

## Protective Orders (Part 3): How to File

Hello. I'm here to guide you through the process of filing for a protective order. Keep in mind that the protective order process can be a dangerous time for victims of domestic violence. Be extra cautious and watchful. There's help at [mdcourts.gov/dv](http://mdcourts.gov/dv).

Let's get started.

### **FULL-SCREEN ROAD MAP**

Forms to File

Address Privacy

Where to File

Get Help

In this video we'll talk about the forms you have to fill out when filing for a protective order. We'll discuss how to keep your address private on court documents, and where to file papers. Finally, we'll share helpful resources to keep you safe.

Before you request a protective order, be certain that you and the other person are in a qualifying relationship. Watch part 2 of this series. Now, let's take a look at the forms.

### **CHAPTER HEADING: Forms to File**

The form you need is a Petition for Protection from Domestic Violence. Search online for form CC-DC-DV-001. You may also ask a court clerk for the form. On that form, the person who wants protection is the Petitioner. The other person, or the alleged abuser, is called the Respondent.

The form has space for you to describe the abuse. Be specific and detailed, and include information about the Respondent's access to firearms.

You will also have to complete a form called the Addendum – Description of Respondent. This is form CC-DC-DV-001A. Law enforcement uses this form when serving paperwork on the other person, or the Respondent.

You may have concerns about making your address known.

### **CHAPTER HEADING: Address Privacy**

When you file court documents to open a case, the court requires law enforcement to provide copies of those documents – which include your contact information – to the other person. If safety is a concern and disclosing your address puts you at risk of further harm, ask the court to keep your contact information private. Use the form called Request to Withhold Address. This is form CC-DC-PO-026. There is also a more permanent way to keep your address private on all documents called Safe-At-Home. Learn more at [mdcourts.gov/addressprivacy](http://mdcourts.gov/addressprivacy).

Once you complete your forms, it's time to file them with the court.

### **CHAPTER HEADING: Where to File**

You may file a protective order petition if you live in Maryland or if the abuse happened in Maryland. File your papers in a courthouse. If you have a current custody or divorce case with the other person, consider filing in the same courthouse where that case was heard.

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Courts are open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. most weekdays. If courts are closed, find a District Court Commissioner's Office. Keep in mind that office ONLY accepts protective order petitions when courts are closed.

If you filed your papers in court, you will have an immediate hearing. If you filed your papers in a commissioner's office, you will have a hearing in court a couple of days later. You will also return for a final court hearing. Watch Part 5 of this series for information on those hearings.

Let me repeat something I said earlier: The protective order process can be the most dangerous time for a victim of domestic violence. Be extra watchful. If you need it, get help.

### CHAPTER HEADING: Get Help

Every Maryland county has at least one organization to assist victims of domestic violence. Help may include a free lawyer, safety planning, connections to housing, counseling, and more. Find a list plus other resources at [mdcourts.gov/dv](http://mdcourts.gov/dv).

Free legal help is also available at the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center, which is open from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. most weekdays. These lawyers can't represent you in court, but they can help you represent yourself or refer you to places for further help. You can call 410-260-1392.

### CHAPTER HEADING: Let's Review

#### **FULL-SCREEN ROAD MAP**

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The form you need is called a Petition for Protection from Domestic Violence, or CC-DC-DV-001. Find information on keeping contact information private on your forms at [mdcourts.gov/addressprivacy](http://mdcourts.gov/addressprivacy). File your papers in any Maryland courthouse. If courts are closed, find a district court commissioner's office. And remember, help is available in every county.

Keeping people safe from domestic violence is important. If you are a victim, you are not alone. Reach out. Find help at [mdcourts.gov/dv](http://mdcourts.gov/dv).

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