

# How to Prepare for an Injunction for Protection Court Hearing

1. There are security guards at the door of the courthouse. You may request their assistance if necessary.
2. Court staff will call your name at the start of the hearings or just before the hearings are scheduled to begin, so it is important that you arrive prior to the time your hearing is set to begin.
3. The way you dress shows respect to the court.
  - Dress appropriately - suit, dress, skirt and top, pants and pantsuits
  - Avoid sporty or casual clothes - no jeans, cut-offs, torn or stained clothes
  - Ask your witnesses to dress appropriately as well
4. You have a right to have a victim advocate sit with you in court. Look for victim advocates as you enter the courtroom and identify yourself before the hearing begins, or contact your local domestic violence center at (DV hotline number) prior to the hearing to speak with an advocate about meeting you in court.
5. If the respondent speaks with you or attempts to speak with you prior to the hearing, ask court security or court staff for assistance.
6. Cell phones must be turned off or set to vibrate before entering the courtroom. Ask your witnesses to turn off their phones as well.
7. Hearings are recorded. If you need to speak with your attorney or advocate, please ask them to step outside of the courtroom with you.

8. Bring your witnesses and evidence to court. (pictures, recordings, etc.) This is the time to present your case. You have to give the judge enough evidence to show why you need an injunction.
9. Young children are not allowed in the courtroom unless they have been pre-approved by the judge. Children may wait outside the courtroom if accompanied by an adult. If the children are not witnesses who have been pre-approved to testify, do not bring them to court. You may want to contact your local domestic violence center to see if they can assist you with finding childcare during your hearing.
10. Your local domestic violence center may be able to provide you with an attorney to assist you with the injunction free of charge, (Add DV hotline number) or Legal aid may be able to provide you with an attorney. (add number of local legal aid office)
11. Speak audibly and clearly into the microphone when testifying. The judge is listening even if she/he is not looking at you.
12. The judge is always called “Your Honor” or “Judge.”
13. Tell your story slowly and to the point. Do not assume the judge knows the facts of your case. If multiple incidents occurred, begin with the most severe.
14. When the judge is speaking, please do not speak. If the judge interrupts you, stop immediately and answer the question directly. Then ask if you may continue to speak or the judge may tell you to continue.
15. If you have legal representation, please ask your attorney to speak with the opposing party or the opposing party’s attorney. If you do not have legal representation, consult with your victim advocate, court staff, the clerk or a bailiff. If the opposing party’s attorney approaches you, do not speak to them other than to advise them that you have an attorney or will be hiring one.

16. The respondent may contact you before the hearing to apologize or persuade you to drop the protection order. This is a violation of the temporary injunction. Report any violations to your attorney and/or to the local law enforcement agency.
17. When meeting with your attorney or victim advocate, please bring the following documents: police reports, violation of the injunction information, witness list with addresses, pending or past divorce or custody papers. Keep all evidence such as letters, emails, voice mails and pictures.
18. If you know the respondent has been convicted of battery or any other violent crime, let your attorney or victim advocate know the state, county and date of the conviction.
19. Violations of the final injunction may include any contact with you in person, by telephone, email, or a message relayed through a third person. Any violation should be reported to law enforcement. Have the case number ready. If it is an emergency, call 911! Violations can also be reported to the Clerk of the Court. The clerk can provide you with paperwork to report the violation to the State Attorney's Office.
20. If you feel unsafe, ask the bailiff if the respondent can be held in the courtroom for a few minutes to allow you time to get safely to your vehicle.