

# ***How do I apply for a Protection Order?***

## ***Step 1: Make sure you are eligible for a Protection Order***

If you are not in a relationship with your abuser that is covered by the law, you may need to apply for a Peace Order.

## ***Step 2: If you want to apply for a Protective Order when the court is closed, go to a Court Commissioner and apply for an Interim Protective Order***

The Interim Protective Order (IPO) will last only until your petition can be heard in the District Court, usually on the first or second business day after you get your IPO. The IPO will give you the date and time that your petition will be heard in the District Court. If you do not return to Court on the hearing date, your Order will expire.

## ***Step 3: Apply for a Temporary Protective Order***

If you do not need an Interim Protective Order, you can apply for a Temporary Protective Order (TPO) in either District or Circuit Court. After filling out the Petition, you will appear before a judge. Describe your abuse to the judge BRIEFLY. If the judge determines that there is reason to believe that abuse occurred, the judge will issue a TPO. This order lasts only 7 days. The judge will schedule a full hearing in 7 days, when the judge will hear from both you and your abuser. During these 7 days, your abuser will receive a copy of your petition and the TPO from a law enforcement officer. If you are returning to court after receiving an Interim Protective Order, you will be asked to describe your abuse to the judge again.

## ***Step 4: The Protective Order Hearing***

At this hearing, you will need to describe again what happened to you. You should bring to this hearing any witnesses or evidence, such as photographs or medical records, to support your testimony. Your abuser will also have an opportunity to present evidence to the judge that may contradict your evidence. If the Judge believes that you were a victim of abuse, the Judge will issue a Protective Order and award whatever relief is appropriate.