

**Important Information about
Protection from Abuse (PFA) Orders in Allegheny
County, Pennsylvania
from Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh's
Legal Advocacy Department**



You may be able to obtain immediate, court-mandated protection through a civil **Protection from Abuse (PFA) Order**, regardless of whether criminal charges are filed against your abuser. **The PFA Order can do any or all of the following:**

- Order the abuser to stop the violent behavior and refrain from harassing, contacting, or stalking you;
- Exclude the abuser from your residence;
- Grant temporary custody of your minor children to you;
- Order payment to you of temporary support and out-of-pocket losses;
- Order the abuser to turn over weapons to the police.

You can obtain a PFA Order at any time as follows:

- **on Weekdays between 9AM and 11:00 AM, go to:**

Allegheny County Family & Juvenile Court
440 Ross Street, Room 3030
Downtown Pittsburgh

You must arrive between 9am and 11am. The Court's PFA Unit staff and domestic violence program advocates will be available to assist and support you in filing a PFA Petition without any charge to you. You will see the Judge at 1:00 pm to request a PFA Order. If the Judge grants your request for a PFA order, you can stay to apply for a free attorney to represent you at your Final Hearing which will take place in 7-10 days. While you are in Court, free childcare is available through the National Council of Jewish Women's Children's Playrooms in Family Court, Criminal Court, and Pittsburgh's Municipal Court.

- **on Weekday Afternoons/Nights and on Weekends:**

If you are not able to safely wait to get to Family Court on a weekday between 9:00 am and 11:00 am, Emergency PFA Orders are available and you can obtain one at either:

Magisterial District Judge's Office in
your community on any afternoon
that the office is open

OR

Allegheny County Night Court (412-350-3240)
660 First Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219
on weekdays anytime EXCEPT 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
and 24 hours/day on weekends and holidays

If you already have a PFA Order that is being violated:

- You should **call 911 immediately** for police who may be able to arrest the defendant (your abuser) for violating the PFA Order.
- If the police do not arrest the defendant immediately, you can take a copy of your PFA Order to either your local District Judge's office or to Night Court to file a Complaint for Indirect Criminal Contempt for Violation of a PFA Order.
- An arrest warrant for the defendant may then be issued so that the defendant can be arrested.

If your abuser has been arrested and is in jail, and you would like to be notified when your abuser is due to be released from jail, please call one of the the following numbers:

- **If your abuser is in the Allegheny County Jail:** please call the Allegheny County Jail Release Notification Program at 412-392-8582.
- **If your abuser is in the Pennsylvania State Prison System:** please call the Pennsylvania State Prison Release Notification Program at 1-800-322-4472.

For more information about PFA Orders and your other legal options, please call:

WC&S Legal Department at 412-355-7400
Or WC&S' 24-Hour Hotline at 412-687-8005
Toll Free at 1-877-338-8255