

# ONE THING YOU CAN DO.

## Colorado

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 an Extreme Risk Protection 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 firearm search and seizure 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 an Extreme Risk Protection Order.

## What does Colorado's Extreme Risk Protection Order do?

An Extreme Risk Protection Order is a court order that temporarily restricts a person's access to guns when a person poses a risk to themselves or others. Extreme Risk Protection Orders are designed to help law enforcement and concerned family members intervene quickly in dangerous situations.

## Who can request an Extreme Risk Protection Order in Colorado?

Under Colorado law, a law enforcement officer or a person's family or household member may file a petition for an Extreme Risk Protection Order.

A family or household member is defined as:

- A person related by blood or marriage,
- A person who has a child in common,
- A dating partner, or
- A person who shares a common dwelling.

## How do I request an extreme risk protection order?

To seek an extreme risk protection 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 extreme risk protection order from the court.

## What happens after an extreme risk protection order has been requested?

Once the court receives a request (called a "petition") for an extreme risk protection 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 will issue a court order that requires the person's firearms to be held by law enforcement or a licensed firearms dealer for as long as the order is in effect. Also, the person will not be able to purchase new firearms while the order is in effect.

## How long does an extreme risk protection order last?

A final extreme risk protection order lasts for one year. At the end of one year, the person who petitioned for the order, another family or household member, or law enforcement officer 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 extreme risk protection 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 extreme risk protection order last?

This temporary order only lasts until the court hearing on a final extreme risk protection order. Because the emergency extreme risk protection 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 an extreme risk protection order go on someone's criminal record?

No. An extreme risk protection 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](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
text HOME to 741741**