



# Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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## Supreme Court Produces Informational Videos About Domestic Violence Process

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia has released a series of short videos explaining the domestic violence petition process.

“Magistrate Courts and Family Courts in West Virginia handle a large number of domestic violence cases. These videos will help everyone involved in these cases understand the process,” said Supreme Court Chief Justice Beth Walker.

In 2017 — the most recent year for which statistics are available — there were 13,149 petitions for emergency protective orders filed in Magistrate Courts, which was 25.8 percent of total filings. That same year, there were 11,464 domestic violence filings in Family Courts, which was 44 percent of total filings.

There are five videos in the “Who, What, When, Where and Why of the Domestic Violence Process” series. One video follows the petition process from beginning to end. The other four videos are segments taken from the longer video so those who want to know more about only one step of the process can access that section more easily.

The videos are posted on the West Virginia Judiciary YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/c/wvsupremecourt> and can be accessed from the West Virginia Judiciary website <http://www.courtswv.gov/>.

There is an accompanying trifold brochure posted on the website at <http://www.courtswv.gov/lower-courts/pdfs/DVTri-fold2019.pdf>. The brochure contains highlights of the same information in the videos.

“This video will be extremely helpful for domestic violence victims seeking safety through the legal system,” said Adrienne Worthy, Executive Director of Legal Aid of West Virginia. “The video describes the process around getting a domestic violence protective order in the West Virginia Court system in an easy to understand manner using two real-person scenarios.”

The videos and brochure contain important information for anyone who wants to file a domestic violence petition and also for anyone who has had a domestic violence petition filed against them.

“Our Court system protects the rights of all West Virginians, so we make sure that our public education materials are even-handed and fair,” said Chief Justice Walker.

“We hope to produce more grant-funded informational videos like this in coming years,” said Chief Justice Walker. “We want to make sure that the information people

need about their rights and our court system is easy to access and understand, and we think that videos are a great way to accomplish those goals.”

“Domestic Violence Protective Orders can be an important tool for preventing further violence and saving lives. This video will help families make informed choices and better understand each step of what can feel like a complicated and intimidating process,” said Joyce Yedlosky, Team Coordinator for the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WVCADV).

At least 34 people died as a result of domestic violence in West Virginia between October 1, 2017, and September 30, 2018, according to the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WVCADV). The number could have been higher because the Coalition was able to gather information only from media reports and licensed domestic violence programs.

Of those who died as a result of domestic violence, 11 were women and 14 were men. Seventeen of the perpetrators were men and eight were women, according to the WVCADV. Of the 34 deaths, six were by suicide.

The Supreme Court used a grant from the Stop Violence Against Women Grant Program (sub award 16 VAW-004/2016-WF-AX-0037) to pay for production of the domestic violence videos.

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