



Emergency Protective Order Reform

Plain-Language Proposal – Parent-Child EPOs

Problem:

Currently, judges can issue an Emergency Protective Order (EPO) that restricts a parent's custody, visitation, or contact with their child based only on allegations, without verifying credibility. This can unfairly suspend a parent–child relationship and infringe on constitutional rights.

Proposed changes:

- Before a parent–child EPO is granted, an internal investigation must determine if allegations appear valid.
- Judges must review DHS/family services findings before restricting custody or visitation.
- Make it an offense to knowingly provide false information or use expunged records in an application.
- Judges should require fact-finding before limiting parental rights, except in cases of immediate, demonstrated danger to the child.

Impact:

- Prevents misuse of protective orders in custody disputes.
- Protects fundamental rights guaranteed under the 1st, 2nd, 5th, and 14th Amendments.
- Keeps true victims of abuse protected while reducing false or weaponized claims.

Prepared by Real Father – real-father.com