

10 Things To Know When Considering A Civil Protection Order:

1. Protection Orders are for people who believe they are in danger.

If the person you wish to restrain has ever hurt or threatened to hurt you and/or your children in any way, if the person is harassing you in a threatening manner, or if the person has demonstrated violent behavior around you (damaged the furniture or hurt a pet), you may be eligible for a Civil Protection Order.

2. You do not have to disclose your address.

If your perpetrator does not know where you are currently residing and you want to keep it that way you do not need to include your address on the Civil Protection Order.

3. You can protect your children.

A judge can rule that the perpetrator be restrained from any contact with your children. If the perpetrator does not have legal rights to your children, the Civil Protection Order works for your children exactly as it works for you. If the perpetrator does have legal rights to your children, the judge can make a temporary order regarding care, control, and visitation of the children. This order is good for 120 days from the date the Permanent Protection Order is granted. It then becomes a custody issue and a matter for District Court.

4. A Protection Order is more readily enforceable than a no-contact bond.

Often a police officer will have to make at least one phone call to get verification that a no-contact order is in place. You will get a paper copy of your Civil Protection Order from the court and should have it with you at all times to show the responding police officers if you call 911.

5. There is no cost for filing or for service of a Protection Order:

If you are requesting protection from a current or former intimate partner which constitutes Domestic Violence.

If you **are not** seeking protection due to domestic violence then fees will be assessed for both filing and for service of the Protection Order. If you are not able to pay, you can ask to have both of these fees waived or postponed. Be sure to request a Motion to Waive Costs form from the Clerk of Courts office.

6. Civil Protection Orders do not create a criminal record.

When you get a Civil Protection Order against someone, the order by itself does not give that person a permanent criminal record. Only if your perpetrator violates the order is it a criminal offense.

7. PERMANENT MEANS PERMANENT

When a judge grants a Permanent Protection Order (PPO) it is valid permanently. You do not need to reapply after a certain amount of time. If you ever want the PPO dropped or want the conditions changed, you must return to the justice center to file the appropriate motion and explain why you no longer feel in danger.

8. *A Civil Protection Order is only part of a safety plan.*

Statistics show that Protection Orders do work. Once you get a Protection Order, if you or your children, if they are included in the Order, are contacted by the perpetrator in a way that is prohibited by the order, you should call 911. Violating a Civil Protection Order is a criminal offense.

For information on a complete personalized safety plan you can contact Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence at 303-444-2424, or Safe Shelter for St. Vrain Valley at 303-772-4422.

9. *You do not need a lawyer.*

It is not necessary to retain the services of a lawyer to get a Civil Protection Order. However, it can be helpful to have a lawyer if you have children or a particularly complicated case. You can contact Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence at 303-444-2424 or Safe Shelter for St. Vrain Valley at 303-772-4422, for lawyer referrals.

10. *YOU ARE NOT ALONE*

Court Advocates from Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence are available at the Boulder County Justice Center and the Broomfield County Courthouse to assist with filing for a Protection Order. Advocates from Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley are available at the Longmont annex. Please call the Crisis Lines listed in #9 for advocate availability.