



Hi-Line's Help for Abused Spouses 800.219.7336 or 406.278.3342

Working with Victims

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What is a Crisis?

Definition of a Crisis:

- A crucial or decisive point or situation, especially a difficult or unstable situation involving an impending change.
- A sudden change in the course of a disease or fever, toward either improvement or deterioration.
- An emotionally stressful event or traumatic change in a person's life.

Crisis implies an emergency or serious situation. The seriousness of the crisis depends upon:

- The individual's life-style and personal style (their way of dealing with things)
- The quality and nature of previous situations the person has had to deal with in the past.
- The amount of support given to the person.
- The person's ability to respond to the crisis without falling apart.

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What is a Crisis?

There are at least two types of crisis:

- A developmental crisis which can be expected in the normal movement of life. These types of crises can be predicted; they are often unchangeable but can be made less traumatic. They often bring on maturity and growth.
- An incidental crisis which is brought on by events which occur within a person's lifetime. These are often brought about by circumstances external to the individual; and most intervention takes place in this type of crisis situation.

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Crisis Intervention

- Focus on an individual's feelings and thought processes while they are in crisis
- Is problem oriented by helping the individual direct their energy toward working through the crisis situation.
- Helps an individual restore or maintain their normal level of functioning by:
 1. Clarifying the crisis situation
 2. Mobilizing personal support systems
 3. Establishing new problem solving techniques

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Goals of Crisis Intervention

- Restore a person's ability to function with life situations.
- Mobilize an individual's strengths to deal with the crisis, by emphasizing the person's ability to work through her problems.
- Create a trusting environment so that the person can work through her crisis, by promoting objectivity through discussion, which helps the person test possible solutions before using them. Role play is one way of doing this.
- Re-establish a person's control over her own life.

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A Skilled Advocate:

- Paraphrases, which means not just parroting but using effective words to capture the essence of what was said to elicit a continuing response.
- Reflects feelings back to the client and lets them know all the client's feelings are accepted; picks up and responds to unstated and stated feelings; identifies feelings accurately.
- Listens to voice tones; listens for and responds to emotional cues, hesitations, pauses, contradictions in voice patterns.
- Checks out interpretations, not assuming what is heard is what was meant.
- Owns and shares feelings and interpretations through the use of "I" statements (i.e., I think this because ... I feel ..., I want ...); identifies herself as the sender of the message.
- Makes non-evaluative responses. Leaves the conversation open rather than interrogating or pushing.
- Responsibly confronts and gives feedback through being able to point out apparent contradictions between values and behavior, self-defeating behavior, and misinterpretations of reality.

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A Skilled Advocate:

- Says what they think, feel, and want and owns thoughts, feelings and intentions without putting them on the client (e.g. . . . "You make me angry").
- When (and only when) appropriate, relates own experiences and feelings briefly and comfortably, in a way which makes it easier for the client to talk about herself and places emphasis on the client's experience, feelings, and needs.
- Asks open questions ("how" or "what." not "who" or "did"); doesn't structure questions to her own ends (e.g., focusing on one rape victim's background of incest only because the advocate has been an incest victim or knows a lot about incest) but rather places the emphasis on the client; asks questions in a gentle, supportive manner.
- Recognizes the power aspect of the counseling relationship and uses it wisely and constructively.
- Explores alternatives which seem realistic or appropriate; asks about resources and support systems available to the client and helps the client use these in formulating a specific plan of action.
- Waits until she has sufficient information and has dealt with the client's feelings before giving feedback and doing problem solving.

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A Skilled Advocate:

- Expresses to the client maybe they can be of help, but ultimately expects the client to take responsibility for solving their own problems; when appropriate, confronts the client with issues they may not want to face, in a caring way, but does not push confrontation to the very extreme if the client is very resistant.
- Is spontaneous and flexible, able to change direction and flow with the conversation.
- Speaks in a language the client can understand and tries to use some of the client's own terms in a way that facilitates conversation.
- When appropriate, asks questions to determine whether a problem is chronic or is a reaction to a specific recent event.
- Searches for the most appropriate referrals and gives them to the client after the counseling process is complete or nearly so.
- Clearly understands what is and is not included in an advocate's role.
- Is very responsible, fills out forms completely and on time

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A Skilled Advocate:

- Is open to receiving feedback and looking at personal issues which may interfere with her advocacy work; is willing to change and grow.
- Is knowledgeable of and adheres to policies and procedures.

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Advocate Characteristics

- **Caring, Unconditional Positive Regard!**

This goes beyond rapport - it offers another person your trust, love, and non-judgmental evaluation of them being capable and loving. It shows itself in your acceptance of the other person and understanding.

- **Empathy not Sympathy**

This is not "feeling sorry" for another person; it is putting yourself in their shoes and understanding what it must feel like if you haven't had first-hand experience in what the person is experiencing.

- **Trust**

Trust takes time to develop with another person, especially if they have just been through a hard time. The best you can do is to allow the time and offer yourself as honestly as you can. Sometimes a light touch or smile can do worlds of good. Offering your help is a way of trust-building or just saying you know how hard it must be to trust anyone can help.

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Advocate Characteristics

- **Awareness**

It is important to be aware of not only what the other person is telling you or what they are showing in the way of overt behavior, but what is not being said as well. Often, the most important thing is what is not being mentioned – for instance, what the person is feeling, not just what is happening.

Another important thing to remember is the awareness of your own internal experiences. Being aware of your own feelings in relation with what is being said or done. It is often valuable to share this with the person you are counseling if it doesn't get in the way of what is being worked through.

- **Valuing or Affirmation**

This is an important part of building a relationship with another person. It means having esteem for yourself and the other person. It means you have a right to be who you are and allow the other person the same right. It allows a mutual respect from one person to the other. It also leaves room for differences in opinions, moral judgments, lifestyles, and belief systems.

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Advocate Characteristics

- **Transparency**

It is important for the person who you are counseling to know you are human and make mistakes. It helps others to know they are not alone. Sharing personal information is one way to get it across.

- **BELIEVE THEM AND BELIEVE IN THEM**

Their abuser has encouraged them to think they are crazy and at fault. Batterers often have a tendency to appear (to everyone except their spouses) as kind and considerate. The victim is frequently questioned or not believed when they tell people about the abusers violent behavior toward them. The abuser has convinced family and relatives they are nothing but the supportive person whom they see.

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Advocacy Techniques

Aside from the standard methods of active listening, empathizing, reflecting feelings, rephrasing, summarizing, clarifying and prioritizing an advocate would use, the list that follows are skills that are particularly important and effective with victims.

- **APPROACH THEM ON A PEER LEVEL**

By dealing with them as an equal, you show them you accept them as a competent person. This, in itself, is healing.

- **ENCOURAGE THEM TO WORK THROUGH THEIR ANGER**

Some women may feel they are not "supposed" to be angry and it is a sign of a lack of femininity.

You may want to say "That would make me mad!" This helps her to own and express her anger so she doesn't displace it as frustration or depression.

Show your own emotions (within control, of course); this is a way of sharing with them an alternative reality--it's not okay to be hit!

- **EXPLAIN THE "CALMING" PHASE IN THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE**

If they have left before, ask them to recount the past contrition stage and how it occurred. This will make them aware of what to watch for so they can better gauge sincerity, permanence, change, etc.

Role play with them to help prepare a response to the abusers pleas and apologies.

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Advocacy Techniques

- **ENCOURAGE THEM TO FANTISIZE ABOUT WHAT THEY WANT TO BE HAPPY**

They may hesitate to indulge in the "luxury" of self-determination or wanting creature comforts. By helping them discover what they want, you can help them define a more autonomous life.

- **ENCOURAGE THEM TO DEVELOP A SUPPORT NETWORK**

Only when they feel support can they end the dependency they feel for their abuser.

Make them aware and caution of immediately entering into another intimate relationship. It is common for people in a vulnerable state to begin another relationship; this often fails, leaving them depressed and deflated again.

- **ASSERT THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR SAFETY**

Without stressing divorce or showing judgment of their decision to return to a battering situation, emphasize a concern for their safety; this may help bring them into contact with the reality that she is a victim

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Advocacy Techniques

- **IF THEY PLAN TO RETURN, HELP FORMULATE "CONDITIONS FOR RETURN"**

Help them gain a feeling of power and control. This is done by encouraging them to state conditions under which they will agree to return. The abuser may be in the calming phase and therefore they are in a good position for "bargaining".

Rehearse (role-play) with them the means whereby they will communicate to the abuser the fact they are a different person—they learned from the episode and have changed accordingly. This statement alone can interrupt the resumption of the Cycle of Violence.

Both of them will have heard the words and the commitment not to tolerate further abuse.

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Assessing Their Readiness for Change

If a victim is not ready to change, then there is nothing an advocate can say or do to get them to make the break from their abuser.

Understanding the phases a victim goes through in approaching readiness to change will help an advocate prevent burn-out or frustration in assisting them to end a violent relationship.

- **HAVE THEY LEFT BEFORE?**

If they haven't left before or left 15 times and always gone back willingly, it is likely they will go back again.

The probability of a victim leaving their abuser permanently is highest if they have left between 2 and 5 times previously.

- **UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES DID THEY LEAVE?**

If they left in a crisis, they are not likely to remain away.

If they carefully planned their exit, they may be ready to make it permanent.

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Assessing Their Readiness for Change

- **WHAT PLANNING HAVE THEY DONE?**

If they have little notion of what to do next, it is likely they are not ready to leave the relationship

If they expresses some options, then it is more possible they are ready for change.

- **HOW DO THEY FEEL ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS TO THEIR FATHER?**

If she believes the children need a father, she is probably not willing to remove them and herself from the relationship.

If you introduce the idea of separation as a means of protecting the children from direct or observed violence, this may motivate her to consider change.

- **HAVE THEY REALIZED THEY MAY BE IN PHYSICAL DANGER?**

This is tricky because they may be in danger if they leave (and the abuser told her so).

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Assessing Their Readiness for Change

- **ARE THEIR FEELINGS INTACT?**

Often anger or "mad talk" is a sign of passion and consequently attachment. You will have to learn to distinguish this from constructive enthusiasm to change.

- **HOW LONG HAVE THEY BEEN IN THIS BATTERING RELATIONSHIP?**

They may not be ready to leave their partner if the relationship has been short and they feel the abuser hasn't been given a good chance to change.

Similarly, if they have been together a long time, she may feel so entrenched in the bond that she is insecure about the idea of separation.

- **WHAT DOES THEIR RELIGION TELL THEM TO DO?**

If they adhere to the ideological frame-work of a religion which discourages their separation, they may not follow their own gut feelings to leave.

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Assessing Their Readiness for Change

- **HAVE THEY BECOME INTERESTED IN SOMEONE ELSE?**

If they have another person "on the line", this may be a sidestep rather than a passage into the phase of permanent separation. Make her aware of the fact she may not be learning new interactive skills or developing inner strength by diving into a new relationship.

- **HOW CLOSELY DO THEY FIT THE BATTERED PERSONALITY PROFILE?**

If they are still accepting guilt, feeling powerless and feeling low self esteem, then they are probably not feeling the strength to make the break.

- **HAVE THEY EXPERIENCED THE "CLICK" OF SELF-RECOGNITION?**

When it "clicks" they are ready for a change, they have begun to over-come guilt and feelings of responsibility for his behavior.

When providing crisis advocacy, it is important to remember your first task is to respond to immediate needs. Later there will be time for more concrete plans and to help them select a strategy for solving their living situation.

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Reminders for Advocates

- Relax. Go slow!
- Validate their feelings.
- Allow productive silence.
- Pay attention to non-verbal cues; give feed-back to them.
- Communicate your hunches to them.
- Take deep breaths together.
- Ask "What would have to happen to change the situation?"
- "What have you done before that has worked?"
- Explore options.
- Access resources.
- Avoid the rescue triangle.
- You are not expected to be her therapist.
- Your role is to be supportive, listen and help them identify their issues and options.

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Completing an Intake

There isn't a set order of how to begin with a client as each situation is different. Here we will list out the different points needing to be covered within the first couple of sessions if possible.

Confidentiality: Many victims hold a great fear of being found out. They feel they'd be killed if the abuser knew the things the victim was revealing. Be sure to stress everything you and the client talk about is confidential; it will not leave this office.

Philosophy: A quick explanation of our philosophy may also be helpful. No person ever deserves to be abused. This includes physical, emotional, spiritual and financial.

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Completing an Intake

Incident: Reflect on what is bringing them in for support. The timing is important. Find out what just happened and how this particular event was interpreted by the victim. Don't let them minimize the violence.

In many instances, you will get someone who blames themselves for the incident or who says, "It really wasn't that bad." Help them face the reality of the incident. Assure them whatever may have caused the abuser to be angry; they do not have the right to physically assault them.

If they begin to minimize the actual incident, help them look at this incident realistically. Try to find out how long the problem has existed, if anyone else is affected by it, where it happens and how it has affected their life.

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Completing an Intake

Services We Offer: In some cases, the client does not know what our program has to offer. Explain the different services we offer and assure them we will not tell them what to do. Don't do more than half of the work. Our job is to empower them, not enable them. This helps them gain confidence about making decisions on their own with guided support if needed.

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Completing an Intake

Expectations: Ask the client what their expectations from the DV program are. Keep in mind everyone has some type of expectations. They may say "I have no expectations." I would then ask what they hope to gain; there is a reason why they decided to contact us. If a woman's expectations fall into the unrealistic, do not lead her to believe these things can be accomplished. Clarify what can and cannot be done.

- An example of an unrealistic expectation is if a woman expresses, "I came to learn how to get him to stop abusing me." Do not lead them to believe this can be accomplished. Explain they cannot stop the abuser; they can only control themselves and their own choices.
- In some cases, a client may be ambivalent as to what they really want. This usually is dealing with the decision to leave or stay in her present relationship.

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Completing an Intake

Goals: Helping a client write their needs and wants in their relationship is beneficial in setting goals. Have them then make a list of what they are not getting out of the relationship. This may enable them to look at her situation realistically, which in turn, may help them decide what type of goals they would like to set up or if they even want our services at all. The goals set the direction for future meetings.

A few examples may be:

- To work on raising my independence.
- To raise my self-esteem.
- To find out why I can't leave this relationship-to leave it.
- To put myself before anything else.

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Completing an Intake

Action Steps: After goals have been set, help them identify their action steps for each goal. Some goals may need several action steps.

Celebrate: Celebrate with them as they gain their independence and increase their self-esteem and so-on. Acknowledge this is not an easy process. It will take time and some days will be better than others. Assure them there is a means to a solution and "down the road when things are different/better/changed, you'll be in a different/better place."

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Completing an Intake

Summarize and To Do List: At the end of the meeting, summarize with them what the both of you went over. A brief review is always helpful. If you feel it necessary, some homework assignments may be utilized, such as "Do one thing just for yourself this week."

For example:

- Put the kids in day-care for a day.
- Go for a walk every day this week.
- Think about her different hopes and fears.

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Completing an Order of Protection

You may need to help a victim apply for a Temporary Order of Protection. It is important to familiarize yourself with the definitions and the petition to better assist the victim.

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Completing an Order of Protection

Copied from dojmt.gov/victims/forms

How to Obtain an Order of Protection

You are about to ask for a Temporary Order of Protection as a victim of abuse. This sheet has information to guide you through the legal process and answer some of the questions you may have.

You are the PETITIONER. The Petitioner is the person alleging abuse and asking for protection. The RESPONDENT is the person you are asking the court to protect you from. A Temporary Order of Protection is an order, signed by a judge, which restricts or prohibits the Respondent from contacting you. Generally, a Temporary Order of Protection is good for 20 days.

If you are a minor, your parent, guardian, or other representative may file a petition for a Temporary Order of Protection on your behalf against the Respondent.

You have the right to appear in court on your own to request a Temporary Order of Protection. However, the following resources are available in your community to help you through this process:

When signed by a Judge, a Temporary Order of Protection is valid immediately. After the judge signs the Order, these are the next steps:

- Your Petition and a copy of the Order must be given to law enforcement for service upon the Respondent.
- There must be a hearing within 20 days. If law enforcement cannot find the Respondent within 20 days, you will need to ask the court to set a new hearing date.
- At the hearing you must be prepared to explain to the court why you are asking for an Order of Protection, which includes bringing witnesses to the hearing who have knowledge about the facts in your Petition.

Stay in contact with the Clerk of Court for information about your case. The Clerk's number is: _____.

You should keep copies of your Order with you at all times. It is a good idea to always carry one in your purse or wallet, as well as having a copy at work and at your children's schools. OVS 2 (05/04)

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Name
Address
City, State, Zip
Telephone No.

IN THE _____ COURT
STATE OF MONTANA
COUNTY OF _____

_____) No. _____
Petitioner,)
v.) **SWORN PETITION FOR**
) **TEMPORARY**
) **ORDER OF PROTECTION**
) **AND REQUEST FOR HEARING**
_____) Respondent.)

The law requires that Respondent be given a copy of this completed form and all attachments.

1. **Request for Temporary Order of Protection.** Under oath and as provided by Mont. Code Ann. § 40-15-201, I request that the Court issue a Temporary Order of Protection against Respondent. I believe I am in danger of harm if the court does not issue a Temporary Order of Protection immediately.

2. **Protected Person/s.** I am seeking an Order of Protection for (check all that apply):

Myself

The following minor child/ren:

Child/ren	Age	How child is related to: You Respondent	Who does child live with?

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Other people you would like to be protected (first and last names and relationship to both you and Respondent): _____

3. **Residence.** I live or am staying in the City of _____
 County of _____, State of _____
 The Respondent lives in the City of _____
 County of _____, State of _____
 The abuse happened in the City of _____
 County of _____, State of _____

(Check all that apply)

The Respondent does not live with me.
 I live with the Respondent at _____
 I have left a residence where I lived with the Respondent. I want to return:
 to live at that residence
 to get personal belongings
 other (describe): _____
 A business is run from the home.
 Type of business (describe): _____
 The business is run by: me Respondent both me and Respondent

4. **Relationship.** (Please check all that apply to the relationship between the Respondent (the person you want restrained) and you or the person(s) for whom you are seeking protection)

I (or the person I want protected) have/has a relationship with Respondent as follows:
 Married
 Were married, but are now separated
 Divorced
 Are currently dating or having an ongoing intimate relationship
 Live together
 Lived together in the past
 Have a child and/or children together
 Is a family member or a former family member of Respondent
 Dated or had an ongoing intimate relationship in the past

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If a dating relationship please describe:
 Nature of relationship _____
 Length of time of the dating relationship _____
 How often saw each other _____
 Time since relationship ended _____

Victim of Sexual Assault/ Stalking/ Other: (describe how you know Respondent)

I am the parent, guardian or other person supervising the welfare of a child less than 16 years of age and request that Respondent, who is a person over 18 years of age and who has no legal right of supervision or control over the child, to stop contacting the child because I believe that the contact is not in the child's best interests as set forth in MCA § 45-5-622 (4).

5. **Information about the violence.** Please explain what the Respondent did to you (and/or the person you want protected). Be specific. Write down places and dates as well as you can remember. It does not matter when the abuse happened or whether you reported it to the police. But you must tell the judge why you are afraid now.

A. **RECENT ABUSE**
 Date of the most recent abuse: _____
 Who was there? _____
 Where did it take place? _____

What did the Respondent do or say that made you (and/or the person you want protected) afraid? _____
 Did the Respondent use or threaten to use a gun or other weapon? If yes, list how: _____

Describe any injuries: _____

Did the police come? Yes No

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4. (List the distance, up to 1500 feet, that you want Respondent to stay away from you and/or the person you want protected and the places you check below).

Respondent shall stay at least _____ feet from:

Me (Petitioner)

Minor children _____

Other people: _____

My home (if you want the location of your home to be secret, do not list)

My job or workplace: _____

My vehicle: _____

The child/ren's school and/or child care: _____

Other places (describe): _____

5. Respondent used or threatened me with firearms. Respondent shall not possess these firearms (describe): _____

6. Respondent shall not take, hide, sell, damage or dispose of property belonging to me (and/or the person who I want protected) or Respondent or both of us.

7. Respondent shall give me (or the person I want protected) possession or use of the following items (items may include the residence, automobile and other essential personal property no matter who owns it): _____

8. I (and/or the person I want protected) need a peace officer to help get possession of the property listed in Number 7, or I request that a peace officer come with Respondent when picking up his/her property or belongings.

9. The Court should order Respondent to complete violence counseling, which may include alcohol or chemical dependency counseling or treatment, if appropriate.

10. The Court should order the following to provide for the safety and welfare of me and/or the person I want protected, and family: _____

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11. Parenting of Child/ren

Note: Justice and City and Municipal Courts can protect minor children by listing them on the Order of Protection. Although these courts can provide short term visitation plans, they cannot make parenting plans. If you need a parenting plan, you need to file an action in your local District or Tribal Court.

(Choose one)

Parenting of children does not apply in this case.

The protections I have asked for in Paragraph 2 will keep Respondent away from the children. Therefore a visitation schedule is unnecessary.

I want the children listed in Appendix A to have parenting time with Respondent. I am attaching Appendix A that says what visitation schedule I want. (Fill in and attach Appendix A).

12. Other Relief: The Court should order other protection as it deems just and proper.

I SWEAR UNDER OATH OR AFFIRM I HAVE READ THIS APPLICATION, OR HAVE HAD IT READ TO ME, AND THE FACTS STATED IN THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE. I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT PROVIDING FALSE INFORMATION IS A CRIME.

Date: _____ Signed: _____
Petitioner

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NOTARY SEAL OR JUDGE'S SIGNATURE

STATE OF MONTANA)
) ss.
 County of _____)

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this ____ day of _____, 20__.

 JUDGE/CLERK/NOTARY

(For use by notary)

 (signed)
 Name _____
 (printed)
 Notary Public for the State of Montana.
 Residing at _____
 My Commission Expires _____

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APPENDIX A

In this form, you will tell the Judge how the temporary visitation will take place under safe and peaceful conditions. You must have a very good reason before the Judge will deny the Respondent visitation. The visitation schedule will be temporary. For permanent parenting arrangements, you must file an action with your local District or Tribal Court.

Parenting schedules generally include:

- visits that take place on a regular basis;
- visits that vary in length depending on the ages and needs of the children.

Children *(List all children, whether or not you have asked that they be protected by the Order of Protection):*

Children	Age	How child is related to You Respondent	Who does child live with?	State(s) where child lived in the last 6 months?

CHECK the visitation option that you want.

I request the following visitation schedule:

Supervised visits *(List why, and supervised by whom):* _____

Neutral drop off and pick up location: _____

Transportation provided by: _____

I request the Respondent have no visitation with the children because: _____

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