

## **INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

### **Are you the victim of domestic violence?**

- If you need help now, you can call **911** for the police to come to you.
- You can also call a domestic violence **hotline**. You can have a confidential talk with an advocate at the hotline about help you can get in your community including: where you can get treatment for injuries, where you can get shelter, where you can get support, and what you can do to be safe. The New York State 24-hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline number is: **1-800-942-6906**, They can give you information in many languages. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call **711**. The New York City Hotline number is: **1-800-621-HOPE** (4673) or dial **311 TDD: 1-800-810-7444** .

### **This is what the police can do:**

- They can help you and your children find a safe place such as a family or friend's house or a shelter in your community.
- You can ask the officer to take you or help you and your children get to a safe place in your community.
- They can help connect you to a local domestic violence program.
- They can help you get to a hospital or clinic for medical care.
- They can help you get your personal belongings.
- They must complete a report discussing the incident. They will give you a copy of this police report before they leave the scene. It is free.
- They may, and sometimes must, arrest the person who harmed you if you are the victim of a crime.
- The person arrested could be released at any time, so it is important to plan for your safety.

### **If you have been abused or threatened, this is what you can ask the police or district attorney to do:**

- File a criminal complaint against the person who harmed you.
- Ask the criminal court to issue an order of protection for you and your child if the district attorney files a criminal case with the court.
- Give you information about filing a family offense petition in your local family court.
- You also have the right to ask the family court for an order of protection for you and your children.

### **This is what you can ask the family court to do:**

- To have your family offense petition filed the same day you go to court.
- To have your request heard in court the same day you file or the next day court is open.
- Only a judge can issue an order of protection. The judge does that as part of a criminal or family court case against the person who harmed you.

### **An order of protection in family court or in criminal court can say:**

- That the other person have no contact or communication with you by mail, phone, computer or through other people.
- That the other person stay away from you and your children, your home, job or school.
- That the other person not assault, harass, threaten, strangle, or commit another family offense against you or your children.
- That the other person turn in their firearms and firearms licenses, and not get any more firearms.
- That you have temporary custody of your children.
- That the other person pay temporary child support.
- That the other person not harm your pets or service animals.
- If the family court is closed because it is night, a weekend, or a holiday, you can go to a criminal court to ask for an order of protection.

### **If you do not speak English or cannot speak it well:**

- You can ask the police, the district attorney, or the criminal or family court to get you an interpreter who speaks your language. The interpreter can help you explain what happened.

**You can get the forms you need to ask for an order of protection at your local family court** (Insert addresses and contact information for courts):

You can also get them online: [www.NYCourts.gov/forms](http://www.NYCourts.gov/forms).

### **You do not need a lawyer to ask for an order of protection.**

- You have a right to get a lawyer in the family court. If the family court finds that you cannot afford to pay for a lawyer, it must get you one for free.
- If you file a complaint or family court petition, you will be asked to swear to its truthfulness because it is a crime to file a legal document that you know is false.