

Supreme Court of Florida

No. SC15-339

IN RE: AMENDMENTS TO THE SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORMS.

[April 23, 2015]

PER CURIAM.

Pursuant to the procedures approved by this Court in Amendments to the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure & Family Law Forms, 810 So. 2d 1, 14 (Fla. 2000), this Court has internally reviewed the Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Forms and has determined that amendments to form 12.980(n), Petition for an Injunction for Protection Against Dating Violence, are needed. Input on this issue was received from the Advisory Workgroup on the Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Forms, which provided valuable assistance. We have jurisdiction. See art. V, § 2(a), Fla. Const.

Section 784.046(2)(b), Florida Statutes (2014) provides that a person who is either “the victim of dating violence and has reasonable cause to believe he or she

is in imminent danger of becoming the victim of another act of dating violence” or “has reasonable cause to believe he or she is in imminent danger of becoming the victim of an act of dating violence,” has standing to file a petition for an injunction for protection against dating violence. § 784.046(2)(b), Fla. Stat. (2014). Both the instructions to the form and the content of the form are amended to more clearly reflect this standard. Additionally, section 784.046(2)(b) provides that a parent or legal guardian has standing to petition for an injunction for protection against dating violence on behalf of a minor living at home. If the person against whom the injunction is sought is also a parent or legal guardian, the petitioning parent or legal guardian must have been “an eyewitness to, or have direct physical evidence or affidavits from eyewitnesses of, the specific facts and circumstances that form the basis upon which relief is sought.” § 784.046(4)(a)1., Fla. Stat. (2014). If the person against whom the injunction is sought is not a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian of the minor, the petitioner must “[h]ave a reasonable cause to believe that the minor child is a victim of . . . dating violence to form the basis upon which relief is sought.” § 784.046(4)(a)2., Fla. Stat. (2014). The instructions and the wording of the form are amended to better explain these requirements.¹

1. Other minor and editorial amendments are also made to the form.

The amended form is adopted as set forth in the appendix to this opinion, fully engrossed, effective for immediate use. The form may also be accessed and downloaded from the Florida State Court's website at <http://www.flcourts.org/resources-and-services/court-improvement/problem-solving-courts/family-courts/family-law-forms.stml>. By adoption of the amended form, we express no opinion as to its correctness or applicability. We also direct that the amended form be published for comment. Interested persons shall have sixty days from the date of this opinion to file comments with the Court.²

It is so ordered.

2. All comments must be filed with the Court on or before June 22, 2015, as well as a separate request for oral argument if the person filing the comment wishes to participate in oral argument, which may be scheduled in this case. If filed by an attorney in good standing with The Florida Bar, the comment must be electronically filed via the Portal in accordance with In re: Electronic Filing in the Supreme Court of Florida via the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, Fla. Admin. Order No. AOSC13-7 (Feb 18, 2013). If filed by a non-lawyer or a lawyer not licensed to practice in Florida, the comment must be electronically filed via e-mail in accordance with In re Mandatory Submission of Electronic Copies of Documents, Fla. Admin. Order No. AOSC04-84 (Sept. 13, 2004). Electronically filed documents must be submitted in Microsoft Word 97 or higher. Any person unable to submit a comment electronically must mail or hand-deliver the originally signed comment to the Florida Supreme Court, Office of the Clerk, 500 South Duval Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1927; no additional copies are required or will be accepted.

LABARGA, C.J., and PARIENTE, LEWIS, QUINCE, CANADY, POLSTON,
and PERRY, JJ., concur.

THE FILING OF A MOTION FOR REHEARING SHALL NOT ALTER THE
EFFECTIVE DATE OF THESE AMENDMENTS.

Original Proceedings – Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Forms

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW
FORM 12.980(n)
PETITION FOR INJUNCTION FOR PROTECTION AGAINST DATING
VIOLENCE (04/15)**

When should this form be used?

If you are a victim of **dating violence**, and have reasonable cause to believe you are in **imminent danger** of becoming the victim of another act of dating violence, **or** if you have reasonable cause to believe that you are in **imminent danger** of becoming a victim of dating violence, you can use this form to ask the court for a protective order prohibiting dating violence. Dating violence means violence between individuals who have or have had a continuing and significant relationship of a romantic or intimate nature. **The dating relationship must have existed within the past six months, the nature of the relationship must have been characterized by the expectation of affection or sexual involvement between the parties, and the frequency and type of interaction must have included that the persons have been involved over time and on a continuous basis during the course of the relationship. Dating violence does not include violence in a casual acquaintanceship or violence between individuals who only have engaged in ordinary fraternization in a business or social context.** Dating violence includes assault, aggravated assault, battery, aggravated battery, sexual assault, sexual battery, stalking, aggravated stalking, kidnapping, or false imprisonment, or any criminal offense resulting in physical injury or death. Because you are making a request to the court, you are called the **petitioner**. The person whom you are asking the court to protect you from is called the **respondent**. If you are under the age of eighteen and have never been married or had the disabilities of nonage removed by a court, one of your parents or your legal guardian must sign this petition on your behalf.

If you are filing on behalf of a child or children

The parent or legal guardian of any minor child *who is living at home* may seek an injunction for protection against dating violence on behalf of the minor child. With respect to a minor child who is living at home, if the party against whom the protective injunction is sought is also a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian, you, as the parent or legal guardian filing the petition, must have been an eye-witness to, or have direct physical evidence or **affidavits** from eye-witnesses of, the specific facts and circumstances that form the basis of the petition. If the party against whom the protective injunction is sought is a person **OTHER THAN** a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian of the minor child, you, as the parent or legal guardian filing the petition, must state why you have reasonable cause to believe that the minor child is a victim of dating violence.

Additional Information

If the respondent is your **spouse**, former spouse, related to you by blood or marriage, living with you

now or has lived with you in the past (if you are or were living as a family), or the other parent of your child(ren), whether or not you have ever been married or ever lived together, you should use **Petition for Injunction for Protection Against Domestic Violence**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(a), rather than this form.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. You should complete this form (giving as much detail as possible) and sign it the presence of a notary or in front of the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where you live. The clerk will take your completed petition to a **judge**. You should keep a copy for your records. If you have any questions or need assistance completing this form, the clerk or **family law intake staff** will help you.

What should I do if the judge grants my petition?

If the facts contained in your petition convince the judge that an **immediate and present danger of dating violence** exists, the judge will sign a **Temporary Injunction for Protection Against Dating Violence**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(o). A temporary injunction is issued without notice to the respondent. The clerk will give your **petition**, the temporary injunction, and any other papers filed with your petition to the sheriff or other law enforcement officer for **personal service** on the respondent. The temporary injunction will take effect immediately after the respondent is served with a copy of it. It lasts until a full **hearing** can be held or for a period of 15 days, whichever comes first. The court may extend the temporary injunction beyond 15 days for a good reason, which may include failure to obtain **service** on the respondent.

The temporary injunction is issued **ex parte**. This means that the judge has considered only the information presented by one side--YOU. Section I of the temporary injunction gives a date that you should appear in court for a hearing. You will be expected to testify about the facts in your petition. The respondent will be given the opportunity to testify at this hearing, also. At the hearing, the judge will decide whether to issue a **Final Judgment of Injunction for Protection Against Dating Violence (After Notice)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(p), which will remain in effect for a specific time period or until modified or dissolved by the court. **If you and/or the respondent do not appear, the temporary injunction may be continued in force, extended, or dismissed, and/or additional orders may be granted, including entry of a permanent injunction and the imposition of court costs. You and respondent will be bound by the terms of any injunction or order issued at the final hearing.**

IF EITHER YOU OR RESPONDENT DO NOT APPEAR AT THE FINAL HEARING, YOU WILL BOTH BE BOUND BY THE TERMS OF ANY INJUNCTION OR ORDER ISSUED IN THIS MATTER.

If the judge signs a temporary or final injunction, the clerk will provide you with the necessary copies. **Make sure that you keep one certified copy of the injunction with you at all times!**

What can I do if the judge denies my petition?

Instructions for Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(n), Petition for Injunction for Protection Against Dating Violence (04/15)

If your petition is denied on the grounds that it appears to the court that no immediate and present danger of dating violence exists, the court will set a full hearing on your petition. The respondent will be notified by **personal service** of your petition and the hearing. If your petition is denied, you may: amend your petition by filing a **Supplemental Affidavit in Support of Petition for Injunction for Protection**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(g); attend the hearing and present facts that support your petition; and/or dismiss your petition.

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms. The words that are in **bold underline** are defined in that section. The clerk of the circuit court or **family law intake staff** will help you complete any necessary forms. For further information, see Section 784.046, Florida Statutes, and Rule 12.610, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____

Division: _____

Petitioner,

and

Respondent.

PETITION FOR INJUNCTION FOR PROTECTION AGAINST DATING VIOLENCE

I, *{full legal name}* _____, being sworn, certify that the following statements are true:

SECTION I. PETITIONER

(This section is about you. It must be completed.)

1. Petitioner currently lives at the following address: *{address, city, state, zip code}* _____

Date of Birth of Petitioner: _____.

[Indicate if applicable]

_____ **Petitioner seeks an injunction for protection on behalf of a minor child.** Petitioner is the parent or legal guardian of *{full legal name}* _____, a minor child who is living at home.

2. Petitioner's attorney's name, address, and telephone number is: _____

(If you do not have an attorney, write "none.")

SECTION II. RESPONDENT

(This section is about the person you want to be protected from. It must be completed.)

1. Respondent currently lives at the following address: *{address, city, state, and zip code}* _____
 Respondent's Driver's License number is: *{if known}* _____
2. Petitioner has known Respondent since *{date}* _____.
3. Respondent's last known place of employment: _____
 Employment address: _____
 Working hours: _____
4. Physical description of Respondent:
 Race: _____ Sex: Male _____ Female _____ Date of Birth: _____
 Height: _____ Weight: _____ Eye Color: _____ Hair Color: _____
 Distinguishing marks and/or scars: _____
 Vehicle: (make/model) _____ Color: _____ Tag Number: _____
5. Other names Respondent goes by (aliases or nicknames): _____
 _____.
6. Respondent's attorney's name, address, and telephone number is: _____

 (If you do not know whether Respondent has an attorney, write "unknown." If Respondent does not have an attorney, write "none.")
7. If Respondent is a minor, the address of Respondent's parent or legal guardian is: _____

SECTION III. CASE HISTORY AND REASON FOR SEEKING PETITION (This section must be completed.)

1. Have the Petitioner and Respondent been involved in a dating relationship within the past six months? _____ Yes _____ No
2. Describe the nature of the relationship between the Petitioner and Respondent *{include the length of time of the relationship, the romantic or intimate nature of the relationship, the frequency or type of interaction, and any other facts that characterize the relationship}*

____ Please indicate here if you are attaching additional pages to continue these facts.

3. Has Petitioner ever received or tried to get an injunction for protection against domestic violence, dating violence, repeat violence, or sexual violence, or stalking against Respondent in this or any other court?

____ Yes ____ No If yes, what happened in that case? *{Include case number, if known}*

4. Has Respondent ever received or tried to get an injunction for protection against domestic violence, dating violence, repeat violence, or sexual violence, or stalking against Petitioner in this or any other court?

____ Yes ____ No If yes, what happened in that case? *{Include case number, if known}*__

5. Describe **any other** court case that is either going on now or that happened in the past **between Petitioner and Respondent** *{Include case number, if known}*: _____

6. Respondent has directed an incident of violence, meaning assault, aggravated assault, battery, aggravated battery, sexual assault, sexual battery, stalking, aggravated stalking, kidnapping, or false imprisonment, or any criminal offense resulting in physical injury or death against Petitioner or a minor child living at home. The incident (including date and location) is described below.

On *{date}* _____, at *{location}* _____,

Respondent _____

9. **Additional Information**

*{Indicate **all** that apply}*

a. ___ Respondent owns, has, and/or is known to have guns or other weapons.

Describe weapon(s): _____

b. ___ This or prior acts of dating violence have been previously reported to: *{person or agency}*

SECTION IV. INJUNCTION

(This section must be completed.)

1. Petitioner asks the Court to enter a **TEMPORARY INJUNCTION** for protection against dating violence that will be in place from now until the scheduled hearing in this matter.

2. Petitioner asks the Court to enter an injunction prohibiting Respondent from committing any acts of violence against Petitioner and:
 - a. prohibiting Respondent from going to or within 500 feet of any place Petitioner lives;
 - b. prohibiting Respondent from going to or within 500 feet of Petitioner's place(s) of employment or the school that Petitioner attends; the address of Petitioner's place(s) of employment _____ and/or _____ school is: _____;
 - c. prohibiting Respondent from contacting Petitioner by telephone, mail, by e-mail, in writing, through another person, or in any other manner;
 - d. ordering Respondent not to use or possess any guns or firearms;

*{Indicate **all** that apply}*

e. ___ prohibiting Respondent from going to or within 500 feet of the following place(s) Petitioner or Petitioner's immediate family must go to often: _____

_____;

f. ____ prohibiting Respondent from knowingly and intentionally going to or within 100 feet of Petitioner’s motor vehicle;
and any other terms the Court deems necessary for the safety of Petitioner and Petitioner’s immediate family.

I UNDERSTAND THAT BY FILING THIS PETITION, I AM ASKING THE COURT TO HOLD A HEARING ON THIS PETITION, THAT BOTH THE RESPONDENT AND I WILL BE NOTIFIED OF THE HEARING, AND THAT I MUST APPEAR AT THE HEARING. I UNDERSTAND THAT IF EITHER RESPONDENT OR I FAIL TO APPEAR AT THE FINAL HEARING, WE WILL BE BOUND BY THE TERMS OF ANY INJUNCTION OR ORDER ISSUED AT THAT HEARING.

I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM SWEARING OR AFFIRMING UNDER OATH TO THE TRUTHFULNESS OF THE CLAIMS MADE IN THIS PETITION AND THAT THE PUNISHMENT FOR KNOWINGLY MAKING A FALSE STATEMENT INCLUDES FINES AND/OR IMPRISONMENT.

Dated: _____

Signature of Petitioner
Printed Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Fax Number: _____
Designated E-Mail Address(es): _____

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on _____ by _____.

NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

[Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or clerk.]

____ Personally known

____ Produced identification

Type of identification produced _____