

- ✓ Transport victims to emergency services;
- ✓ Refer victims to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 800-799-SAFE (7233), 800-787-3224 (TTY);
- ✓ Assist victims in strategically planning for their safety;
- ✓ Notify victims of their legal rights in the enforcing jurisdiction.



BATTERED WOMEN'S JUSTICE PROJECT  
National Center on Protection Orders  
and Full Faith & Credit

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## **Full Faith and Credit: Enforcing Protection Orders**

Federal law requires that a protection order be enforced if it appears valid on its face.

*What follows is a summary of the federal law. Please refer to the Guide for the full statutory language and interpretation.*

## **Responding Officer's Procedures**

A responding officer must enforce the terms and conditions of the order as written by the issuing jurisdiction.

The protection order is presumed valid if it has the correct names of the parties, has not expired, and is signed by an issuing authority. It should be enforced pursuant to departmental policy and the laws of the enforcing jurisdiction.

## Immediate Action

If the respondent committed an offense under the criminal laws in the officer's jurisdiction or violated the court order, the officer should:

- ✓ Approach the scene in accordance with policy and training;
- ✓ Determine if there is a protection order in effect and verify the validity of the order;
- ✓ Arrest for violation of the order, if the enforcing jurisdiction requires or permits, and for any other criminal offenses;
- ✓ Initiate a criminal complaint against the respondent for the crime(s) committed and for violation of the order;
- ✓ Seek voluntary surrender of firearms or other weapons for safekeeping or seize firearms subject to state, local, territorial, or tribal prohibitions.

## Verification of Protection Orders

Verification can be accomplished by any of the following methods:

- ✓ Confirm the elements of an order in the National Crime Information Center Protection Order File (NCIC POF) (Note: Not all jurisdictions participate in NCIC POF);
- ✓ Review the elements of an order in a registry of protection orders in the issuing jurisdiction;
- ✓ Confirm the elements by communicating with the court or law enforcement in the issuing jurisdiction;
- ✓ Confirm the elements of an order if previously filed with designated authorities in the enforcing jurisdiction; or
- ✓ Draw upon professional expertise and information obtained through interview of the parties.

## Referral Actions and Safety Strategies

- ✓ Refer victims to the appropriate community services or programs, victim advocacy organizations, and court for assistance;