

ONE THING YOU CAN DO.

Illinois

When someone you love is showing warning signs that they might try to harm themselves, it can feel like there is nothing you can do in such a high-stakes and emotional situation.

But there is one thing you *can do*: you can request a firearms restraining order to temporarily remove guns from the situation and help keep your loved one safe.

In a moment of crisis, access to a gun can be the difference between life and death. If you're seeing signs that someone you love is considering harming themselves, you can seek a firearms restraining order to temporarily suspend their access to firearms, which are the most lethal form of suicide - until the crisis passes.

Access to a gun can be the difference between life and death in a moment of crisis. Keep your loved one safe with a firearms restraining order.

What does Illinois' firearms restraining order do?

A firearms restraining order is a court order that temporarily restricts a person's access to guns when a person poses a risk to themselves or others.

Firearms restraining orders are designed to help law enforcement and concerned family members intervene quickly in dangerous situations.

Who can request a firearms restraining order in Illinois?

Under Illinois law, a law enforcement officer or a person's family member may file a petition for a firearm restraining order. A family member is defined as:

- A person related by blood or marriage, or
- A person who shares a common dwelling.

How do I request a firearms restraining order?

To seek a firearms restraining order, a family or household member can fill out and file the application directly with the court. They can also contact a member of law enforcement to discuss their concerns. Law enforcement can then investigate these concerns and request the firearms restraining order from the court.

What happens after a firearms restraining order has been requested?

Once the court receives a request (called a "petition") for a firearms restraining order, the court will notify the person and schedule a court hearing about whether the order should be issued.

If, at the hearing, a court finds that a person poses a significant danger of

injury to themselves or others with a firearm, the judge can issue a court order that requires the person's firearms to be held by law enforcement for as long as the order is in effect. Under certain circumstances, the person may choose to transfer their guns being held by law enforcement to a third party who is legally allowed to hold them.

Also, the person will not be able to purchase new firearms while the order is in effect.

How long does a firearms restraining order last?

A final firearms restraining order lasts for six months. At the end of six months, the person who petitioned for the order may ask the court to renew it. The order can only be extended after a court hearing.

I'm afraid to wait until a court hearing is scheduled. What if the person is in immediate danger of harming themselves or someone else?

Concern for the safety of the person, or the public, may demand that action be taken before the scheduled hearing date, to prevent immediate danger.

To protect a person or public safety during this time, a judge may issue an **emergency firearms restraining order** that restricts a person's access to firearms before the person has been notified of the petition, and before a full hearing is held.

How long does an emergency firearms restraining order last?

This temporary order only lasts until the court hearing on a final firearms restraining order. Because the emergency firearms restraining order only stays in place for a short period of time – up to

14 days – it balances the urgent need for public safety with the due process rights of all involved.

Will a firearms restraining order go on someone's criminal record?

No. A firearms restraining order is a civil court order. Its sole purpose is to remove firearms from a person who is at high risk of causing harm to themselves or to others. The court's decision to issue the order does not cause the person to have a criminal record.

If you have immediate safety concerns, call 911 for emergency assistance.

If you believe that a loved one is a risk to their own safety, you may wish to encourage them to seek expert help. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, seven days a week at:

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
text HOME to 741741