

**Circuit Court of Cook County: Domestic Violence Division
Family Court Enhancement Project
Child Relief Expediter Program**

Factual Indicators Suggesting that a Case May Be Appropriate for Expediter Referral:

1. Judge has made a determination that the OP will be granted; judge is not seeking findings of fact or recommendations by the CRE.
2. Child-related relief is at issue in the case and the basis for referral to the CRE.
3. The respondent has been adjudicated to be the father of the children at issue.
4. Judge has determined that the nature and context of the abuse do not raise safety concerns sufficient to preclude an award of visitation to the respondent.
 - This analysis should include, but not be limited to, an assessment of risk indicators. *Judges should consult the risk factors provided below in determining whether visitation should be restricted or denied.*
 - This analysis should include a review of relevant and accessible court records to determine whether any safety concerns exist.
5. Judge has not made a final determination regarding the form and schedule of visitation to be ordered pursuant to the OP.
6. Judge determines that both parties are capable of understanding the process to be undertaken, as well as its purpose and voluntary nature.
7. Parties have received information about the process and have been offered an opportunity to speak with an attorney or advocate prior to engaging in the process.

Risk Factors Regarding Visitation:

750 ILCS 60/214(b)(7) provides that “the court shall restrict or deny respondent's visitation with a minor child if the court finds that respondent has done or is likely to do any of the following: (i) abuse or endanger the minor child during visitation; (ii) use the visitation as an opportunity to abuse or harass petitioner or petitioner's family or household members; (iii) improperly conceal or detain the minor child; or (iv) otherwise act in a manner that is not in the best interests of the minor child.”

Certain risk factors, if present in a case, indicate that visitation may endanger the child or that the abusive parent may use visitation as an opportunity to abuse or harass the petitioner or the petitioner’s family. Many of these risk factors have been identified in studies to determine the factors most commonly present when the risk of serious harm or death exists.

Consider taking evidence about the following risk factors in determining whether visitation should be restricted or denied for those reasons under 750 ILCS 60/214(b)(7):

- Recent separation of the parties or the petitioner is currently separating from the respondent
- Respondent has threatened to kill the petitioner
- Respondent has access to a firearm or other weapon, there is a firearm or weapon in the home, or the respondent has used or threatened to use a weapon against the petitioner
- Respondent has attempted to strangle or choke the petitioner
- The respondent is unemployed and not currently seeking employment

- Direct physical abuse, threats to harm children, and child sexual abuse
 - Respondent is constantly or violently jealous
 - Children witnessed and/or were present during incident(s) at issue in the OP proceeding or during previous incidents of abuse
 - Respondent has stalked the petitioner, including repeatedly calling, texting, or emailing the petitioner, sending unwanted gifts or other items to the petitioner, monitoring petitioner's phone calls, computer use, or social media, using technology, like hidden cameras or global positioning systems (GPS), to track the petitioner, driving by or hanging out at the petitioner's home, school, or work, following or showing up wherever the petitioner is
 - Increase in frequency or severity of physical violence over the past year
 - Respondent has forced the victim to have sex
 - Respondent tries to control most or all of victim's daily activities
 - Respondent has threatened or tried to commit suicide
 - Petitioner believes that the alleged perpetrator will re-assault or attempt to kill the petitioner
- Note: A "no" answer does not indicate a low level of risk, but a "yes" answer is very significant*