

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PROTECTIVE ORDERS

2021 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Todd D. Weiler

House Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill creates a workplace violence protective order.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ defines terms;
- ▶ allows an employer to petition for a workplace violence protective order;
- ▶ requires an employer to notify certain individuals when seeking a workplace violence protective order;
- ▶ establishes relief a court may include as part of a workplace violence protective order;
- ▶ requires a court to take certain action after issuing a workplace violence protective order;
- ▶ establishes circumstances under which a court may modify or vacate a workplace violence protective order;
- ▶ requires a court to set a date for a hearing within a certain time period;
- ▶ establishes provisions related to the expiration, modification, and extension of a workplace violence protective order;
- ▶ establishes provisions related to the service of process of a workplace violence protective order;
- ▶ makes violating a workplace violence protective order a class A misdemeanor;



- 28 ▶ limits liability of employer under certain circumstances; and
- 29 ▶ limits applicability of Title 78B, Chapter 7, Part 10, Workplace Violence Protective
- 30 Orders.

31 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

32 None

33 **Other Special Clauses:**

34 None

35 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

36 AMENDS:

37 **78B-7-102**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2020, Chapters 142 and 287

38 ENACTS:

39 **78B-7-1001**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

40 **78B-7-1002**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

41 **78B-7-1003**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

42 **78B-7-1004**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

43 **78B-7-1005**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

44 **78B-7-1006**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

45 **78B-7-1007**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

46 **78B-7-1008**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

47 **78B-7-1009**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



49 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

50 Section 1. Section **78B-7-102** is amended to read:

51 **78B-7-102. Definitions.**

52 As used in this chapter:

53 (1) "Abuse" means, except as provided in Section **78B-7-201**, intentionally or

54 knowingly causing or attempting to cause another individual physical harm or intentionally or

55 knowingly placing another individual in reasonable fear of imminent physical harm.

56 (2) "Affinity" means the same as that term is defined in Section **76-1-601**.

57 (3) "Civil protective order" means an order issued, subsequent to a hearing on the

58 petition, of which the petitioner and respondent have been given notice, under:

- 59 (a) Part 2, Child Protective Orders;
- 60 (b) Part 4, Dating Violence Protective Orders;
- 61 (c) Part 5, Sexual Violence Protective Orders; ~~[or]~~
- 62 (d) Part 6, Cohabitant Abuse Protective Orders~~[-];~~ or
- 63 (e) Part 10, Workplace Violence Protective Orders.
- 64 (4) "Civil stalking injunction" means a stalking injunction issued under Part 7, Civil
- 65 Stalking Injunctions.
- 66 (5) (a) "Cohabitant" means an emancipated individual under Section 15-2-1 or an
- 67 individual who is 16 years ~~[of age]~~ old or older who:
- 68 (i) is or was a spouse of the other party;
- 69 (ii) is or was living as if a spouse of the other party;
- 70 (iii) is related by blood or marriage to the other party as the individual's parent,
- 71 grandparent, sibling, or any other individual related to the individual by consanguinity or
- 72 affinity to the second degree;
- 73 (iv) has or had one or more children in common with the other party;
- 74 (v) is the biological parent of the other party's unborn child;
- 75 (vi) resides or has resided in the same residence as the other party; or
- 76 (vii) is or was in a consensual sexual relationship with the other party.
- 77 (b) "Cohabitant" does not include:
- 78 (i) the relationship of natural parent, adoptive parent, or step-parent to a minor; or
- 79 (ii) the relationship between natural, adoptive, step, or foster siblings who are under 18
- 80 years ~~[of age]~~ old.
- 81 (6) "Consanguinity" means the same as that term is defined in Section 76-1-601.
- 82 (7) "Criminal protective order" means an order issued under Part 8, Criminal Protective
- 83 Orders.
- 84 (8) "Criminal stalking injunction" means a stalking injunction issued under Part 9,
- 85 Criminal Stalking Injunctions.
- 86 (9) "Court clerk" means a district court clerk.
- 87 (10) (a) "Dating partner" means an individual who:
- 88 (i) (A) is an emancipated individual under Section 15-2-1 or Title 78A, Chapter 6, Part
- 89 8, Emancipation; or

90 (B) is 18 years [~~of age~~] old or older; and
91 (ii) is, or has been, in a dating relationship with the other party.
92 (b) "Dating partner" does not include an intimate partner.
93 (11) (a) "Dating relationship" means a social relationship of a romantic or intimate
94 nature, or a relationship which has romance or intimacy as a goal by one or both parties,
95 regardless of whether the relationship involves sexual intimacy.
96 (b) "Dating relationship" does not include casual fraternization in a business,
97 educational, or social context.
98 (c) In determining, based on a totality of the circumstances, whether a dating
99 relationship exists:
100 (i) all relevant factors shall be considered, including:
101 (A) whether the parties developed interpersonal bonding above a mere casual
102 fraternization;
103 (B) the length of the parties' relationship;
104 (C) the nature and the frequency of the parties' interactions, including communications
105 indicating that the parties intended to begin a dating relationship;
106 (D) the ongoing expectations of the parties, individual or jointly, with respect to the
107 relationship;
108 (E) whether, by statement or conduct, the parties demonstrated an affirmation of their
109 relationship to others; and
110 (F) whether other reasons exist that support or detract from a finding that a dating
111 relationship exists; and
112 (ii) it is not necessary that all, or a particular number, of the factors described in
113 Subsection (11)(c)(i) are found to support the existence of a dating relationship.
114 (12) "Domestic violence" means the same as that term is defined in Section [77-36-1](#).
115 (13) "Ex parte civil protective order" means an order issued without notice to the
116 respondent under:
117 (a) Part 2, Child Protective Orders;
118 (b) Part 4, Dating Violence Protective Orders;
119 (c) Part 5, Sexual Violence Protective Orders; [~~or~~]
120 (d) Part 6, Cohabitant Abuse Protective Orders[~~;~~]; or

121 (e) Part 10, Workplace Violence Protective Orders.

122 (14) "Ex parte civil stalking injunction" means a stalking injunction issued without
123 notice to the respondent under Part 7, Civil Stalking Injunctions.

124 (15) "Foreign protection order" means the same as that term is defined in Section
125 [78B-7-302](#).

126 (16) "Intimate partner" means the same as that term is defined in 18 U.S.C. Sec. 921.

127 (17) "Law enforcement unit" or "law enforcement agency" means any public agency
128 having general police power and charged with making arrests in connection with enforcement
129 of the criminal statutes and ordinances of this state or any political subdivision.

130 (18) "Peace officer" means those individuals specified in Title 53, Chapter 13, Peace
131 Officer Classifications.

132 (19) "Qualifying domestic violence offense" means the same as that term is defined in
133 Section [77-36-1.1](#).

134 (20) "Respondent" means the individual against whom enforcement of a protective
135 order is sought.

136 (21) "Stalking" means the same as that term is defined in Section [76-5-106.5](#).

137 Section 2. Section **78B-7-1001** is enacted to read:

138 **Part 10. Workplace Violence Protective Orders**

139 **78B-7-1001. Definitions.**

140 As used in this part:

141 (1) (a) "Employee" means an individual in the service of an employer for
142 compensation.

143 (b) "Employee" includes an independent contractor.

144 (2) "Employer" means a person that employs one or more individuals in this state.

145 (3) "Ex parte workplace violence protective order" means an order issued without
146 notice to the respondent under this part.

147 (4) "Protective order" means:

148 (a) a workplace violence protective order; or

149 (b) an ex parte workplace violence protective order.

150 (5) "Workplace violence" means knowingly causing or threatening to cause bodily
151 injury to, or damage to the property of, a person, if:

- 152 (a) the person is:
- 153 (i) an employer;
- 154 (ii) an employee performing the employee's duties of employment; or
- 155 (iii) a person present at the workplace of an employer; and
- 156 (b) (i) the action would cause a reasonable person to feel terrorized, frightened,
- 157 intimidated, or harassed; or
- 158 (ii) the threat:
- 159 (A) would cause a reasonable person to fear that the threat will be carried out; and
- 160 (B) if carried out, would cause a reasonable person to feel terrorized, frightened,
- 161 intimidated, or harassed.
- 162 (6) "Workplace violence protective order" means an order issued under this part after a
- 163 hearing on the petition, of which the petitioner and respondent have been given notice.

164 Section 3. Section **78B-7-1002** is enacted to read:

165 **78B-7-1002. Petition for a workplace violence protective order -- Notice to known**

166 **targets of workplace violence.**

167 (1) An employer who reasonably believes workplace violence has occurred against the

168 employer, an employee of the employer, or a person while the person was present at the

169 workplace of the employer, may seek, or authorize an agent to seek, a protective order in

170 accordance with this part.

171 (2) If an employer seeking a workplace violence protective order as described in

172 Subsection (1) has knowledge that a specific individual is the target of workplace violence, the

173 employer shall make a good faith effort to notify the individual that the employer is seeking a

174 workplace violence protective order.

175 Section 4. Section **78B-7-1003** is enacted to read:

176 **78B-7-1003. Workplace violence protective orders -- Ex parte workplace violence**

177 **protective orders -- Modification of orders.**

178 (1) If it appears from a petition for a protective order or a petition to modify an existing

179 protective order that workplace violence has occurred, the court may:

180 (a) without notice, immediately issue an ex parte workplace violence protective order

181 against the respondent or modify an existing workplace violence protective order ex parte, if

182 necessary to protect the petitioner or any party named in the petition; or

183 (b) upon notice to the respondent, issue a workplace violence protective order or
184 modify a workplace violence protective order after a hearing, regardless of whether the
185 respondent appears.

186 (2) The court may grant the following relief with or without notice in a protective order
187 or in a modification to a protective order:

188 (a) enjoin the respondent from committing workplace violence;

189 (b) enjoin the respondent from harassing the petitioner, an employee of the petitioner
190 while performing the employee's duties of employment, or any person while the person is
191 present at the workplace of the petitioner;

192 (c) prohibit the respondent from telephoning, contacting, or otherwise communicating
193 with the petitioner, an employee of the petitioner while performing the employee's duties of
194 employment, or any person while the person is present at the workplace of the petitioner; or

195 (d) order that the respondent is excluded and shall stay away from the petitioner's
196 workplace.

197 (3) The court may grant the following relief in a protective order or in a modification to
198 a protective order, after notice and a hearing, regardless of whether the respondent appears:

199 (a) any relief described in Subsection (2); and

200 (b) subject to Subsection (4), upon finding that the respondent's use or possession of a
201 weapon poses a serious threat of harm to the petitioner, an employee of the petitioner while
202 performing the employee's duties of employment, or any other person while the person is
203 present at the workplace of the employer, prohibit the respondent from purchasing, using, or
204 possessing a weapon specified by the court.

205 (4) The court may not prohibit the respondent from possessing a firearm unless:

206 (a) the respondent has been given notice of the petition for a protective order and an
207 opportunity to be heard; and

208 (b) the petition establishes:

209 (i) by a preponderance of the evidence that the respondent has committed workplace
210 violence; and

211 (ii) by clear and convincing evidence that the respondent's use or possession of a
212 firearm poses a serious threat of harm to the petitioner, an employee of the petitioner while
213 performing the employee's duties of employment, or any other person while the person is

214 present at the workplace of the petitioner.

215 (5) After the court issues a protective order, the court shall:

216 (a) as soon as possible, deliver the order to the county sheriff for service of process;

217 (b) transmit electronically, by the end of the business day after the day on which the

218 court issues the order, a copy of the protective order to the local law enforcement agency that

219 the petitioner designates; and

220 (c) transmit a copy of the protective order in the same manner as described in Section

221 [78B-7-113](#).

222 (6) The court may modify or vacate a protective order after notice and hearing, if the

223 petitioner:

224 (a) (i) is personally served with notice of the hearing, as provided in the Utah Rules of

225 Civil Procedure; and

226 (ii) appears before the court to give specific consent to the modification or vacation of

227 the provisions of the protective order; or

228 (b) submits an affidavit agreeing to the modification or vacation of the provisions of

229 the protective order.

230 Section 5. Section **78B-7-1004** is enacted to read:

231 **78B-7-1004. Hearings -- Expiration.**

232 (1) (a) A court shall set a date for a hearing on the petition to be held within 20 days

233 after the day on which the court issues an ex parte workplace violence protective order.

234 (b) If, at the hearing described in Subsection (1)(a), the court does not issue a

235 workplace violence protective order, the ex parte workplace violence protective order expires

236 on the day on which the hearing is held, unless the court extends the ex parte workplace

237 violence protective order.

238 (c) Subject to Subsection (1)(d), a court may not extend an ex parte workplace violence

239 protective order beyond 20 days after the day on which the court issues the ex parte workplace

240 violence protective order, unless:

241 (i) a party is unable to be present at the hearing for good cause, established by the

242 party's sworn affidavit;

243 (ii) the respondent has not been served; or

244 (iii) exigent circumstances exist.

245 (d) If at the hearing described in Subsection (1)(a) the court issues a workplace
246 violence protective order, the ex parte workplace violence protective order remains in effect
247 until service of process of the workplace violence protective order is completed.

248 (e) A workplace violence protective order issued after notice and a hearing remains in
249 effect for a period the court determines, not to exceed 18 months after the day on which the
250 court issues the order, unless the order is extended in accordance with Section [78B-7-1005](#).

251 (f) (i) If the hearing on the petition is heard by a commissioner, either the petitioner or
252 respondent may file an objection within 10 calendar days after the day on which the
253 commissioner enters the recommended order.

254 (ii) If a party files an objection as described in Subsection (1)(f)(i), the assigned judge
255 shall hold a hearing on the objection within 20 days after the day on which the party files the
256 objection.

257 (2) (a) If a court denies a petition for an ex parte workplace violence protective order or
258 a petition to modify a workplace violence protective order ex parte, the petitioner may, within
259 five days after the day on which the court denies the petition, request a hearing.

260 (b) If the petitioner requests a hearing as described in Subsection (2)(a), the court shall:

261 (i) set a hearing to be held within 20 days after the day on which the petitioner makes
262 the request; and

263 (ii) notify and serve the respondent.

264 Section 6. Section **78B-7-1005** is enacted to read:

265 **78B-7-1005. Extension.**

266 (1) A workplace violence protective order expires automatically, unless the petitioner:

267 (a) files a motion before the day on which the workplace violence protective order
268 expires; and

269 (b) demonstrates that:

270 (i) there is a substantial likelihood that the petitioner, an employee of the petitioner
271 while performing the employee's duties of employment, or a person while the person is present
272 at the workplace of the petitioner will be subjected to workplace violence; or

273 (ii) the respondent committed or was convicted of a violation of the workplace
274 harassment protective order that the petitioner requests be extended.

275 (2) (a) Subject to Subsection (2)(b), if a court grants a motion described in Subsection

276 (1)(a), the court shall set a new date on which the workplace violence protective order expires.

277 (b) A court may not extend a workplace violence protective order for more than 18
278 months after the day on which the court issues the order for extension.

279 (3) After the day on which the court issues an extension of a workplace violence
280 protective order, the court shall take the action described in Subsection [78B-7-1003\(5\)](#).

281 (4) Nothing in this part prohibits a petitioner from seeking another protective order
282 after the day on which the petitioner's protective order expires.

283 Section 7. Section **78B-7-1006** is enacted to read:

284 **78B-7-1006. Service of process.**

285 (1) The county sheriff that receives an order from a court under Subsection
286 [78B-7-1003\(5\)](#) or [78B-7-1005\(3\)](#), shall:

287 (a) provide expedited service for the protective order; and

288 (b) after the protective order is served, transmit verification of service of process to the
289 statewide network described in Section [78B-7-113](#).

290 (2) This section does not prohibit another law enforcement agency from providing
291 service of process if the law enforcement agency:

292 (a) has contact with the respondent; or

293 (b) determines that, under the circumstances, providing service of process on the
294 respondent is in the best interest of the petitioner.

295 Section 8. Section **78B-7-1007** is enacted to read:

296 **78B-7-1007. Penalties.**

297 A violation of a protective order issued under this part is a class A misdemeanor.

298 Section 9. Section **78B-7-1008** is enacted to read:

299 **78B-7-1008. Employer liability.**

300 (1) An employer is immune from civil liability for:

301 (a) seeking a workplace violence protective order, if the employer acts in good faith in
302 seeking the order; or

303 (b) failing to seek a workplace violence protective order.

304 (2) An employer's action or statement made under this part:

305 (a) is not an admission of any fact; and

306 (b) may be used for purposes of impeachment.

307 Section 10. Section **78B-7-1009** is enacted to read:

308 **78B-7-1009. Limitations of part.**

309 Nothing in this part:

310 (1) modifies the duty of an employer to provide a safe workplace for the employees of
311 the employer and persons present at the workplace of the employer;

312 (2) prohibits a person from engaging in constitutionally protected exercise of free
313 speech, including speech involving labor disputes concerning organized labor; or

314 (3) prohibits a person from engaging in an activity that is part of a labor dispute.