

MAINE JUDICIAL BRANCH

Plaintiff

DISTRICT COURT

Location (Town): _____

Docket No.: _____

individually **and** on behalf of:

on behalf of:

V.

Defendant

on behalf of:

INFORMATION REGARDING PROTECTION ORDER FILINGS BY EMAIL AND FILING CERTIFICATION
PMO-SJC-3A

In light of the public health concerns arising from COVID-19, Maine District Courts are **temporarily** allowing email filing of:

- Complaints for protection from abuse and motions to extend protection from abuse orders; AND
- Complaints for protection from harassment and motions to extend protection from harassment orders **without a filing fee.** (There is no filing fee if the complaint or motion to extend is related to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, sex trafficking, or unlawful dissemination of private images.)

Please read the warnings and instructions below carefully before deciding whether or not to file your complaint for protection or motion to extend protection order by email.

WARNING:

- Filing a complaint or motion to extend by email does **NOT** mean you are automatically protected. After you have filed, a judge must review your filing and, if appropriate, decide whether to grant a temporary order or temporarily extend your existing protection order.
- The court reviews emailed complaints for protection from abuse or harassment, and motions to extend a protection order from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Any filings received before 3:00 p.m. will be processed that same day as long as they are complete and do not have technical issues. Any filings received on a weekend, legal holiday, during an announced court closure, or after 3:00 p.m. on a weekday will not be reviewed until the next available business day.
- Under PMO-SJC-3A, a plaintiff who wishes to file a complaint for protection from abuse, a complaint for protection from harassment without a filing fee, or a motion to extend a protection order without a filing fee by email may file the document without notarization provided that, in lieu of a notarized signature, the party electronically signs the complaint or motion and checks the box on the form that says: "I swear under penalty of perjury that the above statements are true and correct. I understand that these statements are made for use as evidence in court and that I am subject to prosecution for perjury punishable by up to 5 years in prison and a fine of up to \$5,000.00 if I give false information to the court."
 - You **MUST** have access to a safe phone number and a safe email that you can check regularly. This is because the clerk will contact you by email to (1) tell you if the court granted you a temporary order for protection, or (2) **if needed**, to schedule a time for you to call the court so the judge can ask for additional information. If the court schedules you for a call with the judge and you do not call at that

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Language Services: For language assistance and interpreters, contact a court clerk or interpreters@courts.maine.gov.

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time, your case will not be dismissed but your request for a temporary order may be denied. Please note that the defendant will not be on that call.

- If you file your complaint or motion before 3 p.m. on a day when the court is open, you will receive an email from the clerk that same day.

If any of the above warnings and instructions presents a problem, you should go to the courthouse and file your complaint for protection or motion to extend protection order in person.

- For a list of court hours, please visit: <https://www.courts.maine.gov/covid19/court-hours.html>. If the court that corresponds to your town is closed, you can still file your protection order case in person at another open court.
- **If you wish to speak to an advocate, you can call the free and confidential statewide hotline for the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence at 1-800-834-4357 or the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault at 1-800-871-7741.**

If you understand all of the above warnings and instructions and still want to file by email, please carefully read the following instructions for next steps:

1. **Scheduling a call if the judge needs to ask you more questions:** The clerk will email you at the email you used to submit your filing to schedule a time for you call to speak with the judge. **Not all cases will need a call with the judge.**

Check here if you would like the clerk to also call you with your scheduled time. Please note that the clerk may be calling from an unblocked number and will not leave a voicemail if you do not pick up. If you check this box, you must provide a safe phone number for the clerk to call:

(_____) _____.

2. **Emailing the court.** The courts have different email addresses for protection order cases depending on the court in which you are filing your complaint or motion to extend.

- Complaints for protection from abuse or harassment are filed, heard, and determined in the district court of the division in which you or the defendant resides. If you have left your residence to avoid abuse or harassment, you may bring the action in the division of your previous residence or new residence.
- If you are filing a motion to extend your protection order, your motion will be emailed to the regional email address for the District Court that issued your order of protection.
- Please email your filing to the region email address of your court:
 - Region 1 (Biddeford, Springvale, and York District Courts): region1pafilings@courts.maine.gov
 - Region 2 (Bridgton and Portland District Courts): region2pafilings@courts.maine.gov
 - Region 3 (Farmington, Lewiston, Rumford, and South Paris District Courts): region3pafilings@courts.maine.gov
 - Region 4 (Augusta, Skowhegan, and Waterville District Courts): region4pafilings@courts.maine.gov
 - Region 5 (Bangor, Dover-Foxcroft, Lincoln, Millinocket, and Newport District Courts): region5pafilings@courts.maine.gov
 - Region 6 (Belfast, Rockland, West Bath, and Wiscasset District Courts): region6pafilings@courts.maine.gov
 - Region 7 (Calais, Ellsworth, and Machias District Courts): region7pafilings@courts.maine.gov
 - Region 8 (Caribou, Fort Kent, Houlton, Madawaska, and Presque Isle District Courts): region8pafilings@courts.maine.gov

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- If you do not know which region email address you need to use, please visit the following website for a list of courts by city or town: https://www.courts.maine.gov/maine_courts/findacourt/court_by_town.shtml

I have reviewed the list of courts and wish to file this matter in _____ District Court.
(fill in name of court)

3. Completing the forms. After you have completed this form, please click [here](#) to download the protection from abuse packet, protection from harassment packet, or the motion to extend protection order packet. Please complete the packet as instructed. You must then email this form along with the packet to the regional email address of your court.

FILING CERTIFICATION. I hereby certify that there are good grounds to support this pleading, that it complies with PMO-SJC-3A, and that it is not being filed to cause any delay.

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

▶ /s/ _____
 Name of filing party or filing party’s attorney
(You do not need to print and sign this form. Typing your name above will be accepted by the court as an electronic signature.)

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