
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6347

State of Washington

52nd Legislature

1992 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Nelson, A. Smith, Erwin, Madsen, Rinehart, Thorsness and von Reichbauer)

Read first time 02/07/92.

1 AN ACT Relating to domestic violence; amending RCW 26.50.030,
2 26.50.035, 26.50.060, 10.99.030, 26.50.010, 26.50.020, 4.08.050,
3 12.04.140, 12.04.150, and 26.28.015; creating new sections; and making
4 an appropriation.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

7 Domestic violence is a problem of immense proportions affecting
8 individuals as well as communities. Domestic violence has long been
9 recognized as being at the core of other major social problems: Child
10 abuse, other crimes of violence against person or property, juvenile
11 delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse. Domestic violence costs
12 millions of dollars each year in the state of Washington for health
13 care, absence from work, services to children, and more. The crisis is
14 growing.

1 While the existing protection order process can be a valuable tool
2 to increase safety for victims and to hold batterers accountable,
3 specific problems in its use have become evident. Victims have
4 difficulty completing the paperwork required particularly if they have
5 limited English proficiency; model forms have been modified to be
6 inconsistent with statutory language; different forms create confusion
7 for law enforcement agencies about the contents and enforceability of
8 orders. Refinements are needed so that victims have the easy, quick,
9 and effective access to the court system envisioned at the time the
10 protection order process was first created.

11 When courts issue mutual protection orders without the filing of
12 separate written petitions, notice to each respondent, and hearing on
13 each petition, the original petitioner is deprived of due process.
14 Mutual protection orders label both parties as violent and treat both
15 as being equally at fault: Batterers conclude that the violence is
16 excusable or provoked and victims who are not violent are confused and
17 stigmatized. Enforcement may be ineffective and mutual orders may be
18 used in other proceedings as evidence that the victim is equally at
19 fault.

20 Valuable information about the reported incidents of domestic
21 violence in the state of Washington is unobtainable without gathering
22 data from all law enforcement agencies; without this information, it is
23 difficult for policymakers, funders, and service providers to plan for
24 the resources and services needed to address the issue.

25 Domestic violence must be addressed more widely and more
26 effectively in our state: Greater knowledge by professionals who deal
27 frequently with domestic violence is essential to enforce existing
28 laws, to intervene in domestic violence situations that do not come to
29 the attention of the law enforcement or judicial systems, and to reduce

1 and prevent domestic violence by intervening before the violence
2 becomes severe.

3 Adolescent dating violence is occurring at increasingly high rates:
4 Preventing and confronting adolescent violence is important in
5 preventing potential violence in future adult relationships.

6 **Sec. 2.** RCW 26.50.030 and 1985 c 303 s 2 are each amended to read
7 as follows:

8 There shall exist an action known as a petition for an order for
9 protection in cases of domestic violence.

10 (1) A petition for relief shall allege the existence of domestic
11 violence, and shall be accompanied by an affidavit made under oath
12 stating the specific facts and circumstances from which relief is
13 sought.

14 (2) A petition for relief may be made regardless of whether or not
15 there is a pending lawsuit, complaint, petition, or other action
16 between the parties except in cases where the court realigns petitioner
17 and respondent in accordance with RCW 26.50.060(3).

18 (3) Within ninety days of receipt of the master copy from the
19 administrator for the courts, all court clerk's offices shall make
20 available ((simplified)) the standardized forms, instructions, and
21 ((instructional)) informational brochures required by RCW 26.50.035 and
22 shall fill in and keep current specific program names and telephone
23 numbers for community resources. Any assistance or information
24 provided by clerks under this section does not constitute the practice
25 of law and clerks are not responsible for incorrect information
26 contained in a petition.

27 (4) A filing fee of twenty dollars shall be charged for proceedings
28 under this section. No filing fee may be charged for: (a) A petition
29 filed in an existing action or under an existing cause number brought

1 under this chapter in the jurisdiction where the relief is sought; or
2 (b) the transfer of a case from district or municipal court to superior
3 court under RCW 26.50.020(2). Forms and instructional brochures shall
4 be provided free of charge.

5 (5) A person is not required to post a bond to obtain relief in any
6 proceeding under this section.

7 **Sec. 3.** RCW 26.50.035 and 1985 c 303 s 3 are each amended to read
8 as follows:

9 By January 1, 1993, the administrator for the courts shall develop
10 and prepare, in consultation with interested persons, to include a
11 representative of the state domestic violence coalition, judges, and
12 law enforcement personnel, ((the—forms)) instructions and
13 ((instructional)) informational brochures required under RCW
14 26.50.030(3), standard petition and order for protection forms that
15 must be used after April 15, 1993, for all petitions filed and orders
16 issued under this chapter, and a court staff handbook on domestic
17 violence and the protection order process. The instructions shall be
18 designed to assist petitioners in completing the petition. The
19 informational brochure shall describe the use of and the process for
20 obtaining a protection order, a no contact order as provided by RCW
21 10.99.040, a restraining order as provided by RCW 26.09.060, and an
22 antiharassment protection order as provided by chapter 10.14 RCW, along
23 with a list of local community resources. The community resources
24 shall be in the form of a list that includes law enforcement agencies,
25 domestic violence agencies, sexual assault agencies, legal assistance
26 programs, interpreters, multicultural programs, and batterers'
27 treatment programs, which shall contain the names and telephone numbers
28 of programs serving the community in which the court is located. Court
29 staff shall obtain the community resource list from a domestic violence

1 program as defined in RCW 70.123.020 serving the county in which the
2 court is located. The order for protection form shall include, in a
3 conspicuous location, notice of criminal penalties resulting from
4 violation of the order, notice that the petitioner may not waive any
5 provisions of the order, and notice that it is the sole responsibility
6 of the respondent to avoid or refrain from violating the provisions of
7 the order. The administrator for the courts shall distribute a master
8 copy of the petition and order forms ((and—instructional)),
9 instructions, and informational brochures to ((all—court clerks)) the
10 staff of all courts and shall distribute a master copy of the order
11 forms to all superior, district, and municipal courts.

12 The administrator for the courts shall arrange for translation of
13 the instructions and informational brochures into Spanish, Vietnamese,
14 Laotian, Cambodian, and Chinese and shall distribute a master copy of
15 the translated instructions and informational brochures to all court
16 clerks by March 1, 1993.

17 The administrator for the courts shall, in consultation with
18 interested parties to include a representative of the state domestic
19 violence coalition, judges, law enforcement personnel, and staff from
20 multicultural programs, determine by June 30, 1993, whether translation
21 of the petition and standard order forms would substantially improve
22 access to the protection order process for those with limited English
23 proficiency. If so, the administrator for the courts shall arrange for
24 the translation of the petition and standard order forms into Spanish,
25 Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, and Chinese, and shall distribute a
26 master copy of the translated petition and standard order forms to all
27 court staff by September 1, 1993, along with any necessary instructions
28 or explanations for use of the translated petition and standard order
29 forms.

1 **Sec. 4.** RCW 26.50.060 and 1989 c 411 s 1 are each amended to read
2 as follows:

3 (1) Upon notice and after hearing, the court may provide relief as
4 follows:

5 (a) Restrain (~~(a party)~~) the respondent from committing acts of
6 domestic violence;

7 (b) Exclude the respondent from the dwelling which the parties
8 share or from the residence of the petitioner;

9 (c) On the same basis as is provided in chapter 26.09 RCW, the
10 court shall make residential provision with regard to minor children of
11 the parties. However, parenting plans as specified in chapter 26.09
12 RCW shall not be required under this chapter;

13 (d) Order the respondent to participate in batterers' treatment
14 (~~(or counseling services)~~);

15 (e) Order other relief as it deems necessary for the protection of
16 (~~(a)~~) the petitioner and other family or household members sought to be
17 protected, including orders or directives to a peace officer, as
18 allowed under this chapter;

19 (f) Require the respondent to pay the filing fee and court costs,
20 including service fees, and to reimburse the petitioner for costs
21 incurred in bringing the action, including a reasonable attorney's fee.
22 If the petitioner has been granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis,
23 the court may require the respondent to pay the filing fee and costs,
24 including services fees, to the county or municipality incurring the
25 expense; and

26 (g) Restrain (~~(any party)~~) the respondent from having any contact
27 with the victim of domestic violence or the victim's children or
28 members of the victim's household.

29 (2) Any relief granted by the order for protection, other than a
30 judgment for costs, shall be for a fixed period not to exceed one year.

1 (3) In providing relief under this chapter, the court may realign
2 the designation of the parties as "petitioner" and "respondent" where
3 the court finds that the original petitioner is the abuser and the
4 original respondent is the victim of domestic violence and may issue an
5 ex parte temporary order for protection in accordance with RCW
6 26.50.070 on behalf of the victim until the victim is able to prepare
7 a petition for an order for protection in accordance with RCW
8 26.50.030.

9 (4) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, no order
10 for protection shall grant relief to any party except upon notice to
11 the respondent and hearing pursuant to a petition or counter-petition
12 filed and served by the party seeking relief in accordance with RCW
13 26.50.050.

14 **Sec. 5.** RCW 10.99.030 and 1984 c 263 s 21 are each amended to read
15 as follows:

16 (1) All training relating to the handling of domestic violence
17 complaints by law enforcement officers shall stress enforcement of
18 criminal laws in domestic situations, availability of community
19 resources, and protection of the victim. Law enforcement agencies and
20 community organizations with expertise in the issue of domestic
21 violence shall cooperate in all aspects of such training.

22 (2) The primary duty of peace officers, when responding to a
23 domestic violence situation, is to enforce the laws allegedly violated
24 and to protect the complaining party.

25 (3)(a) When a peace officer responds to a domestic violence call
26 and has probable cause to believe that a crime has been committed, the
27 peace officer shall exercise arrest powers with reference to the
28 criteria in RCW 10.31.100. The officer shall notify the victim of the
29 victim's right to initiate a criminal proceeding in all cases where the

1 officer has not exercised arrest powers or decided to initiate criminal
2 proceedings by citation or otherwise. The parties in such cases shall
3 also be advised of the importance of preserving evidence.

4 (b) A peace officer responding to a domestic violence call shall
5 take a complete offense report including the officer's disposition of
6 the case.

7 (4) When a peace officer responds to a domestic violence call, the
8 officer shall advise victims of all reasonable means to prevent further
9 abuse, including advising each person of the availability of a shelter
10 or other services in the community, and giving each person immediate
11 notice of the legal rights and remedies available. The notice shall
12 include handing each person a copy of the following statement:

13 "IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, you can ask the
14 city or county prosecuting attorney to file a criminal
15 complaint. You also have the right to file a petition in
16 superior, district, or municipal court requesting an order for
17 protection from domestic abuse which could include any of the
18 following: (a) An order restraining your abuser from further
19 acts of abuse; (b) an order directing your abuser to leave your
20 household; (c) an order preventing your abuser from entering
21 your residence, school, business, or place of employment; (d)
22 an order awarding you or the other parent custody of or
23 visitation with your minor child or children; and (e) an order
24 restraining your abuser from molesting or interfering with
25 minor children in your custody. The forms you need to obtain
26 a protection order are available in any municipal, district, or
27 superior court.

1 Information about shelters and alternatives to domestic violence is
2 available from a state-wide twenty-four-hour toll-free hotline at
3 1-800-562-6025. The battered women's shelter and other resources
4 in your area are --- (include local information)"

5 (5) The peace officer may offer, arrange, or facilitate
6 transportation for the victim to a hospital for treatment of injuries
7 or to a place of safety or shelter.

8 (6) The law enforcement agency shall forward the offense report to
9 the appropriate prosecutor within ten days of making such report if
10 there is probable cause to believe that an offense has been committed,
11 unless the case is under active investigation.

12 (7) Each law enforcement agency shall make as soon as practicable
13 a written record and shall maintain records of all incidents of
14 domestic violence reported to it.

15 (8) Records kept pursuant to subsections (3) and (7) of this
16 section shall be made identifiable by means of a departmental code for
17 domestic violence.

18 (9) Commencing January 1, 1993, records of incidents of domestic
19 violence shall be submitted, in accordance with procedures described in
20 this subsection, to the Washington association of sheriffs and police
21 chiefs by all law enforcement agencies. The Washington criminal
22 justice training commission shall amend its contract for collection of
23 state-wide crime data with the Washington association of sheriffs and
24 police chiefs: (a) To require the compilation, presentation, and
25 inclusion of domestic violence incidents in the annual report of crime
26 in Washington produced by the Washington association of sheriffs and
27 police chiefs pursuant to such contract; and (b) to require that, in
28 consultation with interested persons, the Washington association of
29 sheriffs and police chiefs prepare and disseminate procedures to all

1 law enforcement agencies in the state as to how such agencies shall
2 code and report domestic violence incidents to the Washington
3 association of sheriffs and police chiefs.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The departments of social and health
5 services, community development, and health; the administrator for the
6 courts; and the criminal justice training commission, in cooperation
7 with each other and with the department of social and health services
8 as lead agency shall, in consultation with interested parties, conduct
9 a review of and issue a report on the current level of domestic
10 violence education in the state of Washington, including higher
11 education curricula and continuing professional education for
12 individuals working in positions that involve duties to, or contact
13 with, those affected by domestic violence. Professions for which
14 education levels should be determined include, but are not limited to,
15 health care, mental health, and substance abuse professionals licensed
16 or certified by the state and pastoral counselors, employee assistance
17 counselors, police and law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judges,
18 court administrators, court clerks, probation officers, parole
19 officers, child protective service workers, school counselors,
20 teachers, and clergy. The analysis shall include suggested approaches
21 of how to achieve any needed additional education, and an evaluation of
22 whether there is a need for additional domestic violence education for
23 some or all of these professions, either as part of their higher
24 education curricula or through continuing education or both. The
25 department of social and health services shall report to the house of
26 representatives judiciary and senate law and justice committees
27 regarding its findings and recommendations by September 1, 1992.

1 **Sec. 7.** RCW 26.50.010 and 1991 c 301 s 8 are each amended to read
2 as follows:

3 As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the
4 meanings given them:

5 (1) "Domestic violence" means: (a) Physical harm, bodily injury,
6 assault, or the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, bodily
7 injury or assault, between family or household members; or (b) sexual
8 assault of one family or household member by another.

9 (2) "Family or household members" means spouses, former spouses,
10 persons who have a child in common regardless of whether they have been
11 married or have lived together at any time, adult persons related by
12 blood or marriage, ~~((and))~~ adult persons who are presently residing
13 together or who have resided together in the past, persons sixteen
14 years of age or older who are presently residing together or who have
15 resided together in the past and who have or have had a dating
16 relationship, and persons sixteen years of age or older with whom a
17 respondent sixteen years of age or older has or has had a dating
18 relationship.

19 (3) "Dating relationship" means a social relationship of a romantic
20 nature. Factors that the court may consider in making this
21 determination include: (a) The length of time the relationship has
22 existed; (b) the nature of the relationship; and (c) the frequency of
23 interaction between the parties.

24 (4) "Court" includes the superior, district, and municipal courts
25 of the state of Washington.

26 ~~((4))~~ (5) "Judicial day" does not include Saturdays, Sundays, or
27 legal holidays.

28 **Sec. 8.** RCW 26.50.020 and 1989 c 375 s 28 are each amended to read
29 as follows:

1 (1) Any person may seek relief under this chapter by filing a
2 petition with a court alleging that the person has been the victim of
3 domestic violence committed by the respondent. The person may petition
4 for relief on behalf of himself or herself and on behalf of minor
5 family or household members.

6 (2) A person under eighteen years of age who is sixteen years of
7 age or older may seek relief under this chapter and is not required to
8 seek relief by a guardian or next friend.

9 (3) No guardian or guardian ad litem need be appointed on behalf of
10 a respondent to an action under this chapter who is under eighteen
11 years of age if such respondent is sixteen years of age or older.

12 (4) The court may, if it deems necessary, appoint a guardian ad
13 litem for a petitioner or respondent who is a party to an action under
14 this chapter.

15 (5) The courts defined in RCW 26.50.010(3) have jurisdiction over
16 proceedings under this chapter. The jurisdiction of district and
17 municipal courts under this chapter shall be limited to enforcement of
18 RCW 26.50.110(1), or the equivalent municipal ordinance, and the
19 issuance and enforcement of temporary orders for protection provided
20 for in RCW 26.50.070 if: (a) A superior court has exercised or is
21 exercising jurisdiction over a proceeding under this title or chapter
22 13.34 RCW involving the parties; (b) the petition for relief under this
23 chapter presents issues of residential schedule of and contact with
24 children of the parties; or (c) the petition for relief under this
25 chapter requests the court to exclude a party from the dwelling which
26 the parties share. When the jurisdiction of a district or municipal
27 court is limited to the issuance and enforcement of a temporary order,
28 the district or municipal court shall set the full hearing provided for
29 in RCW 26.50.050 in superior court and transfer the case. If the
30 notice and order are not served on the respondent in time for the full

1 hearing, the issuing court shall have concurrent jurisdiction with the
2 superior court to extend the order for protection.

3 ~~((3))~~ (6) An action under this chapter shall be filed in the
4 county or the municipality where the petitioner resides, unless the
5 petitioner has left the residence or household to avoid abuse. In that
6 case, the petitioner may bring an action in the county or municipality
7 of the previous or the new household or residence.

8 ~~((4))~~ (7) A person's right to petition for relief under this
9 chapter is not affected by the person leaving the residence or
10 household to avoid abuse.

11 **Sec. 9.** RCW 4.08.050 and 1891 c 30 s 1 are each amended to read as
12 follows:

13 Except as provided under RCW 26.50.020, when an infant is a party
14 he or she shall appear by guardian, or if he or she has no guardian, or
15 in the opinion of the court the guardian is an improper person, the
16 court shall appoint one to act. Said guardian shall be appointed as
17 follows:

18 (1) When the infant is plaintiff, upon the application of the
19 infant, if he or she be of the age of fourteen years, or if under that
20 age, upon the application of a relative or friend of the infant.

21 (2) When the infant is defendant, upon the application of the
22 infant, if he or she be of the age of fourteen years, and applies
23 within thirty days after the service of the summons; if he or she be
24 under the age of fourteen, or neglects to apply, then upon the
25 application of any other party to the action, or of a relative or
26 friend of the infant.

27 **Sec. 10.** RCW 12.04.140 and 1971 ex.s. c 292 s 75 are each amended
28 to read as follows:

1 Except as provided under RCW 26.50.020, no action shall be
2 commenced by any person under the age of eighteen years, except by his
3 guardian, or until a next friend for such a person shall have been
4 appointed. Whenever requested, the justice shall appoint some suitable
5 person, who shall consent thereto in writing, to be named by such
6 plaintiff, to act as his or her next friend in such action, who shall
7 be responsible for the costs therein.

8 **Sec. 11.** RCW 12.04.150 and 1971 ex.s. c 292 s 76 are each amended
9 to read as follows:

10 After service and return of process against a defendant under the
11 age of eighteen years, the action shall not be further prosecuted,
12 until a guardian for such defendant shall have been appointed, except
13 as provided under RCW 26.50.020. Upon the request of such defendant,
14 the justice shall appoint some person who shall consent thereto in
15 writing, to be guardian of the defendant in defense of the action; and
16 if the defendant shall not appear on the return day of the process, or
17 if he or she neglect or refuse to nominate such guardian, the justice
18 may, at the request of the plaintiff, appoint any discreet person as
19 such guardian. The consent of the guardian or next friend shall be
20 filed with the justice; and such guardian for the defendant shall not
21 be liable for any costs in the action.

22 **Sec. 12.** RCW 26.28.015 and 1971 ex.s. c 292 s 2 are each amended
23 to read as follows:

24 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and except as provided
25 under RCW 26.50.020, all persons shall be deemed and taken to be of
26 full age for the specific purposes hereafter enumerated at the age of
27 eighteen years:

1 (1) To enter into any marriage contract without parental consent if
2 otherwise qualified by law;

3 (2) To execute a will for the disposition of both real and personal
4 property if otherwise qualified by law;

5 (3) To vote in any election if authorized by the Constitution and
6 otherwise qualified by law;

7 (4) To enter into any legal contractual obligation and to be
8 legally bound thereby to the full extent as any other adult person;

9 (5) To make decisions in regard to their own body and the body of
10 their lawful issue whether natural born to or adopted by such person to
11 the full extent allowed to any other adult person including but not
12 limited to consent to surgical operations;

13 (6) To sue and be sued on any action to the full extent as any
14 other adult person in any of the courts of this state, without the
15 necessity for a guardian ad litem.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** The sum of sixty-one thousand seven
17 hundred fifty dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is
18 appropriated for the biennium ending June 30, 1993, from the general
19 fund to the administrator for the courts for the purposes of sections
20 2 and 3 of this act.

21 The sum of forty-seven thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may
22 be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium ending June 30, 1993,
23 from the public safety and education account to the criminal justice
24 training commission for the purposes of section 5 of this act.

25 The sum of three thousand six hundred dollars, or as much thereof
26 as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium ending June 30,
27 1993, from the public safety and education account to the department of
28 community development for the purposes of section 6 of this act.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** If any provision of this act or its
2 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
3 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
4 persons or circumstances is not affected.