



# Domestic Violence Resource Guide for Mecklenburg County

Including Information about Domestic Violence Protective Orders

## Qualifications for a DV Protective Order (50B)

1. You must be a resident of North Carolina.
  - We recommend you file in the county where you reside
2. Must have a valid address for the person you are seeking the order against.
3. Must have one of the following relationships with the defendant:
  - Married or Divorced
  - Persons of the opposite sex who are not married but live together or have lived together in the past
  - Have a child in common
  - Parent and child or grandparent and grandchild (must be at least 16 years old)
  - Current or former household members
  - Persons of the opposite sex who are in or have been in a dating relationship
4. The person you are seeking protection from must have committed one of the following acts against you or a minor child in your custody; it is the victim's responsibility to prove that the act occurred:
  - Caused or attempted to cause bodily injury
  - Placed you or a member of your household in fear of immediate physical danger
  - Continued to harass you to the point where you are suffering from emotional distress
  - Committed one or more sexual offenses against you

Produced by Safe Alliance Victim Assistance Court Program



Formerly Known As United Family Services

## Mecklenburg County Process for Obtaining A Domestic Violence Protective Order

### Weekdays

Victim Assistance Court Program  
(Safe Alliance)  
8:00 am– 5:00 pm Mon-Fri

*We provide assistance with DVPO (50B) paperwork through the Mecklenburg County E-filing System.*

**Every complaint reviewed by an attorney for FREE.**

No appointment needed  
800 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Suite 310  
Charlotte, NC  
24/7 Hotline: 980-771-4673  
Main Number: 704-312-1667

### Civil Clerk's Office

9:00 am–5:00 pm M-F

832 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Room #3725  
Charlotte, NC  
704-686-0596

Protective Order  
paperwork available.  
No assistance provided.

Paperwork filing  
**NO FEE**

### Evenings and Weekends

*We encourage you to get to a safe place and call our 24/7 Greater Charlotte Hope Line 980-771-4673*

*to speak with an advocate before going to the Magistrate's Office.*

#### Magistrate's Office

6:00 pm-5:00 am M-F  
Anytime on Saturdays and Sundays

801 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Charlotte, NC 704-686-0050

#### Magistrate's Process for an Emergency Protective Order:

You will fill out required paperwork on your own at the Magistrate's office. When finished, the Magistrate/ Judge will decide if you get a temporary Ex Parte protective order.

- Once a decision is made, the Magistrate will give you a court date and time to go before a judge to tell why you need an order for up to 1 year.
- **The process might take several hours so please be patient and allow yourself enough time.**

Alcoholics Anonymous .....	704-332-4387
Narcotics Anonymous .....	704-336-8980
Center for Behavioral Health .....	704-444-2400
Anuvia Prevention & Recovery Center (formerly CDC).....	704-376-7447

### Shelter

**Domestic Violence Shelter**.....Crisis Line 980-771-4673  
Business #704-944-0169

\*Emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence, 24-hour crisis line

\*Resident counseling available

**Salvation Army**.....704-348-2560

\*Open to women & families

**Men's Shelter of Charlotte**.....704-334-3187

**Inlivan (formerly Charlotte Housing Authority)**.....704-336-5183

### Food, Clothing, Medication, and Financial Assistance

**Victim's Compensation** .....800-826-6200

\*Assist victims with financial difficulties as a result of domestic violence incidences

\*Applicant must have reported the crime within 72 hours

**Department of Social Services** .....704-336-3000

**Food Stamps, Medicaid & Work First** .....704-336-3000

\*Select option #8

**Mecklenburg County Community Support Services**.....704-336-3210

**Charlotte Area Fund** .....704-372-3010

\*Provides financial assistance

**Community Link** .....704-943-9490

\*Provides help with relocation; consumer credit housing services

**Crisis Assistance** .....704-371-3001

\*Provides financial assistance

**Latin American Coalition**.....704-531-3848

\*Spanish services available

**Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte**.....704-370-6299

\*Spanish services available

**United Way Information and Referral Line**..... 211

**YWCA** .....704-525-5770

\*Residential, education and wellness services available

### Services for Children

**Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange**.....980-314-8680

Address: 3205 Freedom Drive, Suite 2000 Charlotte, NC 28208

**HERO (Community Support Services)**.....704-336-3210

\*Domestic Violence Child Observers Program

**Department of Social Services** .....980-314-3577

\*Child Abuse, Dept. of Youth & Family Services

**Big Brothers/Big Sisters**.....704-910-1301

**Child Support Enforcement** .....704-432-9300

**Council for Children's Rights**.....704-372-7961

**Thompson Child & Family Focus** .....704-376-7180

**Time Out Youth**.....704-344-8335

## Domestic Violence Resources

### Criminal Justice Referrals

#### Sheriff's Office

\*Call to find out if defendant has been served, or if you have information to help serve them.

Daytime Hours.....980-314-5908

After Hours .....704-336-3671

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (non-emergency).....311

Domestic Violence Unit.....704-336-2379

Mecklenburg County Jail .....704-336-8100

Jail VINE .....800-247-9658

\*Automated system that will tell you when a defendant is released from jail

Magistrate's Office \*Automated Line .....704-686-0050

District Attorney's Office .....704-686-0700

\*Will be able to answer questions regarding criminal charges, court dates and times

Probation.....704-342-6836

\*Can assist victims if defendant violates their probation

Larry King's Clubhouse (Courthouse Rm 2510) .....704-686-0285

Pre-Trial Services .....704-336-2027

Civil Clerk's Office.....704-686-0596

Criminal Clerk's Office .....704-686-0600

Family Court.....704-686-0202

SAVAN Statewide Victim Assistance and Notification.....1-877-627-2826

### Legal Services

McDowell Street Center for Family Law .....704-331-4774

\*Sliding Fee Scale

SelfServe Center.....704-686-0210

\*Located at 832 E. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Mecklenburg County Courthouse Rm #3350

\*Provides paperwork & instructions for filing civil motions. Open 8:30am-4:30pm

Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy.....704-376-1600

\*Provides assistance to immigrant victims of domestic violence

Legal Aid of North Carolina, Inc.....704-376-1600

\*Provides legal assistance to victims of domestic violence for 50B and 50C orders

Lawyers Referral Service.....meckbar.org/lrs

\*Submit referral form and receive up to 3 attorney referrals.

\*If no access to internet, call 704-375-8624 and request a verbal referral.

### Services for Adults

NOVA.....704-336-4344

IMPACT.....980-721-7268

\*Provides counseling and education for individuals who engage in domestic abuse

Mecklenburg County Community Support Services .....704-336-3210

\*Provides one-on-one counseling, support, and referrals

Domestic Violence Healthcare Project (CMC Main).....704-446-3999

Safe Alliance Sexual Trauma Resource Center.....980-771-4673

\*Advocacy and counseling for individuals and families

Safe Alliance DV, Lake Norman Office .....704-655-8745

Greater Charlotte Hopeline.....980-771-4673

\*Domestic violence, sexual assault, and parenting support

## Civil Court Process for a Domestic Violence Protective Order

**Step 1:** Come to the Victim Assistance Court Program (VACP) office for help filling out these forms. You can also get the paperwork from the SelfServe Center or Civil Clerk's Office but will not receive assistance.

**Step 2:** Fill out the "Complaint" form & other required forms.

\*VACP can help you fill out these forms using the E-filing system.

- Describe the situation that caused you to seek a Protective Order.
- Be sure to indicate requests for custody, eviction, no contact, vehicle possession, possession of personal property, financial &/or child support, and the surrender of firearms.

**Step 3:** If you receive assistance through VACP, your advocate will file the forms through the electronic e-filing system and then you will be sworn in by the clerk.

\* If you did the forms yourself, file in the Civil Clerk's Office (3725).

**Step 4:** The Ex Parte Hearing is your chance to tell the judge why you need an emergency order for 7-10 days.

- Held in room# 4110 of the Meck. Co. Courthouse if you did NOT use the E-filing system.
- If you filed through the E-filing system at VACP, then your ex parte hearing will be held at VACP in the virtual courtroom.
- Defendant will not be present.
- Court room accompaniment available for clients of VACP.
- If the defendant requires out of county service, please see the courtroom clerk for more information.
- If granted, once the defendant has been served, emergency relief will be provided until the next court date (typically 7-10 days).

- **Step 5:** VACP has a Legal Representation Program but cannot guarantee representation. You can call Legal Aid for potential legal assistance for your 10- Day Hearing (704-376-1600) or you can hire your own attorney. You may also represent yourself at this hearing.

- **Step 6:** The 10-Day Hearing is your chance to ask the judge to extend the Protective Order for 1 year. Both you and the defendant will have the opportunity to tell your side of the story. This hearing is held in the courthouse in room 4110.

- Even if the defendant has not been served, you still need to return to court on the hearing date. You have a right to ask the Judge to continue the case to allow the sheriff's department additional time to serve the defendant. If you have additional information about where the defendant might be, bring that with you and give it to the sheriff's deputies.
- If the order is granted, the protection it provides will last for up to 1 year, covering only the conditions awarded by the Judge.

## Domestic Violence Protective Order Tips

**Note: The incident leading to your decision to file for a Protective Order needs to have been a RECENT event.**

### Tips for filling out your paperwork

- Be specific when filling out paperwork, even if it is embarrassing.
- Remember to use dates when necessary and fill out the form entirely.
- Print clearly.

### Tips when getting ready for court

- Plan to be on time; plan to spend half a day there.
- Plan not to bring children to court; there is a free daycare facility available at Larry King's Clubhouse in the Courthouse (832 E. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Rm# 2510, ph#704-686-0285).
- Bring any evidence you have with you to court (phone messages, pictures, clothing, etc.) because it is the plaintiff's burden to prove the case.
- Dress nicely in clean, conservative clothing. Don't wear anything too tight or revealing. Dress as if you were going to a job interview.
- If you are afraid to come into the courthouse, you may call the Sheriff's Office to have someone escort you.

### Tips when in Court

- Be honest and tell the truth, retelling the incident described in your Complaint.
- Stick to the facts regarding the abuse. Do not talk about other unrelated topics.
- Be specific and use dates.
- Be respectful and answer the Judge's questions.
- **DO NOT ARGUE WITH THE DEFENDANT OR JUDGE.**
- Review your copy of the Protective Order to make sure the items the Judge discussed are clearly marked on it.

### Important Information

- **Keep a copy of your order on you at all times.** Make multiple copies and give one to anyone that should be aware of the situation.
- **If the defendant is arrested** he or she will have their bond set by a Judge quickly. **Call the Criminal Clerk's office to determine the court date, room, and time.** You may appear at that hearing to tell the court any other information that may be important to setting bond.

## What To Do After Court

1. Create a Safety plan for you and your children. Your personal safety plan should include some of the following items. If you need help, contact VACP at 704-312-1667.
  - Create a plan to leave your home if an emergency arises. You and your children should know what the plan is and have practiced it. Be aware that if a situation arises, it is more dangerous if it happens in the kitchen, bathroom, or a room where a weapon is located. Try to move the situation into a different location if at all possible.
  - Pack a bag and hide it in your home or leave it with a friend/family member. **You should include \$100 or more in cash, extra clothes, bank and checking account information, social security numbers, partner's date of birth and workplace, telephone numbers, legal documents, birth certificates, medication, extra keys to the house and cars, cell phone chargers, and anything else you would need if you had to flee from your home.**
2. Let people know what is happening and make them aware that there is a Protective Order in place. Tell your children's school, daycare, your boss, neighbors, landlords, pastors, or anyone else who may need to know.
3. If you plan to return to your home to get your belongings (personal papers, medications, clothes, toiletries), contact law enforcement so they can accompany you for your safety.

### What To Do If the Defendant Violates the Protective Order

1. **Violation of a 50B is a crime.** If the defendant has assaulted, threatened, abused, followed, or harassed you in any way, **CALL 911** and tell them you have a Protective Order.
  - If the defendant has violated the Protective Order by not paying child support, spousal support, or returning personal property, you can file a Contempt of Court Motion in room #3725 of the Civil Clerks Office (address listed on page 2) in order to address those issues.
2. Once the police have been contacted, if the police do not arrest the defendant, go to the Magistrate's Office and see about getting criminal charges. You will need the police report in order for the Magistrate to help you.