

Counseling and Mental Health Center

How to Obtain a Protective Order



An important part of feeling safe again is being free from intimidation, stalking, and violence. Although a Protective Order cannot guarantee that freedom, it does provide you with legal recourse if the accused violates the rules issued by the court. A Protective Order might require someone to stay away from your work and home; specifically restrict them from contacting you, your friends, or family; and may also order them to attend counseling.

What is a Protective Order?

- Protective Orders are court orders to protect survivors of intimate partner violence, (dating or domestic violence), sexual assault and stalking.
- Only a judge can issue a Protective Order. With your input, a judge decides the rules that the respondent must follow.
- A Protective Order is usually in effect for up to two years but can be for longer.

In general, a Protective Order may require that a respondent:

- Is not allowed to physically hurt you
- Is not allowed to verbally threaten to hurt you or a loved one
- Is not allowed go near your home or work
- Is not allowed to go near the daycare or school of your children
- Is not allowed to follow you
- May be required to go to counseling
- May be required to pay child support
- May be required to follow a child visitation plan

How do I get a Protective Order?

The most common way to get a Protective Order is at the Travis County Attorney's office. Walk-in services are available, and it's FREE. You do not need to make a police report to apply for or obtain a Protective Order. Please note: waiting longer than 30 days after violence has occurred can hurt your chances of having an order granted. You can either do this on your own or with the assistance of a lawyer.

How do I apply for a Protective Order at the Travis County Attorney's Office?

You must apply in person at 314 W. 11th Street, Suite 300. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8am to 5pm, 512-854-4163. You can walk in without an appointment and staff will assist you through the process. There is metered parking around the building. Please note that after the initial screening it may take a couple of hours to complete the paperwork.



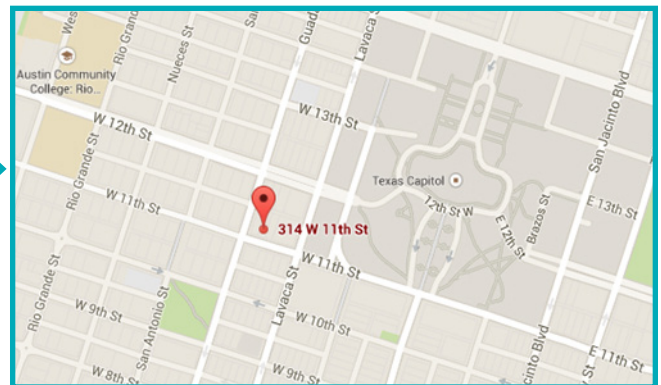
What are the consequences for breaking the Protective Order?

Criminal charges may result in fines of up to \$4000 and two years in jail, depending on whether the violation is a misdemeanor or a felony. Civil violations include contempt of court violations and may result in fines of up to \$500 and/or six months in jail for all other violations. You can report violations, violence and imminent threats to 911 or report civil violations to the Travis County Attorney 512-854-4163 or agency that assisted you with the order.

What do I need to bring with me to apply for a Protective Order at the County Attorney?

These items are RECOMMENDED:

- Information about the respondent. (e.g. make and model of car, addresses where they might be found, a photo of them, etc.)
- Evidence such as printouts of harassing messages and photos of injuries
- A timeline of incidents, including where and when they occurred and who was present



Who provides FREE legal assistance for Protective Orders?

- **Legal Services for Students**

If the respondent is NOT a student, faculty or staff at UT Austin: 512-471-7796
deanofstudents.utexas.edu/lss
SSB 4.104

- **Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA)**

1-888-988-9996
www.trla.org/austin_clinic.htm

- **Texas Advocacy Project**

Family Violence legal line: 512-476-5770
Sexual Assault legal line: 512-225-9290
www.texasadvocacyproject.org

- **Sexual Assault Legal Services & Assistance (SALSA)**

888-343-4414
www.hopelaws.org

For more information on Protective Orders, please see:

Travis County Attorney's Office:

www.co.travis.tx.us/county_attorney/victim_witness/protective_order.asp

Texas Law Help - Protective Order Kit:

www.texaslawhelp.org/protectiveorderkitxas

Voices Against Violence (VAV) Advocacy

A VAV Advocacy appointment is a confidential meeting meant to provide information about rights, options, and resources to a student who has experienced sexual violence, dating or relationship violence and/or stalking. All VAV Advocacy appointments are held in the Counseling and Mental Health Center, on the 5th floor of the SSB (100 West Dean Keeton Street) during business hours (8am-5pm, M-F). CMHC appointments, including VAV Advocacy, are confidential and not part of the academic record. Students seeking VAV advocacy do not need to disclose the details of their experience in order to access support. To make an appointment, please call 512-471-3515. For more information, please visit:

cmhc.utexas.edu/advocacy

More information about VAV issues and prevention can be found at cmhc.utexas.edu/vav

Questions, Comments or Requests? E-mail us at voicesagainstv violence@austin.utexas.edu



Together we can build a safer campus



VOICES AGAINST VIOLENCE

UT COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTER