

In Pennsylvania, there are three different civil protection order options that offer victims of certain crimes relief from further harm from their perpetrator.

Civil protection orders can be filed whether or not the incident has been reported to the police. If you are considering filing a civil protection order, you may find it helpful to contact your local sexual assault or domestic violence advocacy program, legal services, and/or an attorney to thoroughly review your options.

This handout is not a substitute for professional legal advice.



Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape
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Options For Civil Protection Orders in Pennsylvania



Protection
From Abuse
Order



Sexual
Violence
Protection
Order



Protection
From
Intimidation
Order





PFA

Protection from Abuse Order

PFA's are appropriate when there are cases of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse where the victim and defendant have these types of relationships:

- ✓ Current or former spouses
- ✓ People who live or have lived as spouses
- ✓ Current or former intimate or sexual partners
- ✓ Family and/or household members who are related by blood (consanguinity)
- ✓ Family and/or household members who are related through marriage or affinity
- ✓ Parent-child
- ✓ Siblings

PFA's can be filed regardless of the ages of the parties involved. However, if the victim is under the age of 18, an adult** must file on the minor's behalf.



SVPO

Sexual Violence Protection Order

SVPO's are appropriate in cases of sexual violence where the victim and perpetrator do not have and have never had a family, household, or intimate partner relationship. For example, SVPO's may be granted when the victim and the defendant have these types of relationships:

- ✓ Strangers
- ✓ Acquaintances
- ✓ Friends
- ✓ Co-workers
- ✓ Neighbors

SVPO's can be filed regardless of the ages of the parties involved. However, if the victim is under the age of 18, an adult** must file on the minor's behalf.



PFI

Protection from Intimidation Order

PFI's are appropriate in cases of harassment* and stalking* where the victim and the perpetrator do not have and have never had a family, household, or intimate partner relationship AND the victim is under the age of 18 AND the defendant is over the age of 18. PFI's cannot be granted in cases involving two minors, two adults, or where a minor is harassing or stalking an adult.

PFI's can be filed regardless of the ages of the parties involved. However, if the victim is under the age of 18, an adult** must file on the minor's behalf.

* As defined by Title 18 of the Criminal Code

** In order for an adult to file on a minor's behalf, the adult must be a parent, legal guardian, or adult household member.