

HOUSE BILL 1586

D4
HB 1290/24 – JUD

6lr2790

By: **Delegates McComas, Wivell, Arikan, Baker, Beauchamp, Buckel, Chisholm, Ciliberti, Hornberger, Miller, and T. Morgan**

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 2026

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Protective Orders – Coercive Control**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing a certain person to petition for a protective order against
4 another person who the petitioner alleges has engaged in certain behavior toward
5 the petitioner that is controlling or coercive; and generally relating to protective
6 orders and coercive control.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Family Law
9 Section 4–501
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

12 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
13 Article – Family Law
14 Section 4–504
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
18 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

19 **Article – Family Law**

20 4–501.

21 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

22 (b) (1) “Abuse” means any of the following acts:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 1 (i) an act that causes serious bodily harm;
- 2 (ii) an act that places a person eligible for relief in fear of imminent
3 serious bodily harm;
- 4 (iii) assault in any degree;
- 5 (iv) rape or sexual offense under § 3–303, § 3–304, § 3–307, or §
6 3–308 of the Criminal Law Article or attempted rape or sexual offense in any degree;
- 7 (v) false imprisonment;
- 8 (vi) stalking under § 3–802 of the Criminal Law Article; [or]
- 9 (vii) revenge porn under § 3–809 of the Criminal Law Article; **OR**

10 **(VIII) IF THE PERSON FOR WHOM RELIEF IS SOUGHT IS AN ADULT,**
11 **COERCIVE CONTROL.**

12 (2) (i) If the person for whom relief is sought is a child, “abuse” may
13 also include abuse of a child, as defined in Title 5, Subtitle 7 of this article.

14 (ii) Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to prohibit reasonable
15 punishment, including reasonable corporal punishment, in light of the age and condition of
16 the child, from being performed by a parent or stepparent of the child.

17 (3) If the person for whom relief is sought is a vulnerable adult, “abuse”
18 may also include abuse of a vulnerable adult, as defined in Title 14, Subtitle 1 of this article.

19 (c) “Child care provider” means a person that provides supervision and care for a
20 minor child.

21 (d) **(1) “COERCIVE CONTROL” MEANS A PATTERN OF EMOTIONAL OR**
22 **PSYCHOLOGICAL MANIPULATION, MALTREATMENT, THREAT OF FORCE, OR**
23 **INTIMIDATION USED TO COMPEL AN INDIVIDUAL TO ACT, OR REFRAIN FROM ACTING,**
24 **AGAINST THE INDIVIDUAL’S WILL.**

25 **(2) “COERCIVE CONTROL” INCLUDES:**

26 **(I) ISOLATING THE INDIVIDUAL FROM FRIENDS, RELATIVES,**
27 **OR OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPORT;**

28 **(II) DEPRIVING THE INDIVIDUAL OF BASIC NECESSITIES;**

1 (III) CONTROLLING, REGULATING, OR MONITORING THE
2 INDIVIDUAL'S MOVEMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS, DAILY BEHAVIOR, FINANCES,
3 ECONOMIC RESOURCES, OR ACCESS TO SERVICES;

4 (IV) COMPELLING THE INDIVIDUAL BY FORCE, THREAT OF
5 FORCE, OR INTIMIDATION, INCLUDING THREATS BASED ON ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED
6 IMMIGRATION STATUS, TO ENGAGE IN CONDUCT FROM WHICH THE INDIVIDUAL HAS
7 A RIGHT TO ABSTAIN OR ABSTAIN FROM CONDUCT IN WHICH THE INDIVIDUAL HAS A
8 RIGHT TO ENGAGE; OR

9 (V) ENGAGING IN CONTROL OVER THE REPRODUCTIVE
10 AUTONOMY OF AN INDIVIDUAL THROUGH FORCE, THREAT OF FORCE, OR
11 INTIMIDATION, INCLUDING UNREASONABLY PRESSURING AN INDIVIDUAL TO
12 BECOME PREGNANT, DELIBERATELY INTERFERING WITH CONTRACEPTIVE USE OR
13 ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INFORMATION, OR USING COERCIVE TACTICS
14 TO CONTROL OR ATTEMPT TO CONTROL PREGNANCY OUTCOMES.

15 (E) "Cohabitant" means a person who has had a sexual relationship with the
16 respondent and resided with the respondent in the home for a period of at least 90 days
17 within 1 year before the filing of the petition.

18 [(e)] (F) "Commissioner" means a District Court Commissioner appointed in
19 accordance with Article IV, § 41G of the Maryland Constitution.

20 [(f)] (G) "Court" means the District Court or a circuit court in this State.

21 [(g)] (H) "Emergency family maintenance" means a monetary award given to or
22 for a person eligible for relief to whom the respondent has a duty of support under this
23 article based on:

24 (1) the financial needs of the person eligible for relief; and

25 (2) the resources available to the person eligible for relief and the
26 respondent.

27 [(h)] (I) "Executive Director" means the Executive Director of the Governor's
28 Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services.

29 [(i)] (J) "Final protective order" means a protective order issued under § 4-506
30 of this subtitle.

31 [(j)] (K) "Home" means the property in this State that:

32 (1) is the principal residence of a person eligible for relief; and

1 (2) is owned, rented, or leased by the person eligible for relief or respondent
2 or, in a petition alleging child abuse or abuse of a vulnerable adult, an adult living in the
3 home at the time of a proceeding under this subtitle.

4 **[(k)] (L)** “Interim protective order” means an order that a Commissioner issues
5 under this subtitle pending a hearing by a judge on a petition.

6 **[(l)] (M)** “Local department” means the local department that has jurisdiction in
7 the county:

8 (1) where the home is located; or

9 (2) if different, where the abuse is alleged to have taken place.

10 **[(m)] (N)** “Military protection order” means a protection order issued in
11 accordance with 10 U.S.C. § 1567 by a commanding officer against a person under such
12 officer’s command in:

13 (1) any branch of the uniformed services of the United States;

14 (2) the Maryland National Guard; or

15 (3) the national guard of any other state.

16 **[(n)] (O)** “Person eligible for relief” includes:

17 (1) the current or former spouse of the respondent;

18 (2) a cohabitant of the respondent;

19 (3) a person related to the respondent by blood, marriage, or adoption;

20 (4) a parent, stepparent, child, or stepchild of the respondent or the person
21 eligible for relief who resides or resided with the respondent or person eligible for relief for
22 at least 90 days within 1 year before the filing of the petition;

23 (5) a vulnerable adult;

24 (6) an individual who has a child in common with the respondent;

25 (7) an individual who has had a sexual relationship with the respondent
26 within 1 year before the filing of the petition; and

27 (8) an individual who alleges that the respondent committed, within 6
28 months before the filing of the petition, any of the following acts against the individual:

1 (i) rape or a sexual offense under § 3–303, § 3–304, § 3–307, or §
2 3–308 of the Criminal Law Article; or

3 (ii) attempted rape or sexual offense in any degree.

4 [(o)] (P) (1) “Pet” means a domesticated animal.

5 (2) “Pet” does not include livestock.

6 [(p)] (Q) (1) “Petitioner” means an individual who files a petition.

7 (2) “Petitioner” includes:

8 (i) a person eligible for relief; or

9 (ii) the following persons who may seek relief from abuse on behalf
10 of a minor or vulnerable adult:

11 1. the State’s Attorney for the county where the child or
12 vulnerable adult lives, or, if different, where the abuse is alleged to have taken place;

13 2. the department of social services that has jurisdiction in
14 the county where the child or vulnerable adult lives, or, if different, where the abuse is
15 alleged to have taken place;

16 3. a person related to the child or vulnerable adult by blood,
17 marriage, or adoption; and

18 4. an adult who resides in the home.

19 [(q)] (R) “Residence” includes the yard, grounds, outbuildings, and common
20 areas surrounding the residence.

21 [(r)] (S) “Respondent” means the person alleged in the petition to have
22 committed the abuse.

23 [(s)] (T) “Temporary protective order” means a protective order issued under §
24 4–505 of this subtitle.

25 [(t)] (U) “Victim” includes a person eligible for relief.

26 [(u)] (V) “Vulnerable adult” has the meaning provided in § 14–101(q) of this
27 article.

28 4–504.

1 (a) (1) A petitioner may seek relief from abuse by filing with a court, or with a
2 commissioner under the circumstances specified in § 4–504.1(a) of this subtitle, a petition
3 that alleges abuse of any person eligible for relief by the respondent.

4 (2) A petition may be filed under this subtitle if:

5 (i) the abuse is alleged to have occurred in the State; or

6 (ii) the person eligible for relief is a resident of the State, regardless
7 of whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred in the State.

8 (b) (1) The petition shall:

9 (i) be under oath; and

10 (ii) include any information known to the petitioner of:

11 1. the nature and extent of the abuse for which the relief is
12 being sought, including information known to the petitioner concerning previous injury
13 resulting from abuse by the respondent;

14 2. each previous action between the parties in any court;

15 3. each pending action between the parties in any court;

16 4. the whereabouts of the respondent, if known;

17 5. if financial relief is requested, information known to the
18 petitioner regarding the financial resources of the respondent; and

19 6. in a case of alleged child abuse or alleged abuse of a
20 vulnerable adult, the whereabouts of the child or vulnerable adult and any other
21 information relating to the abuse of the child or vulnerable adult.

22 (2) If the petition states that disclosure of the address of a person eligible
23 for relief would risk further abuse of a person eligible for relief, or reveal the confidential
24 address of a shelter for domestic violence victims, that address may be omitted from all
25 documents filed with a commissioner or filed with, or transferred to, a court. If disclosure
26 is necessary to determine jurisdiction or consider any venue issue, it shall be made orally
27 and in camera and may not be disclosed to the respondent.

28 (c) The petitioner may not be required to pay a filing fee or costs for the issuance
29 or service of:

30 (1) an interim protective order;

31 (2) a temporary protective order;

1 (3) a final protective order; or

2 (4) a witness subpoena.

3 (d) (1) If a petitioner has requested notification of the service of a protective
4 order, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services shall:

5 (i) notify the petitioner of the service on the respondent of an
6 interim or a temporary protective order within one hour after a law enforcement officer
7 electronically notifies the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services of the
8 service; and

9 (ii) notify the petitioner of the service on the respondent of a final
10 protective order within one hour after knowledge of service of the order on the respondent.

11 (2) The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services shall
12 develop a notification request form and procedures for notification under this subsection.

13 (3) The court clerk or Commissioner shall provide the notification request
14 form to a petitioner.

15 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
16 October 1, 2026.