
State Laws: Understanding Legal Protections- South Carolina

Stalking Laws

Victim Protections

Courts issue different kinds of protection orders to prohibit unwelcome contact, threats, abuse, or molestation:

- Orders of Protection from domestic abuse help protect household members and their minor children.
- Restraining Orders Against Harassment or Stalking help protect targeted persons and their families, whether or not they have a relationship with or even know the perpetrator.
- Permanent Restraining Orders help protect crime victims, witnesses who assisted the prosecution, and their families from offenders convicted of stalking, domestic violence, and crimes requiring registration as a sex offender.

It's a crime to violate a protection or restraining order, and the person who disobeys it may go to jail.

Local and campus police departments enforce protection and restraining orders (including orders issued by a judge in another state).

For more information, visit these websites:

- [National Domestic Abuse Hotline](#)
- [SCCADVSA](#)
- [WomensLaw.org](#)
- [Order of Protection Manual](#)

Statutes

South Carolina Law

Restraining Order Statutes

TITLE 16. CRIMES AND OFFENSES
CHAPTER 3. OFFENSES AGAINST THE PERSON
ARTICLE 17. HARASSMENT AND STALKING

§ 16-3-1750. Action seeking a restraining order against a person engaged in harassment or stalking; jurisdiction and venue; forms; enforceability.

(A) Pursuant to this article, the magistrates court has jurisdiction over an action seeking a restraining order against a person engaged in harassment in the first or second degree or stalking.

(B) An action for a restraining order must be filed in the county in which:

(1) the defendant resides when the action commences;

(2) the harassment in the first or second degree or stalking occurred; or

(3) the plaintiff resides if the defendant is a nonresident of the State or cannot be found.

(C) A complaint and motion for a restraining order may be filed by any person. The complaint must:

(1) allege that the defendant is engaged in harassment in the first or second degree or stalking and must state the time, place, and manner of the acts complained of, and other facts and circumstances upon which relief is sought;

(2) be verified; and

(3) inform the defendant of his right to retain counsel to represent him at the hearing on the complaint.

.... *[Content omitted for clarity]*

(E) A restraining order remains in effect for a fixed period of time of not less than one year, as determined by the court on a case-by-case basis.

(F) Notwithstanding another provision of law, a restraining order or a temporary restraining order issued pursuant to this article is enforceable throughout this State.

§ 16-3-1760. When temporary restraining orders may be granted without notice; notice and hearing on motion seeking restraining order.

(A) Within twenty-four hours after the filing of a complaint and motion seeking a restraining order pursuant to Section 16-3-1750, the court, for good cause shown, may hold an emergency hearing and, if the plaintiff proves his allegation by a preponderance of the evidence, may issue

a temporary restraining order without giving the defendant notice of the motion for the order. A prima facie showing of present danger of bodily injury, verified by supporting affidavits, constitutes good cause.

(B) A temporary restraining order granted without notice must be served upon the defendant together with a copy of the complaint and a Rule to Show Cause why the order should not be extended for the full one-year period. The Rule to Show Cause must provide the date and time of the hearing for the Rule to Show Cause. The defendant must be served within five days before the hearing in the same manner required for service as provided in the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure.

(C) In cases not provided in subsection (A), the court shall cause a copy of the complaint and motion to be served upon the defendant at least five days before the hearing in the same manner required for service as provided in the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure.

(D) The court shall hold a hearing on a motion for a restraining order within fifteen days of the filing of a complaint and motion, but not sooner than five days after service has been perfected upon the defendant.

(E) Upon motion of a party, the court may determine that a temporary restraining order was improperly issued due to unknown facts. The court may order the temporary restraining order vacated and all records of the improperly issued restraining order destroyed.

§ 16-3-1770. Form and content of temporary restraining order.
.... *[Content omitted for clarity]*

(B) The terms of the restraining order must protect the plaintiff and may include temporarily enjoining the defendant from:

(1) abusing, threatening to abuse, or molesting the plaintiff or members of the plaintiff's family;

(2) entering or attempting to enter the plaintiff's place of residence, employment, education, or other location; and

(3) communicating or attempting to communicate with the plaintiff in a way that would violate the provisions of this article.

(C) A restraining order issued pursuant to this article conspicuously must bear the following language:

(1) "Violation of this order is a criminal offense punishable by thirty days in jail, a fine of five hundred dollars, or both."; and

(2) "Pursuant to Section 16-25-125, it is unlawful for a person who has been charged with or convicted of criminal domestic violence or criminal domestic violence of a high and aggravated nature, who is subject to an order of protection, or who is subject to a restraining order, to enter or remain upon the grounds or structure of a domestic violence shelter in which the person's household member resides or the domestic violence shelter's administrative offices. A person who violates this provision is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than three thousand dollars or imprisoned for not more than three years, or both. If the person is in possession of a dangerous weapon at the time of the violation, the person is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than five thousand dollars or imprisoned for not more than five years, or both."

(D) A restraining order issued by a court may not contain the social security number of a party to the order and must contain as little identifying information as is necessary of the party it seeks to protect.

§ 16-3-1780. Expiration of temporary restraining orders and restraining orders; extensions and modifications.

(A) A temporary restraining order remains in effect until the hearing on the Rule to Show Cause why the order should not be extended for the full one-year period. The temporary restraining order must be for a fixed period in accordance with subsection (B) if the court finds the defendant in default at the hearing.

(B) In cases not provided for in subsection (A), a restraining order must be for a fixed period not to exceed one year but may be extended by court order on a motion by the plaintiff, showing good cause, with notice to the defendant. The defendant is entitled to a hearing on the extension of an order issued pursuant to this subsection within thirty days of the date upon which the order will expire.

(C) Notwithstanding subsection (B), the provisions included in a restraining order granting relief pursuant to Section 16-3-1770 dissolve one year following the issuance of the order unless, prior to the expiration of this period, the court has charged the defendant with the crime of harassment in the first or second degree or stalking and has scheduled a date for trial on the charge. If the trial has been scheduled, relief granted pursuant to Section 16-3-1770 remains in effect beyond the one-year period only until the conclusion of the trial.

(D) The court may modify the terms of an order issued pursuant to this section.

§ 16-3-1800. Arrest upon violation of restraining order.

Law enforcement officers shall arrest a defendant who is acting in violation of a restraining order after service and notice of the order is provided. An arrest warrant is not required.

South Carolina Law

Permanent Restraining Order Statutes

TITLE 16. CRIMES AND OFFENSES

CHAPTER 3. OFFENSES AGAINST THE PERSON

ARTICLE 18. PERMANENT RESTRAINING ORDERS

§ 16-3-1900. Definitions.

For purposes of this article:

- (1) "Complainant" means a victim of a criminal offense that occurred in this State, a competent adult who resides in this State on behalf of a minor child who is a victim of a criminal offense that occurred in this State, or a witness who assisted the prosecuting entity in the prosecution of a criminal offense that occurred in this State.
- (2) "Conviction" means a conviction, adjudication of delinquency, guilty plea, nolo contendere plea, or forfeiture of bail.
- (3) "Criminal offense" means an offense against the person of an individual when physical or psychological harm occurs, including both common law and statutory offenses contained in Sections 16-3-1700, 16-3-1710, 16-3-1720, 16-3-1730, 16-25-20, 16-25-30, 16-25-65 and 23-3-430 [stalking, domestic violence, and crimes requiring registration as a sex offender]; criminal sexual conduct offenses pled down to assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature; domestic violence offenses pled down to assault and battery or assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature; and the common law offense of attempt, punishable pursuant to Section 16-1-80.
- (4) "Family" means a spouse, child, parent, sibling, or a person who regularly resides in the same household.
- (5) "Respondent" means a person who was convicted of a criminal offense for which the victim was the subject of the crime or the witness who assisted the prosecuting entity in prosecuting the criminal offense.
- (6) "Victim" means:

(a) a person who suffers direct or threatened physical, psychological, or financial harm as a result of the commission or attempted commission of a criminal offense; or

(b) the spouse, parent, child, or lawful representative of a victim who is deceased, a minor, incompetent, or physically or psychologically incapacitated.

"Victim" does not include a person who is the subject of an investigation for, charged with, or has been convicted of the offense in question; a person, including a spouse, parent, child, or lawful representative, who is acting on behalf of a suspect, juvenile offender, or defendant, unless such actions are required by law; or a person who was imprisoned or engaged in an illegal act at the time of the offense.

(7) "Witness" means a person who has been or is expected to be summoned to testify for the prosecution, or who by reason of having relevant information is subject to being called or likely to be called as a witness for the prosecution, whether or not any action or proceeding has been commenced.

§ 16-3-1910. Permanent restraining orders; procedure.

(A) The circuit court and family court have jurisdiction over an action seeking a permanent restraining order.

(B) To seek a permanent restraining order, a person must:

(1) request the order in general sessions court or family court, as applicable, at the time the respondent is convicted for the criminal offense committed against the complainant; or

(2) file a summons and complaint in common pleas court in the county in which:

(a) the respondent resides when the action commences;

(b) the criminal offense occurred; or

(c) the complainant resides, if the respondent is a nonresident of the State or cannot be found.

(C) The following persons may seek a permanent restraining order:

- (1) a victim of a criminal offense that occurred in this State;
 - (2) a competent adult who resides in this State on behalf of a minor child who is a victim of a criminal offense that occurred in this State; or
 - (3) a witness who assisted the prosecuting entity in the prosecution of a criminal offense that occurred in this State.
- (D) A complaint must:
- (1) state that the respondent was a person convicted of a criminal offense for which the victim was the subject of the crime or for which the witness assisted the prosecuting entity;
 - (2) state when and where the conviction took place, and the name of the prosecuting entity and court;
 - (3) be verified; and
 - (4) inform the respondent of his right to retain counsel to represent the respondent at the hearing on the complaint.
- (E) A complainant shall provide his address to the court and to any appropriate law enforcement agencies. The complainant's address must be kept under seal, omitted from all documents filed with the court, and is not subject to Freedom of Information Act requests pursuant to Section 30-4-10, et seq. The complainant may designate an alternative address to receive notice of motions or pleadings from the respondent.
- (F) The circuit court must provide forms to facilitate the preparation and filing of a summons and complaint for a permanent restraining order by a complainant not represented by counsel. The court must not charge a fee for filing a summons and complaint for a permanent restraining order.
- (G) A complainant shall serve his summons and complaint for a permanent restraining order along with a notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing on the complaint pursuant to Rule 4 of the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure. The summons must require the respondent to answer or otherwise plead within thirty days of the date of service.
- (H) The court may enter a permanent restraining order by default if the respondent was served in accordance with the provisions of this section and fails to answer as directed, or fails to

appear on a subsequent appearance or hearing date agreed to by the parties or set by the court.

(I) The hearing on a permanent restraining order may be done electronically via closed circuit television or through other electronic means when possible. If the respondent is confined in a Department of Corrections facility, the complainant may come to the Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services in Richland County to have the hearing held electronically via closed circuit television or through other electronic means.

(J) Upon a finding that the respondent was convicted of a criminal offense for which the victim was the subject of the crime or for which the witness assisted the prosecuting entity, as applicable, the court may issue a permanent restraining order. In determining whether to issue a permanent restraining order, physical injury to the victim or witness is not required.

(K) The terms of a permanent restraining order must protect the victim or witness and may include enjoining the respondent from:

(1) abusing, threatening to abuse, or molesting the victim, witness, or members of the victim's or witness' family;

(2) entering or attempting to enter the victim's or witness' place of residence, employment, education, or other location; and

(3) communicating or attempting to communicate with the victim, witness, or members of the victim's or witness' family in a way that would violate the provisions of this section.

(L) A permanent restraining order must conspicuously bear the following language: "Violation of this order is a felony criminal offense punishable by up to five years in prison."

(M)

(1) A permanent restraining order remains in effect for a period of time to be determined by the judge. If a victim or witness is a minor at the time a permanent restraining order is issued on the minor's behalf, the victim or witness, upon reaching the age of eighteen, may file a motion with the circuit court to have the permanent restraining order removed.

(2) The court may modify the terms of a permanent restraining order upon request of the complainant, including extending the duration of the order or lifting the order.

(N) Notwithstanding another provision of law, a permanent restraining order is enforceable throughout this State.

(O) Law enforcement officers shall arrest a respondent who is acting in violation of a permanent restraining order after service and notice of the order is provided. A respondent who is in violation of a permanent restraining order is guilty of a felony, if the underlying conviction that was the basis for the permanent restraining order was a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than five years. If the underlying conviction that was the basis for the permanent restraining order was a misdemeanor, a respondent who is in violation of a permanent restraining order is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than two thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

(P) Permanent restraining orders are protection orders for purposes of Section 20-4-320, the Uniform Interstate Enforcement of Domestic Violence Protection Orders Act, as long as all other criteria of Article 3, Chapter 4, Title 20, are met. However, permanent restraining orders are not orders of protection for purposes of Section 16-25-30.

(Q) The remedies provided by this section are not exclusive, but are additional to other remedies provided by law.

§ 16-3-1920. Emergency restraining orders; procedure.

(A) The magistrates court has jurisdiction over an action seeking an emergency restraining order.

(B) An action for an emergency restraining order must be filed in the county in which:

- (1) the respondent resides when the action commences;
- (2) the criminal offense occurred; or
- (3) the complainant resides, if the respondent is a nonresident of the State or cannot be found.

(C) A summons and complaint for an emergency restraining order may be filed by:

- (1) a victim of a criminal offense that occurred in this State;
- (2) a competent adult who resides in this State on behalf of a minor child who is a victim of a criminal offense that occurred in this State; or
- (3) a witness who assisted the prosecuting entity in the prosecution of a criminal offense that occurred in this State.

(D) The complaint must:

- (1) state that the respondent was convicted of a criminal offense for which the victim was the subject of the crime or for which the witness assisted the prosecuting entity;
- (2) state when and where the conviction took place, and the name of the prosecuting entity and court;
- (3) be verified; and
- (4) inform the respondent of his right to retain counsel to represent the respondent at the hearing on the complaint.

(E) A complainant shall provide his address to the court and to any appropriate law enforcement agencies. The complainant's address must be kept under seal, omitted from all documents filed with the court, and is not subject to Freedom of Information Act requests pursuant to Section 30-4-10, et seq. The complainant may designate an alternative address to receive notice of motions or pleadings from the respondent.

(F) The court must provide forms to facilitate the preparation and filing of a summons and complaint for an emergency restraining order by a complainant not represented by counsel. The court must not charge a fee for filing a summons and complaint for an emergency restraining order.

(G)

(1) Except as provided in subsection (H), the court shall hold a hearing on an emergency restraining order within fifteen days of the filing of a summons and complaint, but not sooner than five days after service has been perfected upon the respondent.

(2) The court shall serve a copy of the summons and complaint upon the respondent at least five days before the hearing in the same manner required for service as provided in the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure.

(3) The hearing may be done electronically via closed circuit television or through other electronic means when possible. If the respondent is confined in a Department of Corrections facility, the complainant may come to the Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services

in Richland County to have the hearing held electronically via closed circuit television or through other electronic means.

(4) The court may issue an emergency restraining order upon a finding that:

(a) the respondent was convicted of a criminal offense for which the victim was the subject of the crime or for which the witness assisted the prosecuting entity, as applicable; and

(b) a restraining order has expired, is set to expire, or is not available and the common pleas court is not in session for the complainant to obtain a permanent restraining order.

In determining whether to issue an emergency restraining order, physical injury to the victim or witness is not required.

(H)

(1) Within twenty-four hours after the filing of a summons and complaint seeking an emergency restraining order, the court may hold an emergency hearing and issue an emergency restraining order without giving the respondent notice of the motion for the order if:

(a) the respondent was convicted of a criminal offense for which the victim was the subject of the crime or for which the witness assisted the prosecuting entity, as applicable;

(b) a restraining order has expired, is set to expire, or is not available and the common pleas court is not in session for the complainant to obtain a permanent restraining order;

(c) it clearly appears from specific facts shown by a verified complaint or affidavit that immediate injury, loss, or damage will result to the victim or witness before the respondent can be heard; and

(d) the complainant certifies to the court that one of the following has occurred:

(i) efforts have been made to serve the notice; or

(ii) there is good cause to grant the remedy because the harm that the remedy is intended to prevent would likely occur if the respondent were given prior notice of the complainant's efforts to obtain judicial relief.

In determining whether to issue an emergency restraining order, physical injury to the victim or witness is not required.

(2) An emergency restraining order granted without notice must be endorsed with the date and hour of issuance and entered on the record with the magistrates court. The order must be served upon the respondent together with a copy of the summons, complaint, and a Rule to Show Cause why the order should not be extended until the hearing for a permanent restraining order.

(I) The terms of an emergency restraining order must protect the victim or witness and may include temporarily enjoining the respondent from:

(1) abusing, threatening to abuse, or molesting the victim, witness, or members of the victim's or witness' family;

(2) entering or attempting to enter the victim's or witness' place of residence, employment, education, or other location; and

(3) communicating or attempting to communicate with the victim, witness, or members of the victim's or witness' family in a way that would violate the provisions of this section.

(J) An emergency restraining order conspicuously must bear the following language: "Violation of this order is a felony criminal offense punishable by up to five years in prison."

(K) The court shall serve the respondent with a certified copy of the emergency restraining order and provide a copy to the complainant and to the local law enforcement agencies having jurisdiction over the area where the victim or witness resides. Service must be made without charge to the complainant.

(L)

(1) An emergency restraining order remains in effect until a hearing on a restraining order.

However, if a complainant does not seek a permanent restraining order pursuant to Section 16-

3-1910 within forty-five days of the issuance of an emergency restraining order, the emergency restraining order no longer remains in effect.

(2) The court may modify the terms of an emergency restraining order.

(M) Notwithstanding another provision of law, an emergency restraining order is enforceable throughout this State.

(N) Law enforcement officers shall arrest a respondent who is acting in violation of an emergency restraining order after service and notice of the order is provided. An arrest warrant is not required. A respondent who is in violation of a emergency restraining order is guilty of a felony, if the underlying conviction that was the basis for the emergency restraining order was a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than five years. If the underlying conviction that was the basis for the emergency restraining order was a misdemeanor, a respondent who is in violation of a emergency restraining order is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than two thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

(O) Emergency restraining orders are protection orders for purposes of Section 20-4-320, the Uniform Interstate Enforcement of Domestic Violence Protection Orders Act, as long as all other criteria of Article 3, Chapter 4, Title 20 are met. However, permanent restraining orders are not orders of protection for purposes of Section 16-25-30.

(P) The remedies provided by this section are not exclusive but are additional to other remedies provided by law.

South Carolina Law

Protection From Domestic Abuse

TITLE 20. DOMESTIC RELATIONS

CHAPTER 4. PROTECTION FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE

ARTICLE 1. PROTECTION FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE

§ 20-4-40. Petition for order of protection.

There is created an action known as a "Petition for an Order of Protection" in cases of abuse to a household member.

(a) A petition for relief under this section may be made by any household members in need of protection or by any household members on behalf of minor household members.

(b) A petition for relief must allege the existence of abuse to a household member. It must state the specific time, place, details of the abuse, and other facts and circumstances upon which relief is sought and must be verified.

.... *[Content omitted for clarity]*

§ 20-4-50. Hearing on petition.

(a) Within twenty-four hours after service of a petition under this chapter upon the respondent, the court may, for good cause shown, hold an emergency hearing and issue an order of protection if the petitioner proves the allegation of abuse by a preponderance of the evidence. A prima facie showing of immediate and present danger of bodily injury, which may be verified by supporting affidavits, constitutes good cause for purposes of this section.

(b) If the court denies the motion for a twenty-four-hour hearing or such a hearing is not requested, the petitioner may request and the court must grant a hearing within fifteen days of the filing of a petition ... *[content omitted for clarity]*

§ 20-4-60. Order of protection; contents.

(A) Any order of protection granted under this chapter shall be to protect the petitioner or the abused person or persons on whose behalf the petition was filed and may include:

- (1) temporarily enjoining the respondent from abusing, threatening to abuse, or molesting the petitioner or the person or persons on whose behalf the petition was filed;
- (2) temporarily enjoining the respondent from communicating or attempting to communicate with the petitioner in any way which would violate the provisions of this chapter and temporarily enjoining the respondent from entering or attempting to enter the petitioner's place of residence, employment, education, or other location as the court may order.

(B) Every order of protection issued pursuant to this chapter shall conspicuously bear the following language:

- (1) "Violation of this order is a criminal offense punishable by thirty days in jail or a fine of two hundred dollars or may constitute contempt of court punishable by up to one year in jail and/or a fine not to exceed fifteen hundred dollars;" and
- (2) "Pursuant to Section 16-25-125 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, it is unlawful for a person who has been charged with or convicted of criminal domestic violence or criminal

domestic violence of a high and aggravated nature, who is subject to an order of protection, or who is subject to a restraining order, to enter or remain upon the grounds or structure of a domestic violence shelter in which the person's household member resides or the domestic violence shelter's administrative offices. A person who violates this provision is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than three thousand dollars or imprisoned for not more than three years, or both. If the person is in possession of a dangerous weapon at the time of the violation, the person is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than five thousand dollars or imprisoned for not more than five years, or both."

(C) When the court has, after a hearing for any order of protection, issued an order of protection, it may, in addition:

- (1) award temporary custody and temporary visitation rights with regard to minor children living in the home over whom the parties have custody;
- (2) direct the respondent to pay temporary financial support for the petitioner and minor child unless the respondent has no duty to support the petitioner or minor child;
- (3) when the respondent has a legal duty to support the petitioner or minor children living in the household and the household's residence is jointly leased or owned by the parties or the respondent is the sole owner or lessee, grant temporary possession to the petitioner of the residence to the exclusion of the respondent;
- (4) prohibit the transferring, destruction, encumbering, or otherwise disposing of real or personal property mutually owned or leased by the parties or in which one party claims an equitable interest, except when in the ordinary course of business;
- (5) provide for temporary possession of the personal property , including pet animals, of the parties and order assistance from law enforcement officers in removing personal property of the petitioner if the respondent's eviction has not been ordered;
- (6) award costs and attorney's fees to either party;

(7) award any other relief authorized by Section 63-3-530 [family court jurisdiction in domestic matters]; provided, however, the court must have due regard for any prior family court orders issued in an action between the parties.

(8) prohibit harm or harassment... *[Content omitted for clarity]* against any pet animal owned, possessed, kept, or held by:

(a) the petitioner;

(b) any family or household member designated in the order;

(c) the respondent if the petitioner has a demonstrated interest in the pet animal.

(D) No protective order issued pursuant to this chapter may, in any manner, affect the title to real property.

(E) Upon motion of a party, the court may determine that a temporary restraining order was improperly issued due to unknown facts. The court may order the temporary restraining order vacated and all records of the improperly issued restraining order destroyed.

(F) If mutual orders of protection have been entered that do not comply with the provisions of this section a petitioner may request the order be vacated and all records of the order be destroyed.

§ 20-4-70. Duration of order of protection; modification of terms.

(A) An order of protection issued under Section 20-4-60 must be for a fixed time not less than six months nor more than one year unless the parties have reconciled as evidenced by an order of dismissal and may be extended or terminated by order of the court upon motion by either party showing good cause with notice to the other party. A respondent has the right to a hearing on the extension of an order issued pursuant to this section within thirty days of the date upon which the order will expire. If the parties reconcile, the issuing court may grant an order of dismissal without a hearing if the petitioner receiving the order of protection to be dismissed appears personally at the offices of the issuing court, shows proper identification, and signs a written request to dismiss based on the reconciliation.

(B) Provisions included in an order of protection granting relief pursuant to Section 20-4-60(C) must be enforced until further order of the court following the issuance of the order unless before the expiration of the period the court has scheduled a hearing pursuant to the filing of an action for divorce or separate support and maintenance to determine the temporary rights and obligations of the parties with respect to support of a spouse or children, custody and visitation, or the distribution of personal property. If the hearing has been scheduled, relief granted under

Section 20-4-60(C) remains in effect until an order pursuant to the hearing is issued by the court.

(C) The family court may modify the terms of any order issued under this section.

(D) An order of protection issued by a magistrate expires as provided under the terms of the order or upon the issuance of a subsequent order by the family court, whichever occurs first.

TITLE 20. DOMESTIC RELATIONS

CHAPTER 4. PROTECTION FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE

ARTICLE 3. UNIFORM INTERSTATE ENFORCEMENT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTECTION ORDERS ACT

§ 20-4-320. Definitions.

For purposes of this article:

- (1) "Foreign protection order" means a protection order issued by a tribunal of another state.
- (2) "Issuing state" means the state whose tribunal issues a protection order.
- (3) "Mutual foreign protection order" means a foreign protection order that includes provisions in favor of both the protected individual seeking enforcement of the order and the respondent.
- (4) "Protected individual" means an individual protected by a protection order.
- (5) "Protection order" means an injunction or other order, issued by a tribunal under the domestic violence, family violence, or anti-stalking laws of the issuing state, to prevent an individual from engaging in violent or threatening acts against, harassment of, contact or communication with, or physical proximity to, another individual.
- (6) "Respondent" means the individual against whom enforcement of a protection order is sought.
- (7) "State" means a state of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, or any territory or insular possession subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. The term includes an Indian tribe or band that has jurisdiction to issue protection orders.

(8) "Tribunal" means a court, agency, or other entity authorized by law to issue or modify a protection order.

§ 20-4-340. Enforcement by law enforcement officer; service of order on respondent.

(A) A law enforcement officer of this State, upon determining that there is probable cause to believe that a valid foreign protection order exists and that the order has been violated, shall enforce the order as if it were the order of a tribunal of this State. Presentation of a protection order that identifies both the protected individual and the respondent and, on its face, is currently in effect constitutes probable cause to believe that a valid foreign protection order exists. For the purposes of this section, the protection order may be inscribed on a tangible medium or may have been stored in an electronic or other medium if it is retrievable in perceivable form. Presentation of a certified copy of a protection order is not required for enforcement.

(B) If a foreign protection order is not presented, a law enforcement officer of this State may consider other information in determining whether there is probable cause to believe that a valid foreign protection order exists.

(C) If a law enforcement officer of this State determines that an otherwise valid foreign protection order cannot be enforced because the respondent has not been notified or served with the order, the officer shall inform the respondent of the order, make a reasonable effort to serve the order upon the respondent, and allow the respondent a reasonable opportunity to comply with the order before enforcing the order.

(D) Registration or filing of an order in this State is not required for the enforcement of a valid foreign protection order pursuant to this article.