

CeaseFirePA



THE DANGERS OF GUNS AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In the United States, an intimate partner is fatally shot by their abuser every 16 hours



500% The likelihood of a partner dying in a domestic violence situation increases by 500 percent if there is a gun in the home

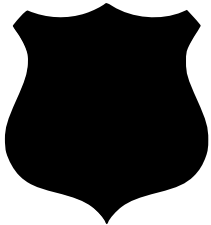
Domestic abusers often hold emotional or psychological control over their victim. Having a gun can be a means of having power over the victim



Firearms are the top method of killing in domestic violence situations and have been for the last decade

In 2018, **71** people in Pennsylvania were killed in domestic violence situations with a firearm

About **4.5 MILLION** American women alive today have been threatened with a gun by an intimate partner



Domestic violence calls are among the most lethal for law enforcement, as the abuser often targets the officers as well as their intimate partner

In 2018, CeaseFirePA helped pass legislation that included several protections for victims of domestic violence, including much stronger safeguards related to abusers' access to firearms and law enforcement accompaniment during service of a PFA.

If you or someone you know is in need of a Protection from Abuse (PFA) here are the steps you take to obtain one. While this is a state law, it is carried out differently in each county but they each follow the same general process:

- 1) The victim goes to the county courthouse to fill out a form (petition). The forms asks victims to explain why they are seeking protection and to describe the abuse they've suffered. The victim will also indicate on the form what types of protections they are seeking, for example, no contact by the abuser or a request for the abuser to relinquish their firearms.
- 2) A judge then reviews the petition and may have some additional questions for the victim. At this time, a judge may grant or deny a temporary PFA. A date for a final hearing will be scheduled within 10 business days. If a temporary PFA is granted, it provides protection for the victim through the date of the final hearing.
- 3) Next, the local sheriff's office will deliver a copy of the petition, temporary PFA order and notice of the final hearing to the defendant.
- 4) At the time of the final PFA hearing, the victim and abuser both have the opportunity to come before the judge. Both are allowed to have attorneys represent them at the hearing. A domestic violence advocate may also accompany the victim. If both the victim and abuser agree on the terms of an order, this will be shared with the judge who will make it official. This is known as a PFA by consent agreement. If either party does not agree, both the victim and the abuser will go in front of the judge to share their accounts. The judge will make a determination based on the testimony and/or evidence they receive. The judge can then order a final PFA for up to a period of three years.

Source: Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence 1-800-932-4632

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233