

2010

State Law Report Card

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Tennessee

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
- 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
- Pay you child support or spousal support
- Participate in counseling or a batterer's intervention program
- 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
- Destroyed your property

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

If you are under 18 years old and have the signature of a parent/guardian, you may file for a protection order on your own behalf. However, Tennessee law does not say at what age you can file for a protection order on your own behalf or who may file for you if you are unable to file on your own behalf. If you are under 18, Tennessee law requires the court to notify your parent/guardian of the protection order unless doing so would not be in your best interests.

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 HIV and sexually transmitted infections
- Medical care during pregnancy
- Adoption
- Medical care for their child(ren)

If you are a minor, you must have your parent's consent to have an abortion.

What are schools doing about dating violence?

Tennessee law allows the department of education to develop a curriculum that discusses teen dating violence and provides information about where to get help if you are a victim of dating violence.

How can Tennessee improve its response to teen dating violence?

- Allow all minors to file for protection orders without parental involvement or notification.
- Allow courts to issue protection orders to persons who have been sexually abused, stalked or harassed by a dating partner.



Empowering Youth to End Domestic Violence

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