

Going to court for a family violence intervention order hearing

If you are in danger right now, call 000

If you are not in immediate danger, but feel unsafe, contact The Orange Door

orangedoor.vic.gov.au

Before you go to court

Going to court is a legal process, so it's a good idea to get legal advice before you go.

Victoria Legal Aid provides free legal advice for eligible people. Phone 1300 792 387

Before going to court you should also:

- › let the court know if you need the help of a duty lawyer on the day of your court hearing
- › let the court know if you need an interpreter
- › ask the court to arrange for you to attend by phone or video conference if you cannot attend in person
- › let the court know if you cannot attend the hearing at all
- › let the court know if you are concerned for your safety at the hearing. The court can arrange for you to wait in a special area if you do not feel safe. The court may also organise security to be in the court room with you. In some courts, you may be able to give evidence by video link, so that you do not have to be in the courtroom. This needs to be arranged in advance.

The address and contact details of Victoria's courts are listed on the Magistrates' Court of Victoria website:

mcv.vic.gov.au/going-court/find-court

On the day of the hearing

Plan to keep the whole day free. Your case may not be heard straight away, so you may have to wait a few hours before your case is heard.

There is no childcare at the Magistrates' Court, so if you have children try to make arrangements for someone to look after them. If you are attending court by phone or video conference, please ensure that there are no children in the room with you when you are in court and/or speaking to a duty lawyer.

Plan how you are getting to court. Parking near courts can be expensive. It might be better to use public transport or get someone to drop you off.

Try to arrive at least 30 minutes before your court time.

To keep the court safe, everyone goes through a security screening. This is to stop dangerous items being brought into court.

Straight after the security screening, go to the court counter – called the registry – and tell the staff at the registry you have arrived.

The registry staff can provide you with information including:

- › finding your way to the right courtroom
- › directing you to other court services including the duty lawyer

If you feel unsafe at court speak to a security guard or the registry.

Things to bring with you to court

- › any paperwork about your court hearing

- › any court orders that relate to you or your children from other courts
- › refreshments, food and drink available nearby can often be expensive
- › phone charger
- › water bottle (not glass)
- › a book or something else to entertain you while you wait for your hearing

When you enter and leave the courtroom, as a sign of respect, please bow towards the Magistrate.

Once inside the courtroom, **do not**:

- › eat, drink or chew gum
- › wear a hat or a pair of sunglasses or have sunglasses sitting on your head.

Please ensure that your mobile phone is on silent or switched off. If your phone is on silent, please make sure that it will not vibrate.

What support will I have at court?

It will depend which court you are in. There may be a duty lawyer at court, and an interpreter (if you have notified the court that you need one).

A support worker (Family Violence Applicant Practitioner) is also at court who can give you non-legal support.

You may wish to bring a friend or family member with you for support.

Can I have an interpreter at court?

Yes. Call the court in advance if you need an interpreter to assist you with your application for an intervention order.

You should also tell the court registry staff that you would like an interpreter for your court hearing.

We welcome feedback. See our website to share your feedback or complaint:

[womenslegal.org.au](https://www.womenslegal.org.au)

women's legal
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Women's Legal Service Victoria is located on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' continuing connection to land, water and community and pay respect to their Elders past and present. Sovereignty was never ceded.

Women's Legal Service is committed to providing safe and inclusive support.