerk for free interpretation services.

If a court interpreter is not available, bring someone to interpret for you. Do not ask a child, a protected person, or a witness to interpret for you.

What if I am deaf?

When you first file your application, ask for an interpreter or other accommodation.

What if I need child support or visitation orders?

Call the Family Violence Legal Line before you go to court: **800-374-HOPE(4673)**

What if I am afraid?

If you don't feel safe, call your local family crisis center or the National Domestic Violence Hotline: **800-799-SAFE(7233)**

What happens after the hearing?

If the judge agrees you need protection, they will sign your Protective Order. Take your signed order to the court clerk. Ask for a certified copy of your order and keep it with you at all times.

Make sure copies of your order are sent to your children's daycare, babysitter, school, and to the other person's staff judge advocate at Joint Force Headquarters or the provost marshal of the military installation to which they are assigned. If the other person violates the order, call the police and show them your order.

Need help?

If you are in danger, call the police: **911**

Or call the Family Violence Legal Line: **800-374-HOPE(4673)**

Or go to: **www.texaslawhelp.org**

*Although you may file these forms without having a lawyer, you are encouraged to get a lawyer to help you in this process. Your county or district attorney or legal aid office may be able to help you for free. The State Bar of Texas may also be able to refer you to a lawyer if you call **800-252-9690**.*