

How Do I File a Family Offense Petition?

1. Go to Probation and speak to a probation officer about your request for an Order of Protection.
2. Go to Family Court to complete a Family Offense Petition.
3. Most temporary orders of protection say that the respondent must not assault, menace or harass you, but you can ask for the following additional terms:
 - The court can order the respondent to stay away from you, your home, your job, your children, your children's school or any other place or person the court finds necessary.
 - You can ask the court to allow you to enter your home with the police to collect your personal belongings at a certain date and time.
 - The court can order temporary custody and child support. Since the custody and child support are only temporary, you will have to file a separate petition for custody and child support.
4. If you are requesting an immediate Order of Protection then you will need to write a letter to the Judge stating specifically what you would like the Judge to order.
5. When you submit your petitions, you will need to show a photo ID.
6. The Judge will review the petition and determine whether there is good cause to issue you a temporary order of protection.
7. If the Judge does not issue the temporary order of protection, the judge may issue one after an initial appearance.
8. If the Judge issues the temporary order of protection, the court will send the temporary order of protection to the Sheriff's office for service upon the respondent.
9. You will have to return to court where the respondent can either agree or disagree to the order of protection.
10. If the respondent does not agree to the order of protection your case may go to trial.