

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is a violent act committed by a member of a family or household upon another member of the same family or household. Studies of serious violence, including abuse, assault and even murder, revealed that many such crimes initially stemmed from domestic violence.

It is the objective of the Prince William County Police to provide intervention in acts of domestic violence directed at solutions that enable the victims of these crimes to live their lives without fear of further violence from abusers. This will be done by a timely police response and a professional intervention into the incident, with the purpose being to save lives and to ensure those involved their right to live safely, without threat of injury or mental stress. To effectively break the cycle of abuse, those involved will be referred to appropriate counseling resources and arrest will be made, if indicated. The abuser's conduct must be recognized for what it is — criminal behavior.

Location of Juvenile Intake:
Juvenile & Domestic Relations Service
Intake Office

Court Service Unit (2nd Floor)
9540 Center Street (Comcast Building)
Manassas, VA 22110

Phone: (703) 792-6210

(ask for an intake counselor)

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

(If you report in person between 8 and 10 a.m. the order may be issued that same day).

RESOURCES

A.C.T.S. Turning Points
P.O. Box 74, Dumfries, VA 22026
(703) 221-4951
(Open 24-7)

Provides emergency shelter, food, support, and educational programs for women and children in violent homes.

Victim/Witness Unit
(703)397-7083

Prince William County
Department of Social Services
(703) 792-7500
(Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 5 pm)
Offers information, referral and financial assistance for low-income Prince William County residents.

For further information contact:
**Prince William County
Police Department
(703) 792-6500
(703) 792-7227**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



**Charlie T. Deane, Chief of Police
Prince William County**

Definitions

Family Abuse: Consists of any act of violence or threat, including any forceful detention, that results in physical injury or places one in reasonable apprehension of serious bodily injury, and which is committed by a person against such person's family or household member (Section 16.1-228 Code of Virginia).

To Cohabitate: To live together as husband and wife with the assumption of marital rights and duties including, but not dependent on, sexual relations (Black's Law Dictionary).

To Reside: To live, dwell, abide, stay, remain or lodge.

Family or Household Members:

- 1) Cohabitant (anyone who has resided within the last 12 months, and includes any children that resided with them).
- 2) No residency required: spouse, former spouse, person's parents, stepparents, children, stepchildren, siblings, half-siblings, grandparents, and grandchildren.
- 3) Residency required: father-in-law, mother-in-law, stepbrother, stepsister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law.
- 4) Any individual who has a child in common with the person, whether or not the person and that individual have been married or have resided together.

How to Report a Domestic Violence Incident

Any victim of a domestic violence situation, or anyone aware of a domestic violence situation in progress, should call the Police Department at (703) 792-6500 and give the address and situation, and advise if any weapons are involved. If the domestic violence incident is serious and in progress, dial 9-1-1 for immediate police response.

Police Response

The Prince William County Police Department shall respond to any reported domestic violence as quickly as possible. An investigation will be conducted by the officer to determine if a crime has been committed. Witnesses will be interviewed, evidence collected and a police report will be filed on all domestic violence incidents.

If the police officer determines that sufficient probable cause exists that a crime has occurred, an arrest will be made. The desire of the victim to prosecute is not a factor in the determination to arrest the suspect. All crimes of domestic violence will be considered criminal behavior.

Emergency Protective Order (EPO)

The Emergency Protective Order is valid until 5 P.M. of the business day following issuance. It is obtained from the magistrate by the investigating police officer upon determining that reasonable belief exists that an assault against a family or household member has been committed and that there is probable danger of further assault. Once issued, the Order will receive priority attention by the Police Officer attempting to serve it immediately.

The Order may impose one or more of the following conditions on the abuser:

- 1) Further abuse is prohibited.
- 2) No contact between parties.
- 3) Petitioner's exclusive use of the residence or other housing as provided by spouse.

The Order may require the abuser to vacate the property immediately. The police will assist the victim (petitioner) in obtaining temporary housing and in removing clothing from the house, if needed.

Obtaining a Protective Order

A citizen may petition the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court for a Family Abuse Protective Order on a walk-in basis at the Intake Office of the Court Service Unit from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., Monday through Friday. Petitions are then scheduled for a court hearing at 1:30 p.m. the same day. Petitions filed between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. will be scheduled for the next court day.

If the judge grants the petitioner's request and issues a Preliminary Protective Order (PPO), it is effective only until the second hearing, which will be set within 15 days. The petitioner can request that the PPO include any or all of the following:

- 1) Further abuse is prohibited.
- 2) No contact between parties.
- 3) Petitioner's exclusive use of the residence or other housing as provided by the spouse.

After the second hearing, the judge may grant a Permanent Protective Order and can include all of the above provisions, as well as ordering one or both parties to participate in treatment, counseling, or other rehabilitation programs; or any other relief necessary to protect the petitioner and any minor children.

Such orders shall be issued for a specific period of time, not to exceed two years. Any violation shall constitute Contempt of Court and can be punished as a Class 1 misdemeanor, which can be confinement in jail for up to 12 months or a fine up to \$2,500, or both.