



TENNESSEE

Each state has different requirements for getting a civil domestic violence protection order. Because it makes protective orders difficult for teens to obtain, Tennessee's grade for protecting teen victims of domestic and dating violence is a C.

Do I Qualify for a Protection Order in Tennessee?

Type of Relationship

In order to qualify for a protection order, the abuser must be someone:

- You are dating or used to date¹
- You are married to or used to be married to⁴
- You have or used to have a sexual relationship with²
- You are related to by blood, marriage, or adoption⁵
- You live with or used to live with³

Type of Abuse⁶

A judge is allowed to give you a protection order when your abuser has:

- Physically abused you
- Sexually assaulted you
- Attempted to physically abuse you
- Stalked you
- Threatened to abuse you
- Damaged your property
- Sexually abused you
- Unlawfully held you against your will

Age

If you are 18 or older, you can get a protection order yourself.⁷ If you are under 18, you will need one parent or guardian or a case worker from a child abuse or family violence nonprofit organization to sign the petition for you.⁸ However, if a case worker files for you, you cannot get a protection order against your parents and a copy of the restraining order and notice of all hearings must be sent to at least one parent or guardian, unless the judge decides it would create a threat of serious harm to you to do so.⁹

How Do I Get a Protection Order?

If you want a protection order, you can go to court to file for a temporary protection order. A judge can give you a temporary order that day and will schedule a full hearing within 15 days.¹⁰ After the hearing, a judge may grant you a permanent protection order which lasts for less than one year and is renewable.¹¹

What Can I Ask for in a Protection Order?

You may ask the court for the following in a protection order:

- Abuser cannot contact you or communicate with you directly or indirectly¹²
- Temporary and/or exclusive use of property¹⁴
- The abuser cannot abuse, stalk, assault or threaten you or your minor children¹³
- Temporary child custody and visitation¹⁵
- Child and spousal support¹⁶
- Counseling for abuser¹⁷

How Much Will It Cost?

It is free.¹⁸

You have the right to a safe and healthy relationship...
free from violence and free from fear.

¹ Tenn. Code Ann. §36-3-601(5)(C) (2007).

² *Id.*

³ *Id.* §36-3-601(5)(B).

⁴ *Id.* §36-3-601(5)(A).

⁵ *Id.* §36-3-601(5)(D), (E), (F).

⁶ *Id.* §§36-3-601(1), 36-3-602(a).

⁷ *Id.* §36-3-601(2).

⁸ *Id.* §36-3-602(b).

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.* §36-3-605(b).

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.* §36-3-606(a)(2).

¹³ *Id.* §36-3-606(a)(1).

¹⁴ *Id.* §36-3-606(a)(4).

¹⁵ *Id.* §36-3-606(a)(6).

¹⁶ *Id.* §36-3-606(a)(7).

¹⁷ *Id.* §36-3-606(a)(8).

¹⁸ *Id.* §36-3-617(a).

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