

## **How to Proceed with Filing an Emergency Order of Protection, Stalking No Contact Order and/or Civil No Contact Order Online**

Using any device with access to the internet, such as a tablet, computer or a phone, go to [www.illinoisprotectionorder.org](http://www.illinoisprotectionorder.org). Select Winnebago County as the county in which you want to file your petition and then click on the type of emergency order you want to file. If you do not know what type of order to file, please view the last section of these instructions for information about the different types of orders available and qualifications for these orders.

Once directed to the next page, click “Start Here” to begin the process of completing the petition for the protection order. Please write down and keep the **RED** receipt number that you are given once you begin the online order of protection filing.

As you work through the program, fill in the appropriate information. Please be as accurate and detailed as possible. Should you have questions about the information required or legal relief available, you can click on the black question mark box labeled “Help” throughout the document.

Once you complete the petition for the emergency order, you will be brought to a Confirmation page. Please note your **RED** receipt number and once you have determined you are ready to submit the document select “I’m Done.” This will submit your emergency order request to the Winnebago County Circuit Clerk’s Office.

**ONCE YOU HAVE SUBMITTED THE ORDER BY SELECTING “I’M DONE” YOU MUST CONTACT THE CIRCUIT CLERK’S OFFICE AT 815-319-4500 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM. For same day processing, your paperwork must be filed electronically and you must contact the clerk’s office by 3:15 pm. YOUR PROTECTION ORDER WILL NOT BE FILED WITH THE COURT OR HEARD BY A JUDGE IF YOU DO NOT COMPLETE THIS STEP. YOU DO NOT HAVE AN ACTIVE PROTECTIVE ORDER.**

When you call the Winnebago County Circuit Clerk’s office, tell the person answering the phone that you submitted a petition for an emergency order online. You will need to provide the Clerk with the **RED** receipt number you were provided when you completed your petition for an emergency order online. The Clerk will gather information from you such as your phone number and address to ensure that you will be notified when a judge is available to review your petition and to ensure that the Court can send you the proper paperwork if your emergency order is granted. **Please provide the Winnebago County Circuit Clerk’s Office with a safe and reliable way to contact you.**

After you provide this information to the Clerk, they will inform you of the next steps and when you can expect to be contacted by the Judge. All remote emergency requests for a protective order are heard via Zoom. The clerk will send a text message informing you of the Zoom ID to use and what time to log onto Zoom to meet with the judge. You must appear on Zoom at the time provided for the Court to be able to proceed with your request for an emergency order.

*If you do not have access to Zoom, please call the Clerk's Office for information on alternative options.*

Once you have entered the Zoom courtroom, a judge will place you under oath and speak with you about your petition for the Emergency Order of Protection, Stalking No Contact Order, Civil No Contact Order or Firearms Order, ask you questions, and let you know if your order is granted. You will be provided with your next court date to request an extension of the emergency order. The documents you need for your emergency order will be mailed to you, or you may choose to pick them up at the Winnebago County Circuit Clerk's Office in Room 108 of the Winnebago County Courthouse. The Winnebago County Sheriff's Police Department will proceed with serving the appropriate paperwork to the person you have requested protection from (the respondent).

**REMEMBER: YOUR EMERGENCY ORDER IS NOT ACTIVE UNTIL IT IS GRANTED BY A JUDGE. YOU MUST CALL THE CLERK AND THEN SPEAK WITH A JUDGE DIRECTLY BEFORE THE PROTECTION ORDER CAN BE PUT INTO EFFECT.**

### **Additional Assistance**

If you feel you would like additional guidance with your online request for an emergency protection order, there are organizations who may be able to assist you. Like the courts, local advocacy organizations are modifying their in-person services to ensure the safety of the people they serve, their staff and the public at-large. Please feel to reach out by phone to the following organizations for possible assistance:

<b>Do you need help filing this petition?</b>	
If you don't know how to file this petition, please call or visit the website of the following legal agencies. They can provide information to help you file your Order of Protection.	
Domestic Violence Assistance Center (legal advocacy office)	(815) 516-2440 <a href="http://www.remediesrenewinglives.org">http://www.remediesrenewinglives.org</a>
Winnebago County State's Attorney's Office	(815) 319-4700 <a href="http://wincoil.us/departments/states-attorney/">http://wincoil.us/departments/states-attorney/</a>
Zeke Giorgi Legal Clinic	(815) 962-9980
Prairie State Legal Services	(815) 965-2134 <a href="http://www.pslegal.org">http://www.pslegal.org</a>
Remedies Renewing Lives (24-hour hotline)	(815) 962-6102 <a href="http://www.remediesrenewinglives.org">http://www.remediesrenewinglives.org</a>
Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling, Inc.	(815) 636-9811

Children's Safe Harbor	(815) 316-7772 <a href="http://www.childrenssafeharbor.net">http://www.childrenssafeharbor.net</a>
Visiting Nurses Association	(815) 971- 3502
Winnebago County Bar Association Lawyer Referral	(815) 964-4992 <a href="http://www.wcbarockford.org">http://www.wcbarockford.org</a>
State of Illinois' Domestic Violence Help Line	1-877-TO END DV or 877-863-6338 (Voice) 1-877-863-6339 (TTY)
National Sexual Assault Hotline	1-800-656-4673
National Domestic Violence Hotline	1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

**Information to help determine if you may qualify for an  
Emergency Order of Protection:**

**1. Relationship to the Respondent**

The person needing protection is called the "Petitioner" and the "Respondent" is the person that you want protection from. **How are you related to the Respondent?**

- We are married, or we used to be married (husband, wife, spouse).
- We are dating each other, or we used to date (boyfriend, girlfriend, intimate partner).
- We have a child together.
- We are family members (parent, child, sibling, step-parent, step-child, or other family relationship).
- We live together, or we used to live together (roommate, housemate, live-in partner).
- I have a disability, and the Respondent is my caregiver (personal assistant).

**You must be able to check at least one of these boxes.** An Order of Protection only covers these kinds of domestic relationships.

If you are not related to the Respondent in any of these ways, then you don't qualify for an Order of Protection under the statute. However, you may qualify for a different kind of civil order such as a:

- Civil No Contact Order: If you were sexually assaulted, **call Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling at 815-636-9811** . They may be able to help you get a Civil No-Contact Order.
- Stalking No Contact Order: For other situations, you may qualify for a Stalking No Contact Order. To qualify for a Stalking No Contact Order, you cannot be related to or meet any of the relationship criteria listed above for the person you are filing against. Stalking No Contact Orders require the occurrence of two or more incidents of harassing or stalking behavior to have occurred.

Please follow the procedures listed above for the filing of a Civil No Contact or Stalking No Contact Order.

## 2. Recent Incident of Abuse or Threat

Abuse can be physical or sexual (grabbing, pushing, hitting, kicking, choking, forcing you to do things you do not want to do), verbal or harassing (threats to hurt you, repeated phone calls or text messages), stalking (following you) or other similar behaviors. These are a few things that the judge will look for:

- The Respondent has done something abusive (physical, verbal, harassing or stalking).
- The Respondent has a history of abuse toward you or other people.
- The abuse is getting worse, or you think the abuse would get worse if the Respondent knew you were trying to get an Order of Protection.

If you are not sure whether what happened to you is abuse, you may want to talk to an advocate or lawyer. 24 -hour hotline advocacy is available through Remedies Renewing Lives at 815-962-6102.

## 3. Location

It is important to file your petition for emergency protection with the right court. **Which of these are true for you?**

- I (the Petitioner) live in Winnebago County.
- The Respondent lives in Winnebago County.

- The abuse happened in Winnebago County.
- I (the Petitioner) fled to Winnebago County for my safety, and I am living here for right now to stay safe.

**You must be able to check at least one of these boxes.** If none of these are true for you, then you will need to get your order in a different county.