

Is there anything that I can do before starting I-CAN! that will assist me in completing the forms?

Yes. You will be asked to provide specific identifying information about the person from whom you are seeking protection. This information includes (if known): address, date of birth, social security number, phone number and any other descriptive information such as place/location of employment, car license number, scars or other ways to identify and find the individual. This information will assist in the service (providing a copy of the order directly to this person) of an order, which is required to make the order effective.

You will also be asked about any children in common (including their identifying information) and whether you would like the protective order to also include any children.

Finally, you will be asked to provide a description of any event that led to your request for the protective order. Having all of this information with you will help speed the process of completing your petition through the I-CAN! system.

Is there any other information that would be helpful to me regarding what to expect in court, the different types of protection orders, etc.

Yes, a checklist has been developed that will provide additional information on how to get ready for your hearing as well as where to go for additional help. This checklist (**Family Abuse Protective Order Check List**) can be printed out with your I-CAN! generated protective order forms.

In addition, the information sheet, **“What You Need to Know About Protective Orders,”** http://www.courts.state.va.us/forms/district/protective_order_information_sheet.pdf will provide you with information on the different type of protective orders in Virginia, and how they work.

Will I-CAN! provide me with legal advice on how to proceed with my case in court?

No. I-CAN! is not a substitute for the legal advice of a licensed attorney and will not provide you with any legal advice on how to proceed with your specific case. I-CAN! merely ‘maps’ the answers you provide onto the correct court form.

The Virginia State Bar provides a Lawyer Referral Service at 800-552-7977. In addition, the Virginia Poverty Law Center may be able provide legal assistance by calling their toll free number at 866-534-5243.

For additional information on the I-CAN! System, please contact: The Department of Judicial Planning, Office of the Executive Secretary, Supreme Court of Virginia, at 804-786-8902.

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Local Court Information Here:



Virginia’s Online Forms Completion Program for Family Abuse Protective Order Petitions



This brochure is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

If you are in immediate danger of abuse, call 911. For assistance in locating a domestic violence program near you, contact the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance's 24-hour hotline at 800-838-8238.

What is I-CAN!?

I-CAN! (Interactive Community Assistance Network) is a FREE Internet-based service that provides assistance with preparing family abuse protective order petition forms.

The I-CAN! system is an online forms completion program that assists the user in creating a properly formatted petition for a Preliminary Family Abuse Protective Order (15 day) in Virginia.

How does I-CAN! work?

Users are guided through a series of questions online; answers are then "mapped" to the appropriate court forms that can then be printed and taken to the appropriate court for filing.

A video guide, "Marie" guides users through the system by reading all the information on the screens and prompting users to answer specific questions.

How do I access I-CAN! and are there any technology restrictions?

I-CAN! is accessible from the homepage of the Supreme Court of Virginia's website at: <http://www.courts.state.va.us/> Under the Online Services heading, click on "Assistance with Family Abuse Protective Orders." The direct link to I-CAN! is: http://www.courts.state.va.us/programs/asst_with_family_abuse_protective_orders.html

You can also do a keyword search using "Assistance with Family Abuse Protective Orders" from the homepage of <http://www.courts.state.va.us>.

While I-CAN! can be accessed from any computer that has Internet access, it does not function using Netscape Navigator and will not print on Apple computers. A PC with Internet Explorer 5.5 or greater can run I-CAN! and Windows 95, 98, NT, 2000, XP operating system versions are supported.

Is I-CAN! available in other languages and how does this work?

Yes, I-CAN! is also available in Spanish.

Once in the I-CAN! system, one of the first questions you will be asked is whether you want to proceed with the program in English or Spanish. If you choose Spanish, all the questions will be posed in Spanish. Just as in the English version of I-CAN! answers are "mapped" to the appropriate court forms, which are printed in English.

How long does it take to go through I-CAN! and complete my family abuse protective order petition forms?

It takes approximately 1 hour to answer all the questions and print out the forms.

If my petition for a family abuse protective order is completed online, does this mean that I have filed for a protective order with the court?

No, you will have only completed and printed the forms necessary to file for the order. You **must** bring these forms to the appropriate court. Forms completed through the I-CAN! system are not automatically or electronically sent to the court.

Once completed, where do I take the I-CAN! generated forms?

Once you complete the protective order forms through the I-CAN! system, you will need to print the forms and physically take the papers to the Court Service Unit Intake Officer at the Juvenile and Domestic Relations court in your community.

A court services unit intake officer will enter the information that you have provided on the forms into the courts' case management system. Once the court has received and entered your forms, you will have filed for an order of protection with the court, which the court must review before an order is issued.

If I don't finish completing the forms with I-CAN!, can I return to the program later to finish?

Yes. When you begin using the I-CAN! system, a unique password is assigned to you. It is helpful to print your password or write it down and keep it in a safe place for future reference.

If you do not finish completing the forms all at one time, you can exit the program and return using the password, which will bring you back to the forms you began completing previously.

Is my information on the forms automatically sent to the courts, and saved on the courts' computer system?

No, the information you provide in I-CAN! is **not** automatically sent to the courts electronically or saved on their computer system through I-CAN!. You must bring your completed paperwork, to the Court Service Unit of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations court in your jurisdiction, and they will process and file the forms with the court.