

2010

State Law Report Card



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 school, 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
- Pay you child support or spousal support
- Participate in counseling or a batterer's intervention program

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 or harassed you OR
- Destroyed your property

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

If you are under 18 years old, a family member, adult acting as your guardian or court-appointed attorney may go to court with you to file for a protection order on your behalf. Maryland law does not say at what age you can file for a protection order on your own behalf. If you are able to file on your own behalf, the law does not say whether the court has to notify your parent/guardian if you receive a protection order. If you are filing against a dating partner who is under 18, you must file in juvenile court.

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)

*If you are a minor, a doctor may tell your parents.

What are schools doing about dating violence?

Maryland law requires the State Board of Education to encourage local schools to include dating violence in the curriculum.

How can Maryland improve its response to teen dating violence?

- Allow all minors to file for protection orders without parental involvement.
- Allow courts to issue protection orders against minor abusers.
- Allow courts to issue protection orders to persons who have been harassed by a dating partner.
- Allow all minors to access health services without parental involvement.

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