

50 THINGS A JUDGE CAN DO ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TODAY

1. Arrange a personal site visit to a domestic violence shelter.
2. Prepare a plain language form motion for victims without lawyers to apply for protection orders.
3. Arrange for brochures from your local domestic violence service agency to be placed in all women's restrooms in the court building.
4. Find out *exactly* what your court staff tells domestic violence victims who ask for help from your court.
5. Find out *exactly* what your court clerk tells domestic violence victims who ask for help from your court.
6. Read "What Therapists May See That Judges May Miss," *The Judges' Journal*, (ABA) Spring, 1988.
7. Ask your prosecutor whether domestic violence cases are being prosecuted *regardless* of whether the victim wishes to proceed.
8. Compare the number of domestic violence *arrests* in your jurisdiction with the number of protection order *applications*.
9. Order a copy of "The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children" from the American Bar Association, (312) 988-6077.
10. Organize a group to write a protocol for your community on the preferred procedure for handling domestic violence cases from the police call through final disposition of the case.
11. Ask the head of the local domestic violence agency to tell you the best and the worst things which victims describe about your court.
12. Ask a newspaper editor to spend an hour in your court during a domestic violence hearing docket.
13. Ask your jail whether complainants are *notified* by phone when a defendant charged with domestic violence is released.
14. Prepare a domestic violence lethality assessment checklist for your use.
15. Decide how you will use the information revealed by your domestic violence lethality assessments.

16. See if the standard amount of bond which domestic violence defendants can post for release from jail before arraignment satisfies your judicial assessment of the *danger* posed by them.
17. See if the law of your jurisdiction allows holding individuals arrested for domestic violence until *a personal appearance* before a judicial officer.
18. Establish a domestic violence *death review* committee.
19. Arrange for one speaking engagement to describe the role of your court in handling domestic violence cases in your community.
20. Find out how many domestic violence police calls in your community last year resulted in the arrest of both parties.
21. Ask law enforcement officials to assign *high priority* to the personal service of all domestic violence protection orders issued by your court.
22. Order a copy of "Domestic Violence & The Courtroom, Understanding The Problem. ..Knowing the Victim," from the American Judges Foundation, (804) 259-1841.
23. Pull your court's files on every case in the past year which you can identify as involving a *domestic violence death*, and review them for ideas on court and community practices.
24. Try to persuade every judicial officer in your community to attend *one* seminar on the dynamics of domestic violence.
25. Find out whether domestic violence convictions and protection orders are being properly reported to law enforcement agencies for handgun purchase disqualification.
26. Write an article for a local newspaper on domestic violence protection orders.
27. Post in your courthouse the National Domestic Violence Hotline number, 1-800-799-SAFE.
28. Organize a domestic violence coordinating council for your community.
29. *Persuade* your local bar association and legal services agencies to arrange legal representation for domestic violence victims seeking protection orders.
30. Read "Not in My County, Excerpts from a Report on Rural Courts and Victims of Domestic Violence," The *Judges' Journal*, (ABA) Summer, 1992.

31. Make sure law enforcement officers who serve protection orders remove all *weapons* from the defendant's possession or control.
32. Prepare a victim information packet to explain procedures for obtaining help in escaping domestic violence.
33. Order a copy of "The Courts' Response to Domestic Violence" from the National Association for Court Management, (757) 259-1841.
34. Make sure law enforcement officers who remove domestic violence defendants from victims' homes take all keys and garage door openers from the defendant.
35. Establish a visitation center that can *protect children* by supervising visitation periods and by supervising the physical exchange of children.
36. Ask about your court's *security precautions* for domestic violence cases.
37. Assign someone on your staff to *call* all domestic violence victims who fail to appear for a hearing.
38. Find out whether batterer's counseling services in your community *report all threats* made by defendants to harm victims.
39. Visit this website: <http://www.ncirs.org>.
40. Make sure domestic violence information is provided as part of any court-ordered parenting classes in your community.
41. Request that a local radio or television station produce a public service announcement on how to obtain a domestic violence protection order.
42. Prepare standardized domestic violence *forms* for use in your court.
43. Prepare *instructions* to help unrepresented parties understand the standardized domestic violence forms.
44. Have lunch with a state legislator concerning domestic violence issues in your court.
45. Order a copy of `Family Violence: A Model State Code` from the National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges, (702) 784-4463.
46. Establish a court website which includes domestic violence laws, procedures, forms, and instructions, such as Seattle's website, <http://www.pan.ci.seattle.wa.us/seattle/courts/dvweb.htm>.

47. Assign a court employee to assist unrepresented parties apply for protection orders.
48. *Require* pre-sentence investigations to include a lethality assessment.
49. Investigate Department of Justice Violence Against Women Act grant funding for domestic violence projects, (202) 307-6026.
50. Make information available at the courthouse concerning state crime victim compensation funds.

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