

CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION IN YOUR COUNTY:

Adams County:

MidPenn Legal Services 717/334-7624
Survivors, Inc. 717/334-9777
YWCA of Hanover Safe Home 717/632-0007

Bedford County:

MidPenn Legal Services 800/326-9177
Your Safe Have 814/623-7664
800/555-5671

Berks County:

MidPenn Legal Services 800/326-9177
Berks Women in Crisis 610/372-9540
Spanish 610/372-7463

Blair County:

MidPenn Legal Services 800/326-9177
Domestic Abuse Project 814/944-3585
800/500-2849

Centre County:

MidPenn Legal Services 814/238-4958
800/326-9177
Women's Resource Center 887/234-5050

Clearfield County:

MidPenn Legal Services 800/326-9177
Crossroads 814/938-3580

Cumberland County:

MidPenn Legal Services 717/243-9400
800/822-5288
Domestic Violence Services 800/852-2102
Of Cumberland & Perry

Dauphin County:

MidPenn Legal Services 717/232-0581
800/932-0356
YWCA/Domestic Violence 717/238-7273
Services 800/654-1211

Franklin County:

MidPenn Legal Services 717/264-5354
800/372-4737
Women in Need, Inc. 717/264-4444
800/621-6660

Fulton County:

MidPenn Legal Services 717/264-5354
800/372-4737
Women in Need, Inc. 717/264-4444

Huntingdon County:

MidPenn Legal Services 800/326-9177
Abuse Network 717/242-2444

Juniata County:

MidPenn Legal Services 800/326-9177
Abuse Network 717/242-2444

Lancaster County:

MidPenn Legal Services 717/299-0971
800-732-0025
Domestic Violence Services 717/299-1249
Of Lancaster County

Lebanon County:

MidPenn Legal Services 717/274-2834
Domestic Violence Intervention 717/273-7190
Of Lebanon County

Mifflin County:

MidPenn Legal Services 800/326-9177
Abuse Network 717/242-2444

Perry County:

MidPenn Legal Services 717/232-0581
800/932-0356
Domestic Violence Services 800/852-2102
Of Cumberland & Perry

Schuylkill County:

MidPenn Legal Services 570/628-3931
866/638-0606
Schuylkill Women in Crisis 800/282-0634
570/622-6220

York County:

MidPenn Legal Services 717/848-3605
800/299-6599
Access York, Inc. 717/846-5400

This brochure contains general information and not specific legal advice. Although this information is believed to be accurate at the time of preparation, individual situations may require individual analysis, such that it may be advisable to consult with a lawyer. -June 2010



MidPenn Legal Services

Protection From Abuse



In Pennsylvania, victims of domestic violence can get protection orders under a law called the Protection From Abuse Act.



Pennsylvania
Legal Aid Network, Inc.

In Pennsylvania, victims of domestic violence can get protection orders under the Protection From Abuse (PFA) Act. Here is how the PFA Act can help you.

WHAT IS ABUSE?

- Causing or attempting to cause bodily injury, or sexual assault
- Placing someone in reasonable fear of imminent serious bodily injury
- Stalking, which can be when someone is following or harassing over a period of time, which makes the person afraid
- Physically or sexually abusing a minor child
- Interfering with an individual's freedom of movement (for example: restraining for a substantial period of time, or false imprisonment.)

WHO CAN ASK FOR A PFA?

Anyone who is being abused by:

- A spouse or former spouse, people who have lived like spouses, or are the parents of a child together
- A current or former sexual or intimate partner
- A parent or child
- A person related by blood or marriage

Emotional, Mental and Financial abuse are also behaviors abusers often use to control their victims. However, the PFA Act cannot grant relief based solely on these factors.

HOW CAN A PFA HELP ME?

A PFA Order can do the following:

- Order an abuser not to abuse, threaten, harass or stalk you
- Evict or exclude the abuser from your residence
- Prohibit the abuser from contacting you, directly or indirectly
- Prohibit the abuser from stalking or harassing family members who live with you
- Grant you temporary custody of your minor children
- Put limits on the defendant's visits with the children, to ensure their safety and yours
- Grant you temporary child or spousal support
- Prohibit the abuser from having any guns or gun permits
- Direct the abuser to attend a batterer's counseling program (depending on jurisdiction)
- Direct the abuser to reimburse you for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses you incurred as a result of the abuse
- You can ask the judge to grant any other relief that is appropriate.

IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER CALL 911!

WHEN SHOULD I FILE A PFA?

Everyone's circumstances are different, and if you are considering filing for a PFA you may want to speak with a Domestic Violence Counselor or an attorney to be sure you can do so safely and effectively. If you need an Emergency PFA (EPFA) at night or on a weekend, call your local police. A Magisterial District Judge (MDJ) can grant you an EPFA after business hours.

Some things to consider when filing for a PFA:

- The timing of the most recent incident of abuse.
- Has the abuse been getting worse recently?
- Will filing for a PFA help increase my safety?

HOW LONG DOES A PFA LAST?

A final order can last up to thirty-six months (three years.) However, a judge can extend the order if it is violated or if the abuser exhibits a pattern of behavior that indicates that the abuse is likely to continue. There is no limit to the number of times an order can be extended.

WHAT IF THE ABUSER VIOLATES THE PFA ORDER?

If the abuser violates the PFA Order, you should call the police immediately.

The police can arrest the abuser and charge him/her with indirect criminal contempt. If, after a hearing, the judge finds the abuser guilty of violating the order, he/she can be put in jail for up to six (6) months and/or be fined up to \$1,000.