

September 28, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- Washington state legal protections against domestic violence

Article provided by Law Offices of Gregory & Rooney, PLLC Visit us at <http://www.grrlegal.com/>

The unfortunate truth about close human relationships is that they are not always loving and harmonious, even escalating far too often into violence. When part of a married or dating couple, a domestic partner or any family or household member inflicts violence against a partner or another family or household member, Washington state law provides for certain court orders that can help to protect the victim of domestic violence.

Domestic violence in Washington law

Washington law defines "domestic violence" as physical injury; creating fear of imminent physical injury; sexual assault; or stalking between family or household members. State law defines family or household members very broadly, including:-Spouses or former spouses.-Domestic partners or former domestic partners.-People who have a child together.-Adults related by marriage or blood.-Adults who live together now or formerly.-People 16 or older who live together now or formerly and have or did have a "dating relationship."-People 16 or older who have or have had a dating relationship.-Parents and children, whether biologically related or through adoption.-Stepparents and stepchildren.-Grandparents and grandchildren.

Orders for protection

In Washington, a victim of domestic violence may seek an order for protection in court for him or herself or his or her children. When there is fear of imminent harm, a temporary order may be sought without notice to the alleged perpetrator. Within two weeks and after legal notice to the alleged perpetrator, a court hearing is held on the victim's petition, after which the court can order any of the following:-That the respondent is restrained from committing domestic violence.-That the respondent is forbidden from entering a home the parties share or the home, work or school of the alleged victim or the day care or school of a child.-That the respondent is ordered to stay a specific distance away from a particular location.-That the respondent enter a domestic violence perpetrator treatment program.-That the respondent not have contact with the alleged victim or his or her kids or household members.-That the respondent not harass, follow, keep under surveillance or cyberstalk the victim, his or her kids or household

members.-That the respondent be electronically monitored.-That the respondent surrender firearms.-That the victim have possession and use of personal effects, including cars and pets.-And more.

There are complex provisions in the law governing how long a protective order lasts and how it gets renewed. If the subject of an order for protection violates it, he or she can be arrested and the violation is considered a crime.

Another type of protective order in Washington is a restraining order in a family law matter like a divorce, separation or related matter. There are other remedies available through the criminal justice system.

Seek legal counsel

The laws related to domestic violence in Washington are complicated and serious. If you are a victim or if you are accused of domestic violence, it is essential to seek the help of an experienced family law attorney who has brought or defended against protective orders and related matters.