

Civil Protection Order (CPO) Checklist for Remote Court

This document talks about

- How to stay safe before your court date (page 1),
- What to do before your court date (pages 2-3), and
- What to do on your court date (pages 4-5).

Staying Safe

If you have a Temporary Protective Order:

- **Keep an electronic and printed copy of the TPO with you at all times.**
- **Make extra copies.** Leave them at places in the “Stay Away” part of your TPO (such as your work, your leasing office/landlord, or your child's school or daycare).

If you feel unsafe:

- **Call 911 immediately if you ever feel your life is in danger.**
- **If you're not in immediate danger, call your local police station to file a report if:**
 - You think the other side got a copy of the TPO (“has been served”), and
 - They are violating the TPO.

You can also call the Domestic Violence Division Clerk's Office at (202) 879-0157, D.C. SAFE at 1-844-443-5732, or your lawyer to file a motion for contempt

For help making your home safe or finding safe housing:

- **Talk to Crime Victims Compensation (CVC).** They can help you pay to:
 - Change your locks or fix your outer door or windows; or
 - Install a security system in your home; or
 - Find emergency or temporary housing options, move somewhere else, or make up for lost wages.

Contact CVC in one of three ways:

1. *Call CVC at (202) 879-4219.*
2. *Apply online at <https://www.dccourts.gov/services/crime-victims-compensation-matters/procedures>.*
3. *Go in person to the Moultrie Courthouse, 500 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington DC 20001. CVC is at the first floor information booth. They are open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm.*

Questions? Call Legal Aid at (202) 628-1161 or go to www.legalaiddc.org/online-intake/.

Before Your Court Date

You should do three things before your court date.

Action Item 1: Make sure you're ready to join the hearing.

- **Check your email no later than 2 days before your hearing for instructions on how to join the hearing.** The judge should email you this information and you should read this email before your hearing date.
- **Download the WebEx app on your phone, tablet, or computer.** If you can, the Court prefers that you log in with video. The WebEx app lets you log into the hearing. Download it at: <https://www.webex.com/downloads.html>. If you can't download the app, you can call into the hearing by phone.
- **Be ready to wait around all day.** It's hard to know how long the hearing could last, and it could take all day. You also might have to wait for a long time. If you can, take off the whole day from work.

Action Item 2: Get your evidence ready.

- **Upload evidence to Box.com.** The judge will send you a link that tells you how to do this. Before the hearing, upload your evidence. Evidence can include:
 - Photos of injuries or property damage
 - Copies of text messages or social media
 - Receipts for any property damage
 - Medical records and bills
- **Make sure your witnesses can be at your hearing.** Evidence also includes testimony (what people tell the judge under oath). Your witnesses must be at the hearing to talk to the judge. Witnesses cannot provide written statements.

Action Item 3: Make sure the other side has been served.

- **Check whether the other side has been served.**
 - *If you asked the D.C. police to help you serve the other side:* Call the Domestic Violence Division at (202) 879-0157 to ask if the police served them..
 - *If the other side lives outside DC and you asked the police to help serve:* Call that local police or sheriff's department to ask if they served the other side.
- **If the police haven't served the other side, you need to get someone else to serve them.** Instructions about how to do this are on the next page.

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Remember: Make sure the other side is served!

What is service?

- Serving the other side means giving them the court papers. *You don't do this yourself—ask somebody else to serve the papers.* See below.

Who can serve the other side?

- *You can ask any adult* who is over 18 and is not a witness in your case to serve the other side the court papers. You are not allowed to serve them yourself.
- If you know where the other side will be at a certain time, you can also call the police and ask them to meet you near there. The police will serve them with the paperwork. You will need to bring a copy of the court papers for the police to serve this way.

What do I need to serve the other side with?

- Make sure they are served with:
 - (1) The CPO Petition. *This is what you filed with the Court.*
 - (2) The Temporary Protection Order (if you have one).
 - (3) The Notice of Hearing and Order to Appear. *These are in the documents the Court sent you.*
 - (4) Any other papers you filed with the Court. *(Only if you filed more than one motion.)*

What if the other side won't take the papers?

- If they won't take the papers, the person serving them can:
 - Leave the paperwork at their feet; **or**
 - Give them to another adult who lives with them.

How do I prove the other side was served?

- First, the person who serves the other side has to complete the “Return of Service” form sent to you with your other paperwork. You can also get a copy of this form at <https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/2019-07/Return%20of%20Service%20on%20Respondent.pdf>.
- You need to email this form to the Clerk's Office before your Court date. Send it to dvd@dcsc.gov.

On Your Court Date

Step 1: Check in with the Clerk’s Office.

- **Check in at 8:30 am.**
 - *To check in online:* go to <https://dccourts.webex.com/meet/dvdhearings/>.
 - *To check in by phone:* call the Clerk’s Office at (202) 879-0157.
 - *If you’re running late or can’t connect:* call the Clerk's Office at (202) 879-0157.
- **Check in with the Clerk.**
 - You’ll be sent to a breakout room. The clerk will ask your name and contact information.
 - The clerk will send you the link to join the courtroom later in the day.
- **You can also review the check-in instructions in your email and call the Judge's chambers directly if you are having trouble.**

Step 2: Make sure you’re ready when the Court calls.

- **When will the Court call me?**
 - They can call you at any time that day. Make sure you’re by your phone.
- **What if I’m late or don’t answer the call?**
 - If you see you missed the call, call the Court back as soon as possible.
 - The Court could dismiss your case. If your case is dismissed, you have 2 options:
 - (1) File a motion asking the judge to re-open your case. Explain why you missed the hearing; or
 - (2) File a new CPO Petition in the future if there are new incidents.

What should I do if the other side doesn’t show up?

<p>If the other side hasn’t been served and doesn’t show up:</p>	<p>If the other side has been served and doesn’t show up:</p>
<p>Ask the judge for more time to serve the other side. Say you want a “2 week continuance.”</p> <p><i>If you have a TPO:</i> Ask the judge to extend the TPO until you come back to Court.</p>	<p>Ask the judge for a “default.” This means that the judge can give you a Protective Order even though the other side isn't there.</p> <p>Tell the judge what happened and show them your evidence. <i>See the next page to learn more.</i></p>

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Negotiations before the hearing:

- *If you and the other side have both checked in:*
 - An attorney negotiator who works for the Court will call you.
 - Tell them what you want in your Civil Protection Order (CPO).
 - They will ask the other side if they agree to what you're asking for.
 - The attorney negotiator might call you more than once.
 - You won't have to talk to the other side.
- *If the other side agrees to what you ask for:* At the hearing, the judge will go over the CPO and make sure both sides agree. The other side will virtually sign the Order.
- *If the other side does not agree to what you ask:* At the hearing, both sides will present evidence to the judge.

At the hearing: Explain what happened. Present your evidence.

- Tell the judge the date, time, and location of each incident in your Petition.
- Describe your relationship with the other side.
- Talk about any evidence that you uploaded to Box.com.
- Be prepared to answer questions that the other side can ask you.
- Have your witnesses join the hearing and tell the judge what happened. *Make sure they know that the other side can ask them questions too.*
- Listen to what the other side and their witnesses say. Ask them any questions you have.

At the hearing: What to do if the judge grants your CPO.

- **If your CPO is granted, you can ask the Court to grant the protections you want.** You can ask that your CPO be granted for up to two years. Be ready to tell the Court:
 - If you want the other side to not contact you directly or through a third party.
 - If you want the other side to stay away from you, specific locations, or people.
 - If you want the other side to pay you back for damaged property or medical expenses.
 - If you want the police to be there while the other side picks up their items from your home or leaves your home, or while you get your items from their home.
 - If you want the Court to order the other side to enroll in a counseling program.

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