

Should I Get a Restraining Order?

Reasons to get a Restraining Order

To feel more confident or good about yourself for taking control of the situation.

To encourage law enforcement assistance before the abuser hurts you or hurts you again. For example, if you have a restraining order you do not have to wait for the abuser to hurt you again before you can call law enforcement; it is enough just that the abuser has contacted or come near you.

To encourage a more effective response from law enforcement. They have a copy of the restraining order and may give your call priority.

To encourage the assistance of your employer, school officials, and other authorities in case the abuser presents at your work place or presents inappropriately at the school if you share a child/children.

To establish an official record of the abuse.

To encourage the courts assistance in enabling you to remain in the home you shared with the abuser if it is jointly owned or to enable you to return to the home and remove your belongings safely.

To provide documentation of the abuse for your landlord thereby enabling you to proceed with the steps involved in terminating/changing a lease.

Reasons not to get a Restraining Order

You think that it will make the abuser more violent and will put you in greater danger.

You think you do not have strong facts or enough evidence to convince the court to grant a restraining order. Talk with the Family Crisis Center before making your decision not to file a restraining order. How you present your fear in the context of the entire relationship is important.

You choose not to make law enforcement aware of the abuser and the abuse.

You do not want to report a violation of the restraining order to law enforcement.

You do not want friends, family or perhaps co-workers to know about the abuse.

You are afraid of peer or gang retaliation.

You do not want to spark the abuser's interest in your children and you believe the abuser will not otherwise try to get visitation or custody.

Restraining Orders can be powerful tools, but they are not the answer for everyone. Only you know what feels right for you. The Family Crisis Center can help you weigh your options and design a personalized safety plan no matter what you decide to do.