



A victory in the Sixth Court of Appeals

Each day at the Project we enjoy small victories that help improve the lives of hundreds of people struggling with domestic violence. One such victory happened this week and we are excited to share it with you.

When Jessica* filed a protective order against her father Bill*, she hoped it would end a cycle of abuse that had been plaguing their family for decades. During their court proceedings, the Judge determined that both parties were at fault for abuse and that a "mutual" protective order be filed.

This meant Bill* is ordered to stay away from Jessica*, but Jessica* must also do the same. While this has become common practice, these orders bypass the need for the alleged batterer to file for their own protective order against their accuser. The effects of this practice can be devastating to domestic violence victims.

Yet thanks to an appeal by the Texas Advocacy Project, the Sixth Court of Appeals now requires a separate application be filed before a victim of domestic violence has a protective order issued against them.

Why is this an important victory? Once a finding of family violence (in this case the Protective Order) has been made against the victim, they immediately lose many important protections in the Family Code including child custody, support, and spousal maintenance. They also then become ineligible to receive financial assistance through the Crime Victims Compensation Fund and may be adversely affected in future employment. In addition, many victims enter the courtroom without counsel and suddenly become forced into a position of defending themselves.

Thanks to the hard work provided by our staff at The Project and the financial support many of you provide, victims can now effectively obtain court ordered protection from their abusers without the fear of immediate legal retaliation.

Thanks to a kind donation from our friends at RunTex we have tickets to the April 13th Austin Toro's game as a special appreciation for our supporters. Make an online donation of \$20.00 or more, before April 8th and Texas Advocacy Project will give you 2 free tickets (while supplies last) to the game.

Want to do more to help? If a \$20 donation isn't enough, you might want to check out our exclusive Justice Partners Program. Becoming a Justice Partner allows you to be listed among an elite group of statewide funders who are recognized for their dedication to protecting victims of domestic violence. For this and other opportunities to support our programs please visit

FAMILY VIOLENCE LEGAL LINE
800-374-HOPE (STATEWIDE)
512-476-5770 (IN AUSTIN)

FAMILY LAW HOTLINE
800-777-FAIR (STATEWIDE)
512-476-1866 (IN AUSTIN)

SEXUAL ASSAULT LEGAL HOTLINE
800-296-SAFE (STATEWIDE)
512-476-9290 (IN AUSTIN)

TECHNICAL ADVOCACY HOTLINE
888-325-SAFE (STATEWIDE)
512-476-5386 (IN AUSTIN)

www.texasadvocacyproject.org

Through your support we can have many more victories in our fight against domestic violence and sexual assault.

** Names have been changed to protect the identity of the victim.*

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