



Webster County Kentucky Legal Aid Case Story



Erica and Todd were married for 10 years, but they'd been together since she was just 17 years old. Todd was controlling and abusive – both verbally and physically. Two years ago, the abuse got so bad that social services removed their little children and placed them in foster care to prevent Todd from being able to hurt them. Todd went to therapy and things seemed to get better. The children came home, and for a while things were looking so much better.

Unfortunately, the change wasn't permanent. Todd started yelling and threatening Erica again. She was terrified – so afraid that she'd lose her children again and afraid Todd would hurt her or one of the children. It got so bad that Erica tried to leave and asked the Court for an order of protection to make Todd stay away from her and the children. Todd ignored the temporary order and pressured Erica to drop the case.

On the morning of the hearing, Erica didn't know what to do. She was so afraid that she wouldn't know what to do at the hearing, and the Judge wouldn't enter a protective order for her. She knew that if she returned, Todd would keep hurting her. She also knew that if she tried to get the order and lost, things would be so much worse than if she dismissed the case like Todd wanted her to do.

A shelter worker approached Erica at the hearing and asked if she would like to be referred to KLA for free legal help (even if it was just to talk about her options) before the case was called. Erica agreed, and a KLA attorney discussed her options and evaluated her case. The attorney offered to represent Erica that morning, and Erica accepted – she wasn't going to have to do this alone after all.

Erica's legal aid attorney presented her evidence to the Court, and the Judge agreed that she and the children were at risk. A DVO was entered for her and the children. Todd was livid. He started stalking Erica, sent people to her house to harass her, sent messages from multiple fake

accounts, and showed up unannounced at both of her jobs. (Erica had to work two jobs to support her and the children after she left Todd). Erica called her attorney and asked what she should do – what could be done about Todd and his behavior? Her attorney filed a motion to hold Todd in contempt for violating the Court order. At the hearing, Todd was sentenced to 30 days in jail for his violations.

How Dollars Help Our Clients



\$100

Provides two (2) low-income Webster County residents with civil legal assistance to obtain and complete self-help court forms to establish visitation or modify child support.

\$500

Provides 10 elderly Webster County residents with civil legal assistance for estate planning and benefits issues at the Warren County Senior Center.

\$1,000

Provide 10 Webster County victims of crime with legal representation at protective order hearings.