

# Protection from Harm: Know Your Order!

## Stay Away Order (SAO)



## Protection from Abuse (PFA) Order

**Who**

Commonwealth of PA vs.  
Criminal Defendant

You vs. person who  
harmed you

**What**

Criminal Order prohibiting  
Defendant from contacting  
or coming near the victim

Civil Order with variety of relief  
to bring an end to abuse,  
including no contact, eviction  
from home, and more.

**How**

Issued by Court in  
connection with criminal  
charges and/or criminal  
sentence. Usually verbal,  
victims can request written  
SAO

Victim files Petition for  
PFA and serves on abuser

**Why**

To protect victims  
and witnesses

To protect victims of  
interpersonal violence and  
domestic violence

**Length  
of Time**

Duration of the criminal  
case and/or duration of  
criminal sentence

Maximum of 3 years