

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE PETITION FOR A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CIVIL PROTECTION ORDER

These instructions will help you to prepare the Petition for Domestic Violence Civil Protection Order. Only the domestic relations court in your county hears a Petition for a Domestic Violence Civil Protection Order. **Throughout the petition, you are called *Petitioner* and the person you are filing this petition against (the alleged domestic violence offender) is called *Respondent*.**

SOME HINTS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- All forms must be typed or printed.
- When you write your name on the Petition, use the same name you use when you write your signature.
- Write your name and Respondent's name the same way throughout the Petition.
- Fill out the Petition as completely and accurately as possible.
- If you have any questions about completing the Petition, ask the clerk of court's office for assistance or contact your local domestic violence program or the Ohio Domestic Violence Network at 800-934-9840.
- Under Federal Law the victim **cannot be charged any fees** to obtain a protection order.

FILLING OUT THE PETITION: MARK EACH INSTRUCTION BELOW AFTER YOU READ AND COMPLETE IT

- On the front page, leave the "Case No." line and "Judge" lines BLANK.** The clerk of court's office fills in this information.
- On the top left-hand side of the front page, fill in the requested information about yourself.** If you do not want your present address to be known, write "confidential" in the space for your address. Do not write your address anywhere on the Petition if you want it to be confidential. However, you must include someone's mailing address on the Petition to allow the court to send you legal notices concerning your case.
- On the top left-hand side of the front page, fill in the requested information about Respondent as best you can.** You may use Respondent's work address if you do not know Respondent's home address. If you do not know Respondent's date of birth, leave that line blank. Do not attempt to obtain this information unless it is safe to do so.
- Paragraph 1:** If you are filing the Petition to protect yourself, mark the first box and the box that describes your relationship to Respondent.
- Paragraph 2:** If you are filing the Petition to protect a family or household member, mark the box and fill in their name(s) and the other information requested in the chart. You may attach additional pages if you need more room.
- Paragraph 3:** State the date(s) of the incident(s) that caused you to file the Petition. Provide a brief description of what happened. You may attach additional pages if you need more room to complete your description. You may attach an affidavit instead of or in addition to the written description.
- Paragraph 4:** Indicate what action you want the court to take by marking the boxes next to the numbered paragraphs that apply to your situation.
- Paragraph 4(b):** Provide the address of the residence that you want Respondent to stay away from. If you do not want your present address known, write "address confidential." Do not write your address anywhere on the Petition if you want it to be confidential.
- Paragraphs 4(d) and (e):** If you want temporary custody of your minor children, or want the court to establish temporary visitation rights, list the names and birth dates of the children. If you have children whose custody or visitation will be at issue in this domestic violence case, you must also complete and file a Parenting Proceeding Affidavit. There is a separate form and instructions for the Parenting Proceeding Affidavit.
- Paragraph 4(i):** If you want the court to grant you use of a motor vehicle, describe that vehicle.
- Paragraph 4(k):** Write any special court orders you believe would help ensure you and your family or household members safety and protection.
- Paragraph 5:** If you need an emergency ("*ex parte*") protection order mark the box next to Paragraph 5.
- Paragraph 9:** List ALL present court cases and pertinent past court cases or investigations that involve you or household member that may be related to you, your children, your family, or household members. This list should include all civil, criminal, divorce, juvenile, custody, visitation, and bankruptcy cases. Write the case name, the court, the case number, if known, the type of case, and the result of the case. If the case is not over, write "pending." You may attach additional pages if you need more room.

SIGNING THE PETITION: Try to fill out the Petition before you go the courthouse. **AFTER YOU HAVE FILLED OUT THE PETITION, TAKE IT TO A NOTARY PUBLIC TO HAVE YOUR SIGNATURE NOTARIZED. DO NOT SIGN THE PETITION UNLESS YOU ARE IN FRONT OF A NOTARY PUBLIC.** An employee of the Clerk of Courts office may be available to take your oath.

FILING THE PETITION: After you have your signature notarized, file your Petition at the clerk of court's office. The clerk of court's office will tell you when and where your *ex parte* hearing will take place. **There is no filing fee for a Petition for a CPO.**