



COMMUNICATION REGARDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTECTIVE ORDERS, PEACE ORDERS AND EXTREME RISK PROTECTIVE ORDERS

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the District Court of Maryland has altered procedures so that it can continue to provide services for those individuals seeking domestic violence protective orders, peace orders and extreme risk protective orders.

District Court Commissioners' offices located across the state of Maryland remain open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are now handling all three types of the orders listed above as **interim orders**. If an individual needs to file a petition, they can do so by visiting a commissioner office located closest to them. They can find a full directory of commissioner office locations here: <https://mdcourts.gov/district/directories/commissionermap>.

When a commissioner grants an interim order, a hearing date is placed on the paperwork based on the expected reopening of the court location in which the interim order is filed or based on procedures determined by the Administrative Judge. Depending on when the order was issued, these orders may have hearing dates that have passed or may pass as the court adjusts to the evolving pandemic.

To minimize any confusion created by these necessary adjustments, **all pending interim and temporary domestic violence protective orders, pending interim and temporary peace orders and pending interim and temporary extreme risk protective orders will remain in effect (even if the date has passed on the order) until such time that the court has conducted a hearing or has otherwise communicated with the parties.**

The clerk's office will attempt to contact the parties when a hearing is scheduled. If a party has not received a call or court notice from the clerk's office and it is within 5 days from the date listed on the hearing paperwork, the party should contact the clerk's office to confirm the hearing date. **If the party has new contact information, they should notify the clerk's office of the change.** You can find the contact information for the District Court clerks' offices here: <https://mdcourts.gov/coronaviruslocationupdates>.

Pursuant to Chief Judge Barbera's Fourth Amended Administrative Order Expanding and Extending Statewide Judiciary Restricted Operations Due to the COVID-19 Emergency issued May 4, 2020, a newly revised policy on Interim and Temporary Orders during the COVID-19 emergency was issued May 5, 2020. This policy, as well as all additional Administrative Orders and operations advice related to the COVID-19 public health emergency can be located on this website: <https://mdcourts.gov/coronavirusupdate>.

If a party has questions, please contact the clerk's office where the petition was filed between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekdays. The Maryland Judiciary's Self-Help Center remains open for free legal advice regarding certain civil court matters. You can speak to an attorney by phone or chat. For more information on the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center go to: <https://mdcourts.gov/selfhelp>.

The District Court of Maryland is committed to continuing emergency services while maintaining the health and safety of all those it serves during this COVID-19 global health emergency. Thank you for your understanding and please be safe.