

Criminal Court and Civil Court

There are two types of courts that are available to provide protection to victims of domestic violence – Criminal and Civil. Family Court is a Civil Court with the goal of protecting you and your family. Access to Family Court is limited to people who are legally married, divorced, or otherwise related by blood or marriage to their abuser or who have a child or children in common with their abuser, regardless of whether they have been married or have lived together.

If you are eligible to go to Family Court, you have the option of going to Family Court or Criminal Court, or both at the same time. Supreme Court is also a Civil Court, used in cases of legal separation or divorce. You can apply for an order of protection in any of these courts. Each court works differently, and understanding the differences can help you decide what is best for your situation. If you are not eligible to go to Family Court, then your only option to get an order of protection is in Criminal Court.