

## HOW CAN I FILE FOR A PFA?

There are different procedures for obtaining a PFA in each county.

In Washington County, to file a PFA, go to the DVSSP office located on the lower level of the Washington County Courthouse.

In Greene County, go to the DVSSP satellite office in Waynesburg located at 43 North Morgan Street to file a PFA.

In Fayette County, go to the Legal Aid office located at 45 East Main Street in Uniontown. From there, the receptionist will direct you to the DVSSP Legal Advocacy office.

After reviewing the PFA petition, the judge will either grant or deny a temporary PFA and, if granted, set a final hearing within 10 business days. The Sheriff's Department will then attempt to serve the abuser with a copy of the granted temporary order.

At that hearing, you may receive a final PFA that can be in effect for up to 36 months. You may be required to testify about the information you included in your petition.

*All services are free and confidential.*



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## WHAT IF THE PERSON WHO ABUSED ME VIOLATES THE PFA?

In most cases, if the person who abused you violates the PFA you should call the police immediately. While the police cannot arrest the individual for violating financial provisions, they can and should arrest the individual for violating other terms of the PFA (for instance, no-contact provisions).

Be aware that the person who abused you may be released shortly after being arrested for a violation. Contact a DVSSP advocate in your county for information on steps to take if the individual was not arrested for a violation and/or if you need information on safety planning.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR PFA HEARING

You may want to contact an attorney to represent you at the PFA hearing or call your local **Legal Aid** office.

Washington County	724-225-6170
Greene County	724-627-3127
Fayette County	724-439-3591

You may also want to contact the **Sheriff's Department** to see if the person who abused you was served with a notice of the PFA hearing.

Washington County	724-228-6840
Greene County	724-627-7207
Fayette County	724-430-1296

DVSSP is a member program of PCADV

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# Protection From Abuse Orders

# DVSSP

Domestic Violence Services  
of Southwestern PA



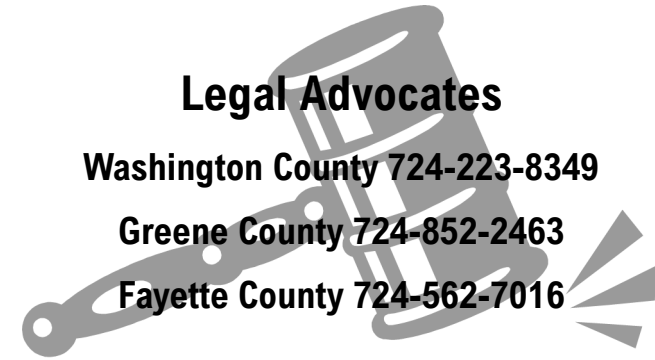
EDUCATING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING SURVIVORS  
ELIMINATING RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE

## Legal Advocates

Washington County 724-223-8349

Greene County 724-852-2463

Fayette County 724-562-7016



[peacefromdv.org](http://peacefromdv.org)



**NO MORE**  
TOGETHER WE CAN END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

## WHAT IS A PROTECTION FROM ABUSE ORDER (PFA)?

A PFA Order is a civil document issued by the court to protect you from future abuse. In order to file for a PFA Order, you must be 18 years of age. If a person is under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must file on their behalf.

## WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF ABUSE UNDER THE PFA ACT?

1. Causing or trying to cause physical harm, with or without a weapon;
2. Putting someone in reasonable fear of imminent, serious bodily injury;
3. Holding someone against one's will or interfering with a person's freedom of movement;
4. Rape or sexual assault;
5. Repeatedly stalking and/or harassing someone, causing that person reasonable fear of bodily injury.

***Verbal abuse, threats to take the children, and property damage do not by themselves qualify for a PFA.***

## AGAINST WHOM CAN YOU FILE A PFA ORDER?

The law states that a victim of abuse may file a PFA against a family or household member as defined below:

- Spouse or former spouse;
- Parent of your child;
- Your parents;
- Your children;
- Current or former sexual or intimate partners - this also includes dating relationships;
- Family members related by blood or marriage.

## HOW CAN A LEGAL ADVOCATE HELP ME?

A legal advocate will assist you in filling out the petition for a PFA and give you information about Legal Aid and other referrals as needed. We provide free and confidential court accompaniment, support, information, and advocacy as victims progress through the legal system.

## HOTLINE NUMBERS

Washington County 724-223-9190  
Greene County 724-852-2463  
Fayette County 724-439-9500

## WHAT CAN I ASK FOR IN A PFA?

The judge will consider your requests and may grant or deny some or all of them. The judge may grant an order that:

- Orders the person who is abusive to stop threatening, abusing, stalking, or harassing you and/or your children;
- Evicts the person who is abusive from your joint home or excludes the abuser from your residence;
- Orders that your address be held as confidential;
- Orders temporary custody;
- Orders temporary child support, spousal support, or reimbursement of out of pocket expenses caused by the person who is abusive;
- Orders the person who is abusive to have no contact with you, your children, or your family members;
- Excludes the person who is abusive from making contact with you at your school, business, or place of employment;
- Orders the person who is abusive to turn over any weapons to the sheriff;
- Orders the return of personal items, important papers, etc.