

1 State of Arkansas
2 93rd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2021
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1724

5 By: Representatives Gazaway, Clowney
6 By: Senators C. Tucker, Bledsoe, Hester
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
10 ORDERS OF PROTECTION; CONCERNING COERCIVE CONTROL;
11 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
12
13

Subtitle

15 TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING DOMESTIC
16 VIOLENCE ORDERS OF PROTECTION; AND
17 CONCERNING COERCIVE CONTROL.
18
19

20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
21

22 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings.

23 The General Assembly finds that:

24 (1) In times of natural disasters and crises, the rates of
25 interpersonal violence historically rise, especially among households
26 experiencing significant financial strain;

27 (2) The coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has proven this
28 historical trend to be the reality for survivors of domestic violence as
29 police chiefs nationwide reported increases of ten percent (10%) to thirty
30 percent (30%) in domestic violence assaults in the first two (2) weeks after
31 a national emergency was declared in March of 2020, thereby revealing more
32 severe violence as compared with years immediately preceding 2020;

33 (3) During the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) crisis, reports show
34 this is a worst-case scenario for victims experiencing domestic violence,
35 with the data showing coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) is being used as a scare
36 tactic to keep victims isolated from their children or support systems;



1 (4) Shelter-in-place orders and other restrictions related to
 2 coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) have resulted in victims being isolated from
 3 family, friends, and the community;

4 (5) While some jurisdictions have reported a drop in domestic
 5 violence calls, these reports do not necessarily equate to a reduction in
 6 domestic violence; and

7 (6) The increased isolation of victims has created an
 8 environment in which abuse, including coercive control, is more likely to go
 9 undetected and, by extension, unreported.

10
 11 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 9, Chapter 15, Subchapter 2, is amended
 12 to add an additional section to read as follows:

13 9-15-219. Order of protection – Coercive control – Definitions.

14 (a) As used in this section:

15 (1)(A) "Coercive control" means a pattern of behavior that in
 16 purpose or effect unreasonably interferes with the free will and personal
 17 liberty of a person.

18 (B) "Coercive control" includes without limitation the
 19 following:

20 (i) Unreasonably isolating a person from his or her
 21 friends, relatives, or other sources of support;

22 (ii) Unreasonably depriving a person of basic
 23 necessities;

24 (iii) Unreasonably controlling, regulating, or
 25 monitoring a person's movements, communications, daily behavior, finances,
 26 economic resources, or access to resources; and

27 (iv) Unreasonably compelling a person by
 28 intimidation, force, threat of force, or threat based on actual or suspected
 29 immigration status to engage in conduct from which the person has a right to
 30 abstain or to abstain from conduct in which the person has a right to engage;
 31 and

32 (2)(A) "Disturbing the peace" means direct or indirect conduct
 33 that destroys the mental or emotional calm of a party or a family or
 34 household member of the party based on the totality of the circumstances.

35 (B) "Disturbing the peace" includes without limitation
 36 coercive control.

1 (b) A court may enter an ex parte order enjoining a party from
2 engaging in course of control or disturbing the peace, including without
3 limitation through one (1) or more of the following acts:

- 4 (1) Molesting the other party;
5 (2) Attacking the other party;
6 (3) Striking the other party;
7 (4) Stalking the other party;
8 (5) Threatening the other party;
9 (6) Sexually assaulting the other party;
10 (7) Battering the other party;
11 (8) Credibly impersonating the other party;
12 (9) Falsely impersonating the other party;
13 (10) Harassing the other party;
14 (11) Telephoning the other party with the intent to harass the
15 other party;
16 (12) Destroying the personal property of the other party;
17 (13) Directly or indirectly contacting the other party with the
18 intent to harass the other party;
19 (14) Coming within a specified distance of the other party;
20 (15) Disturbing the peace of the other party;
21 (16) Disturbing the peace of a family member or household member
22 of the other party; or
23 (17) Any other act that the court determines should be enjoined.

24 (c)(1) Upon a showing of good cause, an order of protection may
25 include an order granting the petitioner the exclusive care, possession, or
26 control of an animal owned, possessed, leased, kept or held by:

- 27 (A) The petitioner;
28 (B) The respondent; or
29 (C) A minor residing in the residence or household of
30 either the petitioner or respondent.

31 (2) The court may order the respondent to refrain from:

- 32 (A) Coming into contact with the animal; or
33 (B) Taking, transferring, encumbering, concealing,
34 molesting, attacking, striking, threatening, harming, or otherwise disposing
35 of the animal.

36 (d) This section does not limit any other remedy available to a

1 petitioner by another provision of law.

2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36