



Information for Fathers who have been ordered by the Family Courts to complete a Risk Assessment at DVIP

What is a Risk Assessment?

This is an assessment of the risk posed by yourself towards your ex-partner and child(ren).

Why has a Risk Assessment been ordered?

A risk assessment may be ordered by the courts in any case where domestic violence has been proved, which may pose a risk to child contact. The domestic violence may have been established through your admissions, previous criminal convictions, or a finding of fact by the court.

Can I refer myself for a Risk Assessment at DVIP?

A risk assessment must be ordered by the court and a copy sent to DVIP; **we cannot accept cases where an order has not been made.** We then ask Cafcass to complete an information form, or failing that, then a solicitor who is involved in the case can complete one. If we cannot get a referral/information form completed by a professional then we will obtain contact details for your ex-partner from Cafcass and proceed without one. However, this can cause delay.

The court has made an order for an assessment, what happens next?

Once you have received a copy of the order from the courts please send this to the risk assessment team as soon as possible (contact details are below). Please note that the courts do not usually send orders direct to DVIP so we may be unaware of your case until you contact us. When we receive the order we will ask that you provide details of any professionals involved in the case including Solicitors, Cafcass Officers and Social Workers. In order for us to start the assessment we require all the documents filed in the case: these documents are usually sent by solicitors involved in the proceedings, or if there are no solicitors involved, we will ask you to provide them.

In order for DVIP to start an assessment we must have all the documents in the case, contact details for both parties and the fees for the assessment must be paid in full.

How much does a Risk Assessment cost?

You will also need to pay for the preparation of this assessment report yourself. In order for us to calculate what your contribution will be we ask that you forward us your last three pay slips, or if you are on benefits then you will need to provide us with a letter of proof. The following is a list of documents that we accept as proof of income depending on your employment circumstances:

In employment

- Last 3 wage slips
- P60 for the most recent tax year

Self employed

- Document from HMRC - e.g. acknowledgement of tax return for the most recent tax year

Not employed and in receipt of benefits

- Letter from benefits office

Not permitted to work

- Letter from immigration confirming that you are not permitted to work

Please note that we do not accept bank statements, letters or documents from accountants, or invoices as proof of income.

If your earnings are shown to be less than £40,000 a year, a reduced charge is available to cover the cost of the assessment which is £1600. For those earning £40,000 or more, the full amount of £2,700 will be required.

We require the above payment to be made in full prior to commencing any work on this assessment: this payment can be by bank transfer or cheque made payable to DVIP. You can pay in instalments; however, we cannot start until the fee is paid in full.

What does a Risk Assessment involve?

Once we have received all the paperwork and fees an assessor will be allocated to your case and you will be advised of their name and also the filing date for the report. DVIP will require between 4 and 6 hours interview time with you and between 2 and 4 hours with your ex-partner. The interviews will take place at DVIP's office in Southwark and will normally last for 2-3 hours each. As part of the assessment the assessor will also consider all relevant documentation.

It takes 6 weeks for the full risk assessment report to be prepared from receipt of all the paperwork and fees.

What if English is not your first language?

When you first contact us please let us know if you require an interpreter and one will be provided for you by DVIP for the interviews.

The assessment has been completed, what happens next?

The assessment report will be sent (usually by email) to all the parties in the case including any professionals involved such as Cafcass Officers or Social Workers. The report will not be sent to the court so you may need to file this with the court yourself.

The court will consider the recommendations in the report and may make further orders regarding contact arrangements or treatment.

The assessor can be ordered by the court to attend future hearings and answer further questions regarding the report. When attending your first appointment you will be asked to sign an agreement that you will meet the cost of the assessors' attendance at court should this be required.

What is the Women's Support Service?

DVIP also offer a linked service to your ex partner who will be contacted once you have been referred to DVIP. The Women's Support Service will offer her further information and support. This is separate from the assessment and is a voluntary service.

DVIP's Perpetrator Programme

The Court can order that you cooperate with risk management measures if contact is to take place. This can include attendance on a domestic violence perpetrator programme.

If the court makes an order for you to attend the programme as a 'court ordered activity' the Cafcass Officer or Social Worker involved in your case will need to refer you. Once we have received the referral you will be invited to an appointment with the programme team and be given a date to start the programme.

DVIP's perpetrator programme takes a total of 26 sessions to complete and is delivered mainly in small groups, meeting weekly for three hours. Most sessions begin at 6 or 6.30pm in the evening. Modules include: stopping physical violence, emotional abuse, effects of domestic violence on partners and children, responsible parenting, harassment and stalking, sexual abuse of a partner, jealousy and tactics of isolation.

The courts may order further reports either at the interim stage or upon completion of the programme. This is so that the court can be kept updated of your progress and contact may be recommended or restrictions removed as appropriate.

There is no charge for the perpetrator programme where the court makes an order and Cafcass makes a referral, however, any further risk assessment reports will need to be funded.

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