

Protection from Harassing Behavior

Minnesota law ([Minn. Stat. §609.748](#)) allows someone who is being “harassed” to request a Harassment Restraining Order. However, there are other practical steps to take before asking the Court for this protection. While these steps may or may not take care of the problem, the judge will want to know what steps have been taken to resolve the issues before asking the court to become involved.

Ask the person to stop.



The first step should be to ask the person to stop the behavior. Some people do not understand that their behavior is not welcome unless they are told directly. **NOTE:** If there has been violence in the relationship, speak to a domestic violence professional before taking this step.

Repeated telephone calls or text messages



If someone is repeatedly calling you and/or leaving unwanted voicemails or text messages, call your phone company. Most phone companies have policies on how they will respond to these types of complaints. The response could include setting up a “trap” to identify the person making the calls or a “privacy manager” that allows some calls to go through and blocks other calls. They could also offer you a new phone and/or phone number. Some policies may require you to file a police report before they will take action. See www.privacyrights.org for more information.

Mediation



Mediation is a voluntary process that brings people together in a safe and neutral setting with one or more mediators. The meeting is an informal discussion in which both participants are given time to describe their concerns. The mediators facilitate the discussion, ask questions, and put any agreement the parties reach into writing. See www.communitymediation.org for more information.

Some communities also offer cultural mediation where elders mediate between members of the community. Members of the Somali community can contact the Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota at (612)338-5282 or check their website at www.cscmn.org/programs.html. Members of the Hmong community can contact the Council of Hmong Elders at (612) 374-2694. Their website is: www.hamaa.org/hamaa2/programs/CHE.htm.

Landlord / Tenant



If you are a tenant who is being harassed by another tenant, speak to your landlord about the problem. If you feel you are being harassed by your landlord, you can call Housing Services at (612)673-3003 (for Minneapolis tenants), or Home Line at (612)728-5767 or 1-(866)866-3546 (for Minnesota tenants outside of Minneapolis), or visit www.homelinemn.org. If you are a landlord being harassed by a tenant, contact Minnesota Multi Housing Association at (952)858-8222. Their website is www.mmha.com.

Harassment @ Your Workplace



Harassment in the workplace should be immediately reported to a supervisor, manager, or the human resources department. Most employers have strict policies against harassment. If the harasser is the supervisor or manager, go directly to the human resources department. If there is no Human Resources Department, contact a lawyer for legal advice. Learn more at www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/harassment.cfm.

Harassment @ School



Harassment at school should be immediately reported to teachers and the school principal or administrator. If talking to teachers and the principal doesn't bring results within a couple of days, write a letter to the principal and school district superintendent, outlining the facts and asking for an immediate response to the problem. Many public schools have adopted zero tolerance policies against bullying as a result of nationally publicized school violence incidents, and are especially sensitive to this problem. See www.education.com/topic/school-bullying-teasing or www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocrshpam.html for more information.

Police Report



If another person's actions make you afraid for your safety and/ or security, call the police - while it is happening, or as soon after the incident as possible. Ask the police to take a report of your complaint. If it happens again, call the police again and make sure the police know that you have made previous report(s). If you find that you need to file for a Harassment Restraining Order, it is helpful if you bring the police report(s) with you to court.