

**Maine Revised Statutes**  
**Title 19-A: DOMESTIC RELATIONS**  
**Chapter 101: PROTECTION FROM ABUSE**

**§4001. PURPOSES**

The court shall liberally construe and apply this chapter to promote the following underlying purposes:  
[ 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF). ]

**1. Recognition.** To recognize domestic abuse as a serious crime against the individual and society, producing an unhealthy and dangerous family environment, resulting in a pattern of escalating abuse, including violence, that frequently culminates in intrafamily homicide and creating an atmosphere that is not conducive to healthy childhood development;

[ 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF) . ]

**2. Protection.** To allow family and household members who are victims of domestic abuse to obtain expeditious and effective protection against further abuse so that the lives of the nonabusing family or household members are as secure and uninterrupted as possible;

[ 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF) . ]

**3. Enforcement.** To provide protection by promptly entering and diligently enforcing court orders that prohibit abuse and, when necessary, by reducing the abuser's access to the victim and addressing related issues of parental rights and responsibilities and economic support so that victims are not trapped in abusive situations by fear of retaliation, loss of a child or financial dependence;

[ 2001, c. 273, §2 (AMD) . ]

**4. Prevention.** To expand the power of the justice system to respond effectively to situations of domestic abuse, to clarify the responsibilities and support the efforts of law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judicial officers to provide immediate, effective assistance and protection for victims of abuse and to recognize the crucial role of law enforcement officers in preventing further incidents of abuse and in assisting the victims of abuse;

[ 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF) . ]

**5. Data collection.** To provide for the collection of data concerning domestic abuse in an effort to develop a comprehensive analysis of the incidence and causes of that abuse; and

[ 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF) . ]

**6. Mutual order.** To declare that a mutual order of protection or restraint undermines the purposes of this chapter.

[ 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF) . ]

SECTION HISTORY

1995, c. 694, §B2 (NEW). 1995, c. 694, §E2 (AFF). 2001, c. 273, §2 (AMD).

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