

Infographic for Immediate Release
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A closer look at Protection from Abuse Orders in Pennsylvania

HARRISBURG — In 2021, the number of new protection from abuse (PFA) orders filed statewide **increased by 12 percent** from 2020. A PFA is a civil court order to help protect victims of domestic violence, providing relief from abuse by an intimate partner, family or household member. Additional information about protection orders is available [here](#).

The infographic below highlights 2021 PFA data including the statewide number of PFAs filed over the last five years, the top 10 counties with the highest number of PFA cases and the percentages of PFA case outcomes. A high-resolution file of the graphic is available for download at www.pacourts.us under [Media Resources](#).

A closer look at statewide PFA filings

What is a PFA?

A protection from abuse (PFA) order is a civil court order to help protect victims of domestic violence, providing relief from abuse by an intimate partner, family or household member.

In 2021:

38,765 new petitions requesting relief under the PFA Act (Title 23, Chp. 61) were filed

90% of temporary PFAs filed (valid until a final hearing) were granted

In 2021, the number of PFA's filed **increased by 12% from 2020.**

A PFA can order an abuser to:

- Have **no** contact with the victim or victim's children including: no texting, no calling, no communication via social media
- Leave the home where the victim lives
- Relinquish any weapons

Top 10 counties with highest number of new PFA cases in 2021:

Percentages given reflect the percent of total state filings.

PFA case outcomes:

	processed cases	% of total
Plaintiff did not appear in court	9,469	(25%)
Withdrawn by plaintiff	8,544	(23%)
Final order granted	7,165	(19%)
Agreement reached between parties	6,183	(16%)
Temporary order dismissed/denied	4,351	(11%)
Final order denied	1,962	(5%)
Case transferred/other dispositions	231	(1%)

Total # of PFA cases disposed in 2021: 37,905

Learn more at <http://www.pacourts.us/team/protection-order>. Additional data, including county-level data, is available at <http://www.pacourts.us/news-and-statistics/research-and-statistics/>. This data does not include Protection from Sexual Violence or Intimidation (PSVI) filings (42 Pa. C.S. § 622).

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Media contact: [Kimberly Bathgate](#), 717-231-3331

Editor's Note: View county-by-county protection from abuse (PFA) data via the PFA [interactive dashboards](#).