

Filing Information for Family Abuse Protective Orders in the City of Alexandria

Family Abuse Protective Orders are legal documents issued by a judge or magistrate to protect the health and safety of someone who has been injured or threatened by a family or household member.

In Virginia, there are 3 kinds of protective orders that can protect you and others in your family or home:

- **Emergency Protective Orders** – generally last only 72 hours and are usually issued by a magistrate.
- **Preliminary Protective Orders** – last 15 days or until a full hearing and require that you file a petition at court.
- **Permanent Protective Orders** – last up to 2 years and are issued by the court after a full hearing where both parties are before the judge.

Note: If a child is the victim of abuse you should contact Alexandria Department of Social Services at 703.746.5800 or State 1.800.552.7096

ALERT:

- **If you are in immediate danger call 911.**
- **Be aware that having a Protective Order does not guarantee your safety. It is critical that you take extra safety precautions before and AFTER an order is issued.**
- **DO NOT leave the Courthouse without a copy of the order, if issued.**

1. Where is the Court located?

Both the Alexandria Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court and the Court Service Unit are located on the first floor of the Courthouse at:

520 King Street, 1st Floor
Alexandria, VA 22314

Google map link:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/520+King+St,+Alexandria,+VA+22314/@38.8046076,-77.0475526,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x89b7b0f80728fc4b:0x80922b1f8f8f3e89!8m2!3d38.8046076!4d-77.0453639>

2. What are the driving directions to Alexandria Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court?

From 495: Take Route 1 North (Exit 1) from the beltway (last exit before crossing the Woodrow Wilson Bridge or first exit coming from Maryland). Proceed north for seven blocks until making a right onto King Street. Follow King Street for five blocks to the Courthouse at 520 King Street. The Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court is located on the first floor just inside the main entrance.

From 395: Take the King Street East (Exit 5). Continue on King Street into Old Town Alexandria. After crossing Patrick Street, proceed five blocks to the Courthouse at 520 King Street.

Link to City of Alexandria contact information:

<http://alexandriava.gov/jdrcourt/info/default.aspx?id=3336>

3. Where can I park?

Paid parking is available in a public parking garage under the courthouse accessible from S. Pitt Street. Metered parking is available around the Courthouse with a maximum of 2 hours. There is also two hour residential parking one or more blocks from the Courthouse.

4. What bus transportation is available to the Courthouse and at what cost?

Local bus service is available through DASH. The Alexandria Transit Company's DASH system provides bus service within the City of Alexandria, and connects with Metrobus, Metrorail, Virginia Railway. For bus information, call Alexandria DASH 703.370.3274 or Metrobus at 202.637.7000.

5. What Metro rail Service is available to the Courthouse?

The King Street Metro Station is located 1 mile west of the courthouse.

6. What taxi service is available to the Courthouse?

Many taxi companies serve the Washington metropolitan area. For more information go to <http://commuterpage.com/taxi.htm>

7. What other assistance is there for transportation?

The Alexandria Domestic Violence Program (DVP) may be able to help you locate other resources for transportation. Call the hotline at 703-746-4911 for more information.

8. What should I do if I don't understand or speak English well or I am hearing impaired?

You can contact the Court Services Unit at 703-746-4144.

I-CAN! Virginia is available in Spanish. *I-CAN! Virginia* is a free online program that helps a person complete the forms necessary to ask the court for a protective order.

Go to: <https://www.vacourtformhelp.courts.state.va.us/> and follow the prompts. For additional information about *I-CAN! Virginia* and how it works, go to: <http://www.ican.courts.state.va.us> and click on the *I-CAN! Virginia Frequently Asked Questions* link.

9. What should I do if I need help because of a physical challenge?

All court facilities are fully handicap accessible.

10. Is there a fee for filing for a Family Abuse Protective Order?

There is no fee for filing for a Family Abuse Protective Order.

11. What should I wear to Court?

You should dress in a respectful manner appropriate to the setting and dignity of the court. Please do not wear tight or revealing clothing such as shorts, shorts, or spandex. Clothing should cover your body from your shoulders to your knees.

12. What should I bring with me?

You **must** have:

- The name and address (the place where they can be found, not a P.O. box) of the person from whom you are seeking protection.
- A full description of the event that led you to seek a protective order.

If you used the I-CAN! Virginia system to complete your paperwork, bring the Affidavit with you. I-CAN! Virginia can be accessed at: <https://www.vacourtformhelp.courts.state.va.us/>

YOU WILL NEED THIS SAME INFORMATION FOR THE FULL HEARING that will be scheduled if a Preliminary Protective Order is issued. You will be asked to testify at the full hearing about the event that made you want to seek protection.

You should **also** bring with you:

- As much identifying and contact information as possible about the person from whom you are seeking protection. **This information is essential because the Sheriff must be able to find this person for the Protective Order to take effect. PLEASE TRY TO PROVIDE:**
 1. name, nicknames, aliases;
 2. date of birth;
 3. home, work, cell phone and pager numbers;
 4. addresses for home, work, friends, relatives, and places frequented;
 5. age, height, weight, eye color, hair color, distinguishing marks;
 6. social security number
 7. tendencies toward violence;
 8. ownership or possession of weapons, especially firearms;

9. existence of a concealed weapons permit;
 - 10.a history or presence of drug or alcohol abuse, or mental illness and
 - 11.a recent photograph of that person.
- A copy of an Emergency Protective Order if one was issued.
 - Any photographs, police reports, or medical records related to the event that led to the petition for a Family Abuse Protective Order
 - Copies of any other existing court orders involving BOTH you and the other person.
 - If possible, birth certificates and social security numbers for children for whom you may be seeking protection.

13. What should I NOT bring with me?

All persons entering a county courthouse will be searched and all bags and other items will be passed through an x-ray machine. Weapons such as guns and any knives are prohibited inside the courthouse. Cameras (including cell phones with cameras), video cameras, photographic, recording or similar equipment is prohibited inside the courthouse (lockers available for \$.25). Advise security if the above listed items are needed as evidence in your case.

14. Who should I bring with me to file for a Protective Order?

You need only bring yourself to file for a Family Abuse Protective Order.

You are discouraged from bringing young children with you to court. If you must bring them to court, bring an adult to supervise the children. You may be at the courthouse for several hours so please make the necessary child care arrangements to cover the entire day including picking children up from school or day care.

15. What days can I file for a Family Abuse Protective Order at Alexandria Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court?

The Alexandria Court Services Unit is open Monday thru Friday from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm except Federal and State holidays. In bad weather you can call 703-746-4141 to make sure the Courthouse is open.

16. How early can I arrive to file for a Family Abuse Protective Order?

The Courthouse opens to the public at 8:00 am, and the Court Services Unit Intake begins seeing clients at 8:30 am.

17. How late can I arrive to file for a Family Abuse Protective Order and have the petition reviewed the same day?

If you wish to have your case heard on the same day that you file, you should be at the Court Services Unit as early as possible.

18. How long should I expect to spend at the Courthouse in order to file the petition for a Family Abuse Protective Order and have the petition heard the same day?

The process at Court Services Intake generally takes between one and one and one half hours. Due to cases already scheduled you may have to wait several hours before going before the judge, but the next available judge will hear your case. You should expect to spend several hours at the Courthouse.

19. Where should I go after passing through the security check at the door?

Go to the Court Services Unit which is located on the first floor of the Courthouse. The entry to Court Services is located to the right of the security checkpoint.

20. How do I contact the Court for more information?

For more information you can:

- Call 703-838-4141 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday - Friday.
- Come in person to the Clerks Office from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Mon. – Friday.
- You may also contact the Juvenile Services Intake Unit at 703-746-4144

21. What should I do if I feel I am in immediate danger?

Call 911 for police assistance.

22. What should I do if the court is closed?

You may contact the Magistrate's office that is open 24 hours a day seven days a week. A Magistrate is a judicial officer, not a police officer, who may issue Emergency Protective Orders (EPO) and Warrants of Arrest. Magistrates only issue Emergency Protective Orders in emergency situations and these orders are generally valid for only 72 hours. If you need longer protection you **MUST** go to the Courthouse when it is open **BEFORE** the EPO expires to file for a Protective Order.

For a list of all Magistrates in Virginia go to
http://www.courts.state.va.us/directories/contact_by_district/region_5.pdf

23. How do I contact a Magistrate in Alexandria?

You should contact the Magistrate in person. The Magistrate's office is open 24 hours a day seven days a week. You will need a valid form of identification in order to enter the building.

The Magistrate's office for the city of Alexandria is located at:
The Adult Detention Center
2001 Mill Road
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-838-4515

24. Do I need a lawyer to file a petition for a Preliminary Protective Order? *(A petition is a formal, written request asking the Court to do something)*

You do not need a lawyer to file for a preliminary protective order. The Court Service Unit intake counselor will provide assistance to help you complete the petition/necessary paperwork and will provide basic information about preparing for your court hearing. The counselor, however, cannot give you legal advice. You may want to retain an attorney to represent you at your full hearing (scheduled within 15 days where both parties are before the judge), especially if the person from whom you want protection will have an attorney (see also question 25).

25. How can I find a lawyer to help me?

Legal Services of Northern Virginia, Alexandria Branch, 703-684-5566, provides free legal assistance in protective order and other civil matters for those who are income eligible as long as they are not already representing the other person.

Alexandria Lawyer Referral Services, 703-548-1105, can schedule an appointment for you to speak with an attorney for a 30-minute consultation. There will be a small fee for the consultation.

26. How will I know when the Preliminary Protective Order is served on the person from whom I want protection?

You can call the Sheriff’s Office at 703-746-4120 between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm to find out if the order has been served. This office will provide that information only to you.

27. Where can I get access to the Internet?

Alexandria Library – Alexandria has many library branches, their locations and hours of operation can be found at:

http://www.alexandria.lib.va.us/branches/branch_information.html

28. Where else can I get help?

Alexandria Domestic Violence Program 24 hour hotline 703-746-4911; <https://www.alexandriava.gov/DomesticViolence> This program provides crisis intervention, individual and group counseling, and advocacy services to victims of domestic violence and their children. Trained counselors can help you identify available resources and provide safety planning, counseling and shelter if necessary. Advocates provide court accompaniment to all court hearings.

Adult Protective Services	703-746-5778
Child Protective Services	703- 746-5800
Sexual Assault	703- 683-7273