

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN WRITING YOUR PETITION

This Guide Can Help You:

- Identify things that may put you at risk of repeated injury or death
- Write information on your petition that will help the judge understand your needs.
- Understand what you can ask the court to do. The judge may not be able to do everything you ask especially at the first hearing.
 - Any information you share with the court may be shared with the respondent.
 - For this Guide: If you are asking the court to protect you, you are the “petitioner” and the person you are asking the court to protect you from is the “respondent.”

THINGS THAT MAY PUT YOU AT RISK

WHAT TO WRITE IN YOUR PETITION

WHAT YOU MIGHT ASK THE COURT TO DO

Violence Against You

- Details about the physical violence including whether it has gotten worse
- Whether and when violence has happened before, and any changes in the violence

Sexual Violence Against You

- The injuries, level of pain, whether you’ve gone to the doctor or hospital, and treatment you’ve needed
- Whether the respondent forced you to have sex, or forced you to get pregnant or to have an abortion against your wishes

Choking / Strangling

- Whether the respondent tried to choke you or put his or her hands on your neck
- Any pain or injuries and if you lost consciousness

Require respondent to:

- stay away from me and my work or from me and the children and school;
- pay for medical bills due to the injuries;
- temporarily pay child support;
- go to an abusive partner intervention program;
- go to probation

Loss of Job

- How long the respondent has been unemployed
- What led to the respondent losing his or her job

- Order respondent to attend abusive partner intervention programming

Drug or Alcohol Use

- What kind of drugs the respondent uses (illegal drugs such as “uppers” or amphetamines, meth, speed, angel dust, cocaine, crack, street drugs, or mixers)
- If the respondent is an alcoholic or drinks a lot

- Order respondent to have drug or alcohol testing or treatment

Criminal and Other Court History

- Whether the respondent has been arrested or if you ever called the police or tried to call the police
 - If you have another order or have asked for an order of protection or child support
 - If the respondent has any other court cases now (in this court or other courts)
- Make sure this court knows what the other orders say or check to see if there are any criminal cases open

Relationship Status

- When your relationship began and ended
 - Where you each live and if you ever lived together
 - Changes to your relationship
- Keep my new address confidential on court paperwork
 - Allow me to terminate my lease
 - Require respondent to:
 - stay away from my home

Weapons

- Whether the respondent owns or can easily get a gun or other weapon
 - The types of weapons the respondent owns or has access to
 - Any threats (words or actions) to use a weapon against you
- Remove all of respondent's guns or weapons
 - Suspend pistol permit

Threats to Kill and Threats to Commit Suicide

- How the respondent has threatened to kill you or tried to kill you (for example, verbal or electronic threats, such as text messages, posts on-line, etc.)
 - Whether the respondent ever threatened or tried to commit suicide.
 - Whether the respondent has any mental health issues
 - Whether you think the respondent will kill you and why
- Require respondent to:
 - turn in all guns or weapons;
 - stay away from me and the children;
 - have a mental health evaluation

Controlling Behavior

- How the respondent controls your daily activities, and if the respondent is constantly or violently jealous, threatens to embarrass you, threatens to call immigration, or forces you to do things you don't want to
 - Whether the respondent keeps you from having a bank account or driving a car
 - Whether the respondent destroys your things or harms your pets
- Include my pet on the order
 - Require respondent to:
 - stop contacting me;
 - go to an abusive partner intervention program;
 - return my papers or property
 - pay for damaged property

Stalking

- Whether the respondent follows or spies on you; reads your emails, texts, social media; drives by or hangs out at your house, school, or work.
- Whether the respondent leaves you threatening messages, or repeatedly calls, texts, or emails you
- Whether the respondent uses technology, like cell phones, hidden cameras, or global positioning systems (GPS) to track you.

Require respondent to:

- stay away from me, my children, my home, school, work, etc.;
- have no contact or communication with me

Children

- Whether the respondent threatened to hurt the children
- Whether children were home during an incident against you
- Whether you have children that aren't the respondent's children (this may increase your risk of harm and may be important to tell the judge)

- Award temporary custody to you
- Require someone to be present during visitation or exchange of the children or not allow the respondent visitation

Require respondent to:

- pay temporary child support
- continue to pay medical insurance