

The 209A Order

An Abuse Prevention Order, called a "209A Order" or a "Restraining Order," is a civil court order that provides protection from physical or sexual harm caused by force, or threat of harm from a family or household member.

An Order can be obtained against:

- A spouse or former spouse
- A present or former household member
- A relative by blood and a present or former relative by marriage
- The parent of a minor child, even if the parents never married or lived together
- A person involved in a substantive dating relationship with the victim.

Obtaining a 209A Order

A 209A Order can be obtained in any District, Superior or Probate and Family Court in Massachusetts. **An emergency 209A order is available through any police department after court hours and on weekends.**

Guns or weapons will be ordered to be turned over to the police, along with a license to carry the guns and FID card. The police can also search for and take custody of any gun or weapon if given permission to search your home.

Court Orders Under c. 209A

The court can order the abuser to:

Stop or refrain from abuse

Have no contact with the victim

Vacate and remain away from a house or workplace

Order medical costs and property damage payments. If needed the court can also award temporary support and custody of minor children to the victim



Violation of the Order

Once a 209A Order is served, violation of its terms is a criminal offense and police officers can arrest if they believe or can see that the conditions of the order were violated. If the abuser violates the order, call the police immediately. Explain how it was violated; for example: a punch, slap, threat, entering the house or apartment or refusing to leave, or any contact or third party contact at home, the workplace, by telephone, mail or in person. The abuser is subject to arrest if any contact with the victim is made, even if the victim initiates the contact. The court can modify or vacate the Order on request.

**BREAK THE
SILENCE**

Stop the Violence!

***For assistance with any
Domestic Violence issues you
may call the following
numbers:***

Springfield Police Department
Advocates:

Milta Vargas: 413-735-1519
Suehaley Arce 413-735-1520
Jennifer Rivera 413-735-1510

Hampden County District Attorney's
Office Domestic Violence Intervention
Unit: 413-747-4826
YWCA ARCH Program 413-733-7100
SafeLink/CasaMyrna Hotline:
1-877-785-2020

SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

**Zero Tolerance For
Domestic Violence**



Domestic Violence
The Law and how to
protect yourself

**Office of the
Police Commissioner**

THERE IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is the abuse of power and control

It is behavior used by one person to control another through force or threats.

A batterer makes a CHOICE to:
Slap/Punch
Threaten/ Intimidate/ Kick

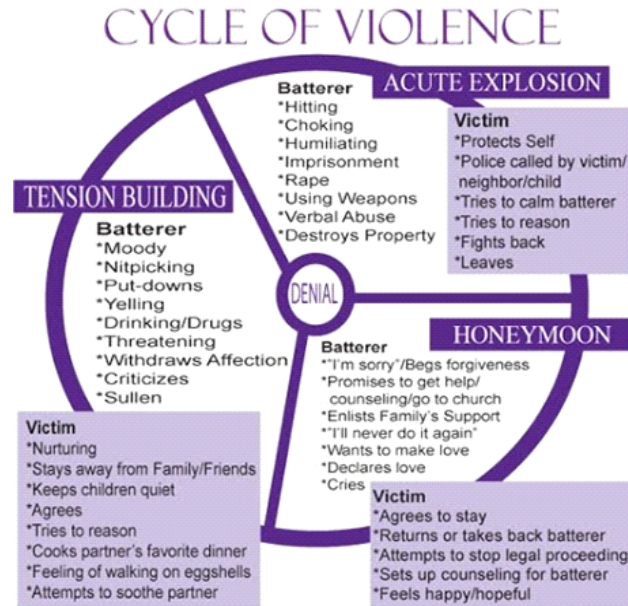
Domestic violence includes physical, verbal, and sexual attacks or threats. These violent acts are criminal, and the batterer can be prosecuted for committing them. These behaviors are meant to control the victim's thoughts, feelings, and behavior. The violence does not lessen over time. The threats and/or physical abuse generally happen more often with time, last longer, and cause greater physical injuries. Emotional abuse and insulting words are almost always part of the abuse pattern, but are not considered criminal acts. The wounds from these injuries are often more difficult to heal. Domestic violence is not caused by, or provoked by, the actions or inactions of the victim. Alcohol or drug abuse, depression, lack of money, lack of a job, mental illness or abuse as a child do not directly cause domestic violence; however, these factors may escalate or increase the risk of violence. Many abusers blame the victim for their violent acts, and do not take responsibility for their abusive behavior.

The Legal Definition Of Abuse MGL c. 209A

- Actual physical abuse
- An attempt to harm another
- Placing another in fear of serious physical harm
- Causing another to engage in sexual relations by force, threat of force or duress.

Protecting yourself from domestic violence

If you live with someone who abuses you, or if someone is stalking you, you need to take immediate measures to protect yourself. You're in extreme danger if your abuser or stalker talks about murder or suicide. You're also in particular danger if you are thinking about leaving an abusive relationship. Because of the risk of being seriously hurt or killed when leaving an abusive relationship, it's important to develop a safety plan for departure.



The [Massachusetts Domestic Violence Hotline](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-domestic-violence-hotline) is 1-877-785-2020. Experienced staff can advise you on how to protect yourself and refer you to services or domestic violence shelters.

NO MORE VIOLENCE



Red Flags of an Abusive Relationship:

Extremely Jealous
 Checks your phone calls and texts
 Wants to know where you are at all times
 Blames you if something is wrong
 Calls you names
 Swears at you most of the time
 Makes you feel like your "going crazy"
 Gets upset very quickly
 Feels like your "walking on egg shells"

Tips on Staying Safe

- Keep change and cash on you at all times. Have emergency cash, clothing, and important phone numbers and documents stashed in a safe place
- Hide a spare key to the house and the car where you can get it quickly.
- Practice escaping quickly and safely. Rehearse your escape plan so you know exactly what to do if under attack from your abuser. If you have children, have them practice the escape plan also.
- Establish a word, phrase, or signal you can use to let your children, friends, neighbors, or co-workers know that you're in danger, and that the police should be called.
- Avoid small enclosed spaces without exits or rooms with weapons (such as a closet or kitchen)
- Identify safe areas in the house. Know where to go if your abuser attacks or starts an argument.
- Memorize the numbers of your emergency contacts, and your local domestic violence hotline. Ask people you trust if you can call them if you need a ride or a place to stay.
- Cell phones which are not activated are still capable of calling 9-1-1. Save your old phones or seek assistance from Springfield Police Department Domestic Violence coordinator to obtain a phone.