



MINNESOTA GUIDE & FILE

Next Steps: Order for Protection

Printing at end of interview

Save the email and password you used for your Guide & File account; you will need this information later to go back to your Guide & File account or to go to the eFS System (Minnesota Judicial Branch's web-based system that allows you to eFile documents in Minnesota district courts).

Below are the next steps for filing an **Order for Protection** when choosing to print your forms at the end of the interview.

! **Consider getting help from an advocate.** A domestic abuse advocate knows the court process and can support you through all the steps. There is a statewide directory of advocacy agencies on the Violence Free MN website at www.vfmn.org/get-help. Visit the "Find a program near you" for resources available in your area. A 24-hour phone line is also available at **866-223-1111**.

STEP 1: Review the Completed Form

- Guide & File will create the Petition for an *Order for Protection* (OFP102) and *Law Enforcement Information Sheet* (OFP105) at the end of the interview. Depending on your case, it may also create the *Petitioner's Request to Keep Address/Phone Confidential* (OFP107).
- Carefully read through your answers on all the forms. Are your form complete? Is the information true and correct? If you find any errors, go back into the interview (<https://minnesota.tylertech.cloud/SRL>) and make changes.
- Print all of the forms and the *Next Steps* that you see listed on the **Summary Page** in the interview.

STEP 2: Sign and Date the forms

- Once your form is complete, print or download the forms and the *Next Steps* listed on the **Summary Page** in the interview.
- Sign and date the *Petition for an Order for Protection* (OFP102) form under penalty of perjury. This means you are saying that everything in the form is true; if you know something in the form is not true when you sign it, you could be found guilty of the crime of perjury (see Minn. Stat. § 609.48, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=609.48>).
- Sign and date the *Law Enforcement Information Sheet* (OFP105) stating that everything is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.
- Note – if you plan to electronically file your form, you can type your signature on the downloaded form. Type a "/s/" before your name to create a typographical signature. Otherwise, you can scan your hand-signed forms to upload.

STEP 3: File Your Forms with Court Administration

Once your forms are signed, you are ready to file it with the court. It is a good idea to make a copy of your signed forms for your own records before filing. Copy fees may apply for extra copies from court administration. How you file your forms is explained below.

At the Courthouse:

- File the original *Petition for an Order for Protection* (OFP102) and *Law Enforcement Information Sheet* (OFP105) with court administration. You may also need to file the *Petitioner's Request to Keep Address/Phone Confidential* (OFP107) depending on your situation.
- This can be done either in person at the courthouse or by mail. Addresses for courthouses are online at <https://www.mncourts.gov/Find-Courts.aspx>.

Electronic Filing through eFS System:

- The eFS System allows you to eFile your forms. This is a separate website from Guide & File. However, your eFS System login information is the same as your Guide & File login and password. Information for eFiling is on the MN Judicial Branch website at <https://www.mncourts.gov/eFile> under the “eFile and eServe Training” tab.
- Once you choose to eFile, you will need to continue to use the eFS System for the rest of the case. See Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 14.01(b)(5)(i) (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/court_rules/gp/id/14/).
- You will need to upload a signed copy of your forms that you saved to your computer.

STEP 4: Court will review the filed forms

- Once all your forms are filed, a judicial officer will review your requests and issue an order. When a decision has been made, a court order will be signed and given to you. If you eFiled your forms and signed up for eService, copies will be sent through eService.
- Read your order carefully. Did the judicial officer:
 - **Grant** your request for the temporary Order for Protection (called an Ex Parte Order)?
 - **Deny** your request for an Ex Parte Order?
 - **Dismiss** the case (not grant your request)?
- If the judicial officer **GRANTS** the Ex Parte Order, it will be effective immediately. The judicial officer may have also ordered a hearing. If no hearing is ordered, the Respondent has the right to request a hearing within 5 days of service of the petition and Ex Parte Order.

If a hearing is ordered, the Order for Protection (OFP) will be in effect until the date of the hearing. Depending on what happens at the hearing, the OFP may or may not continue. You **must** attend the hearing if you want the court to issue the OFP.

- If the judicial officer **DENIES** the request for the Ex Parte Order **and** you asked for a hearing, then court administration will schedule a hearing. The court will send a notice of the date and time of the hearing to you and Respondent. There will be no OFP in effect before the hearing. You **must** attend the hearing. If you do not attend the hearing, the OFP may be dismissed.
- If the judicial officer **DISMISSES** the case, this means that the judicial officer does not believe that what you described in your petition fits the definition of domestic abuse as defined by the law or may not

have enough information to make a decision. You can talk to a domestic abuse advocate or get legal advice to see what your options might be. Court staff cannot give legal advice, and they may not have any more information than what is included in the order.

Step 5: Service on Respondent

- **A copy of any order (except dismissed OFPs) must be personally served on the Respondent.** If your petition gave an address in Minnesota where the Respondent can be served, court administration will send the documents to the Sheriff who will try to personally hand it to the Respondent. There is no fee for this service.
- Service is complete when law enforcement personally delivers a copy of the papers to Respondent. It may take them several tries to serve the Respondent, which could take a week or more.
- If Respondent is under 18 years old and you gave the court the name and address of the parent or legal guardian, the court will mail a copy of the order to Respondent's parent or legal guardian.
- If law enforcement is not able to serve Respondent, you may file the *Affidavit and Request for Publication* (OFP501). This form is used to ask the court to publish information about the order as a way to serve the Respondent. OFP501 is available online at <http://www.mncourts.gov/GetForms.aspx?c=17&f=324>. File the original, completed and signed form with the court. If you eFiled your *Petition*, you will also need to eFile this request through the eFS System.
- If the Respondent cannot be served within 14 days, including weekends and holidays, from the date the Ex Parte Order is signed, and an *Affidavit and Order for Alternate Service or Publication* is not filed, the Ex Parte Order will expire. An OFP issued **after** a hearing will not expire if the Respondent cannot be served.

Step 6: Prepare for the hearing and go to court (if hearing scheduled)

- If a hearing is scheduled, court administration will let you know. You **must** attend the hearing. If you do not attend the hearing, the OFP may be dismissed.
- If you are granted an Ex Parte Order and Respondent asks for a hearing, the Ex Parte Order could be **dismissed if you do not attend the hearing.**
- If you no longer want an OFP, please talk with court administration about your options for dismissing your request before the hearing.
- There is helpful information, including Tools & Resources and contact information for the Domestic Violence Crisis Line, on the MN Judicial Branch website <https://mncourts.gov/help-topics.aspx> under the "Domestic Abuse & Harassment" category.

Need Help?

Contact the Statewide Self-Help Center at 651-435-6535, or <https://mncourts.gov/Help-Topics/Self-Help-Centers/Self-Help-Centers-Contact.aspx>

For help with the eFS System (if eFiling your forms in Step 3 or Step 5), contact the eFS Support Center at 612-902-9585 or 1-844-918-1724 (if calling long distance from a landline phone), or <https://www.mncourts.gov/eFS-Support>