

## Victims of family violence no longer need to serve their own protection order in B.C.

B.C. government is spending about \$180K on professional process servers for those at risk of family violence

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The B.C. government is spending about \$180,000 to fix what Justice Minister Suzanne Anton calls a "missing link" in protection of victims of family violence.

Starting now, people who are at risk of family violence who are granted a protection order in court will no longer have to serve the order to the respondent, if he or she wasn't present in court.

Instead, the B.C. government has contracted a private company, [Dye & Durham](#), as professional process servers in those cases.

"This fills in a bit of a missing link," said Anton.

"Starting today, British Columbians will no longer need to worry about arranging for this service."

"The significance of today is having an intermediary, to ensure that a woman herself doesn't have to approach a violent offender, or she doesn't have to ask her dad to go and serve such an order," said Tracy Porteous, executive director of the Ending Violence Association of B.C., at the government announcement.

## 1800 protection orders a year in B.C.

[Protection orders](#) can be granted by a judge in family court to protect one family member from another in cases of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse; forcible confinement, or withholding the necessities of life.

The order will list the conditions the person named in it, or respondent, has to follow, which usually includes no direct or indirect contact with the applicant.

When the respondent isn't in court — which is common, happening in about 1,000 of the 1,800 cases a year in B.C. — the applicant has to find some way to notify or "serve" the respondent the order.

Now, with a professional process server doing that job, there will be a clear paper trail that will make it easier for police to enforce the orders if they are disobeyed, said Anton.

"I want to thank the minister of justice profoundly for this step, because I think it will increase safety for families that are dealing with domestic violence," said Porteous.

The service will be available in all regions of B.C. at no cost to applicants, the government said.

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