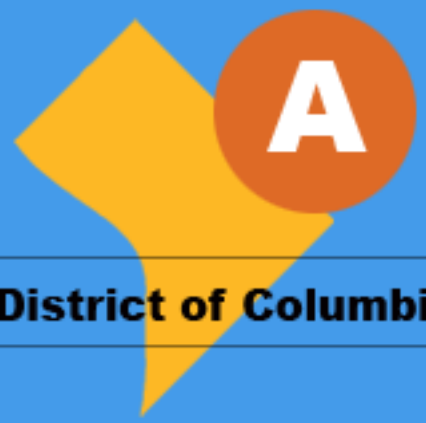


2010

State Law Report Card

District of Columbia



A protection order is a FREE court order that can protect you from an abusive dating partner. This order can prevent your current or ex- partner from:

- Threatening or abusing you
- Contacting or coming near you or your family
- Coming to your home or work
- Possessing a gun

The order may also require your current or ex-partner to:

- Move out of your home
- Agree to a custody and visitation schedule, if you have children
- Give you use of shared personal property
- Participate in counseling or a batterer's intervention program
- Pay your attorney's fees
- Do anything else the court finds is necessary for your protection

A protection order can be changed if things in your life change (for example, if you transfer to a new school or get a new job).

You can get a protection order against someone who:

- You are/were dating, living with or married to OR
- You have a child with OR
- You are related to by blood or marriage

The law requires you to show that your current or ex-partner:

- Threatened to, attempted to or actually physically abused you OR
- Sexually abused you OR
- Stalked you OR
- Destroyed your property

Other types of abuse may also qualify you for a protection order.

If you are under 12 years old, your parent or another adult acting as your guardian must go to court with you to file for a protection order on your behalf. If you are 12 or older, you can go and file on your own. If you are under 18 and are residing with a parent or another adult acting as your guardian, DC law requires the court to notify your parent or the person acting as your guardian if you receive a protection order, unless the court determines that doing so would not be in your best interest.

This is the law in your state only. The law is different in every state.

What other laws do you need to know about?

All teens can consent to:

- Birth control services
- Testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections
- Medical care during pregnancy
- Adoption
- Abortion services
- Medical care for their child(ren)

What are schools doing about dating violence?

District of Columbia law does not include information about dating violence in schools.

How can the District of Columbia improve its response to teen dating violence?

- Allow all minors to file for protection orders without parental involvement or notification.
- Allow all minors to access health services without parental involvement.
- Allow courts to issue protection orders to persons who have been harassed by a dating partner.
- Require schools to include dating violence education in health classes in all middle schools and high schools.

Break the Cycle

Empowering Youth to End Domestic Violence

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse in their relationship go to www.thesafespace.org