

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 479

Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY HOWARD, HILL-EVANS, BOBACK, SANCHEZ, CIRESI,
SCHLOSSBERG, GUENST, SHUSTERMAN, HOHENSTEIN, PASHINSKI,
KIRKLAND, ISAACSON AND O'MARA, FEBRUARY 9, 2021

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, FEBRUARY 9, 2021

AN ACT

1 Amending Titles 23 (Domestic Relations) and 42 (Judiciary and
2 Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated
3 Statutes, in protection from abuse, further providing for
4 definitions and for relief; and, in protection of victims of
5 sexual violence or intimidation, further providing for
6 relief.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. The definition of "victim" in section 6102(a) of
10 Title 23 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes is amended to
11 read:

12 § 6102. Definitions.

13 (a) General rule.--The following words and phrases when used
14 in this chapter shall have the meanings given to them in this
15 section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

16 * * *

17 "Victim." A person who is physically, emotionally or
18 sexually abused by [a family or household member.] another
19 person or subjected to other patterns of harassment causing

1 significant distress. For purposes of section 6116 (relating to
2 confidentiality), a victim is a person against whom abuse is
3 committed who consults a domestic violence counselor or advocate
4 for the purpose of securing advice, counseling or assistance.
5 The term shall also include persons who have a significant
6 relationship with the victim and who seek advice, counseling or
7 assistance from a domestic violence counselor or advocate
8 regarding abuse of the victim.

9 * * *

10 Section 2. Section 6108(a)(6) of Title 23 is amended to
11 read:

12 § 6108. Relief.

13 (a) General rule.--Subject to subsection (a.1), the court
14 may grant any protection order or approve any consent agreement
15 to bring about a cessation of abuse of the plaintiff or minor
16 children. The order or agreement may include:

17 * * *

18 (6) Prohibiting the defendant from having any contact
19 with the plaintiff or minor children, including, but not
20 limited to, restraining the defendant from entering the place
21 of employment or business or school of the plaintiff or minor
22 children and from harassing the plaintiff or plaintiff's
23 relatives or minor children. For purposes of this subsection,
24 the term "harassment" includes contact, attempts to contact
25 in person, by phone, e-mail or social media, including
26 following or requests to follow public web pages, or
27 knowingly attending events where the victim will be in
28 attendance.

29 * * *

30 Section 3. Section 62A07(b)(1) of Title 42 is amended to

1 read:

2 § 62A07. Relief.

3 * * *

4 (b) General rule.--An order or a consent agreement may

5 include:

6 (1) Prohibiting the defendant from having any contact
7 with the victim, including, but not limited to, restraining
8 the defendant from entering the victim's residence, place of
9 employment, business or school. This may include prohibiting
10 contact, attempts to contact in person, by phone, e-mail or
11 social media, including following or requests to follow
12 public web pages, or knowingly attending events where the
13 victim will be in attendance, and indirect contact through
14 third parties and also prohibiting direct or indirect contact
15 with other designated persons.

16 * * *

17 Section 4. This act shall take effect in 60 days.