



Illinois' Firearms Restraining Order

HEALTH PROVIDERS CAN SPEAK FOR SAFETY

"A patient who was in the military has seemed very unhappy for the last few months and has told his daughter she is better off without him. He keeps many guns around his home, and I am worried about suicide—what can I do?"

"A patient who is an avid gun owner has made threats of violence to his neighbors and has admitted to me during one of our appointments that he has thought about harming them. What can I do to help keep those around him safe?"

A NEW LAW CAN HELP!

Illinois' Firearms Restraining Order (FRO) is a law that allows family or household members and law enforcement officers to obtain a court order that temporarily prohibits an at-risk person from accessing firearms or obtaining any new firearms. The firearm removal and purchase restriction can last from 14 days to six months, depending on the type of order and what the judge thinks is appropriate. Only when the order expires or is terminated may firearms be returned to the restrained person. A six-month FRO may be renewed before it expires if the danger still exists.

WHO CAN REQUEST A FRO AND HOW DO YOU GET ONE?

Family members* and law enforcement officers can file a petition to obtain a FRO with the Circuit Court in the county which the person to be restrained resides. As a health provider, you cannot petition directly for a FRO. If a patient has risk factors such as an emotional crisis or dementia, and is demonstrating signs of being dangerous such as suicidal thoughts, aggression, public threats of violence, or is exhibiting other dangerous behaviors, you may consider contacting your local sheriff or police department, or advising a client's family member about the FRO.

Educating patients and families about the FRO can help reduce the potential for danger when a gun is present in the home of someone who is at risk of harming themselves or others. In case of emergency, you may need to contact the local police department, who can serve a FRO as soon as it is issued.

**Includes spouse, parent, grandparent, child, or step-child of the respondent, or a person who shares a common dwelling with the respondent (roommates). See relationship code on FRO petition form¹ for all eligible relationship statuses.*

¹ <http://champaigncircuitclerk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Approved-FRO-Petition-01-18-19.pdf>

FROS AND OTHER RESTRAINING ORDERS

FROs are civil orders specifically designed to ensure safety and allow the person being restrained the opportunity to heal or stabilize away from firearms. There are also other types of restraining orders available in Illinois which prohibit someone from accessing guns. If you are concerned about someone being or becoming violent towards themselves or others, you may want to consider talking with an attorney and family or household members about what type of order would be most appropriate for the situation. For more information on the different types of restraining orders available visit [here](#).

IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT ILLINOIS' FRO

- If someone poses an immediate danger to themselves or others, an emergency FRO can be filed and issued on the same day. While health care providers cannot directly petition for a FRO, you may be able to reach out to family members or law enforcement to express concerns.
- If the judge issues a six-month order, within three months before its expiration the petitioner may request a renewal of the FRO with the court if the respondent (person about whom is there concern) of the FRO is still a risk to themselves or others.
- If someone is being threatened directly by a spouse, partner, or someone in their family or household, they may petition for other types of orders of protection. Visit [IllinoisLegalAid.org](#) for more information.

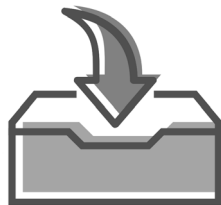
DID YOU KNOW?

- On average, there are more than 6,000 Veteran suicides each year.²
- One out of every three suicides in Illinois involve guns.²
- A recent study examined the results of a similar law in Connecticut and estimated that for every 10 to 20 orders removing firearms issued, at least one suicide was prevented.

HOW CAN I SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THE FRO TO SPEAK FOR SAFETY?



Contact your local Circuit Court office and ask if they have heard of the FRO.



Download our resources [Illinois.SpeakForSafety.org](#).



Work within your agency or organization to ensure that your colleague know about the FRO as a tool to prevent gun violence

² https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/data-sheets/OMHSP_National_Suicide_Data_Report_2005-2016_508.pdf
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