

**FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA
ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD
OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

No. 16 of 2020

In re: Relief Under the Protection From Abuse Act

ORDER

AND NOW, this 20th day March, 2020, in accordance with the General Statewide Judicial Emergency Orders issued by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court on March 18th, 2020 (Nos. 531 and 532 Judicial Administration Docket), directing the closure of court facilities in all judicial districts as to *non-essential functions*, and authorizing in-person court proceedings in some emergency matters involving *essential functions*, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AND DECREED THAT effective immediately:**

- 1. The Philadelphia Family Court building at 1501 Arch Street remains generally closed to the public.**
 - a. General operations are suspended except as set forth in previously issued President Judge Administrative Order, Docket No. 15 of 2020, *and* as provided hereafter.
 - b. Should a hearing be required it will be conducted electronically, as set forth herein.

- 2. Emergency Temporary Protection from Abuse Hearings and Orders During NON-BUSINESS HOURS - During non-business hours, which are hereby defined as weekdays from Monday through Friday from 4:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M. and weekends from Friday at 4:00 P.M. through Monday at 8:00 A.M., Emergency PFA relief will continue to be available at the Stout Criminal Justice Center.**

- 3. Temporary PFA Filings**
 - a. Pre-prepared, verified PFA filings:**
 - i. *IMPORTANT: Preparers of the petitions must provide a valid email address and telephone number for the Petitioner (and counsel, if applicable) to the Domestic Violence (DV) Unit to process the petitions.*
 - ii. PFA Petitions and Proposed Temporary Orders properly completed pursuant to 23 Pa.C.S.A. § 6101, *et seq.*, and Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure 1901.3 and 1905, must be emailed to the following email address for referral to and consideration by the Court: TempPFA@courts.phila.gov.

 - b. Petitioners who require assistance in preparation and filing (self-represented):**
 - i. *IMPORTANT: Petitioners must be prepared to provide a valid email address and telephone number in order for the Domestic Violence (DV) Unit to prepare and process their petitions.*
 - ii. Assistance to prepare and file Protection from Abuse petitions is available telephonically Monday through Friday from 8:30 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.
 - iii. Self-represented petitioners are directed to call the following intake number for the Domestic Violence Unit: 215-686-6311, ext. 19217 during this time only.
 - iv. DV Unit personnel will conduct a brief intake interview and obtain a valid email address and telephone number for each Petitioner; each Petitioner

- must also provide other electronic (audio/visual) means by which they can be contacted in order to participate remotely at the hearing on their petition.
- v. Thereafter, each Petitioner will receive a telephone call from the DV Unit for a more detailed interview. Based upon that interview, the DV Unit will then prepare a proposed PFA Petition and email a copy of said proposed petition to the Petitioner.
 - vi. Assuming Petitioner is in agreement as to the contents of the Petition, the Petition must then be signed electronically by the Petitioner (via a link embedded in the email from the DV Unit).
4. **Temporary PFA Hearings** - Each verified petition, completed and filed during the normal business hours prescribed above, will be immediately scheduled for an electronic (audio/visual) Temporary PFA hearing before a Judge.
- a. Said hearings will be held electronically from 11:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M., Monday through Friday.
 - b. At the beginning of each hearing, the Petitioners and their attorneys (if applicable) shall be contacted electronically by the Court at the number/electronic means they provided during the intake process.
 - c. Petitioners must appear electronically for the hearing; counsel (if applicable) must also participate electronically.
5. **Temporary PFA Orders.**
- a. If a Temporary PFA Order is entered, the Petitioner (and counsel, if applicable) shall receive a copy of their Temporary PFA Order via First Class Mail.
 - b. Upon request of a Petitioner, a copy of the Protection from Abuse Order will be available for pickup from 4:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. at the Philadelphia Family Court Building, 1501 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102. The pickup location will be at the employee entrance to the Family Court Building at 1501 Arch St., which is located between the Family Court Building and the Department of Human Services Building (1515 Arch St), adjacent to the Arch Street flagpole. Each Petitioner must present a valid form of photo identification in order to receive their order.

This Order shall be filed with the Office of Judicial Records in a Docket maintained for orders issued by the Administrative Governing Board of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, and shall be submitted to the State Court Administrator, posted on the website of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania (<http://www.courts.phila.gov/regs>), and published by The Legal Intelligencer.

BY THE COURT:

/s/ Idee C. Fox

**Honorable Idee C. Fox, President Judge
Chair, Administrative Governing Board
First Judicial District of Pennsylvania
President Judge, Court of Common Pleas,
Philadelphia County**