

# Oklahoma Address Confidentiality Program (ACP)

## Confidentiality of Records

*Are you a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking attempting to hide from your perpetrator? Do you live in fear of being located? If so, the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) may be the help that you need.*

*The ACP provides you with a substitute address that can be used when interacting with state and local government agencies. The substitute address serves as your home, work, and school address. Acceptance of the address by government agencies ensures your perpetrator does not use government records to locate you. The address can be used for enrolling children in public schools, driver license, social services, child support, court documents, protective orders and much more. Additionally, the ACP can help with confidentiality when applying for public utilities, registering to vote and transfer of school records.*

*For more information about the program and how to apply, call us toll-free at 1.866.227.7784.*

On January 1, 2003, the Secretary of State began administering a new program, the **Oklahoma Address Confidentiality Program (ACP)**. On July 1, 2008, the ACP was transferred to Office of Attorney General. The ACP provides services to residents of Oklahoma that are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. Laws governing the ACP are in Title 22, Oklahoma Statutes 2002, Section 60.14.

The program has two basic parts. First, the ACP provides victims, who have moved to a new location unknown to their abuser, with a substitute address for use when interacting with state and local agencies. The second part of the program provides participants with a cost-free first-class mail forwarding service.

The Oklahoma Address Confidentiality Program allows the state to contribute to the safety of victims by denying abusers the opportunity to use public records as a means to violate the rights of others.

The ACP is not for everyone. Recommendation for participation in the program is deferred to the experts in the field of domestic violence and sexual assault.

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## **Eligibility**

To be eligible for ACP, an individual must be:

- A victim (or an adult who resides with a victim) of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking who fears for his or her safety, or someone who resides with such a person and fears for his or her safety  
A resident of Oklahoma who has recently relocated to a place unknown to his or her abuser or is planning to move in the near future.

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## **Applying for Participation**

Victims do not apply directly to the Oklahoma Address Confidentiality Program. Application is made in person at one of the designated victim assistance programs located throughout the state. Designated

programs are state or local agencies or nonprofit agencies that provide counseling and shelter services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking and have ACP trained staff. A parent or guardian can apply to the program on behalf of a minor or incapacitated person. The application process involves meeting with an application assistant.

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### **Application Assistant**

An application assistant is a domestic violence and sexual assault advocate who has received ACP training. The application assistant provides the victim with information about the program and determines whether ACP should be a part of the victim's overall safety plan. In addition, the application assistant assists the victim in completing the application documents and forwards them to the ACP office for processing.

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### **Certification of a Program Participant**

Upon receiving a properly completed application, the ACP will certify the applicant as a program participant. **The certification is effective for four (4) years unless otherwise cancelled before the expiration date.** Upon certification, the participant is assigned a substitute address and issued an authorization card identifying the individual as an Address Confidentiality Program participant.

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### **Substitute Address**

**The substitute addresses assigned to participants have no relation to their actual address. The address may be used as the participant's residence, school and work address. The address is a post office box number and the same number is assigned to all participants.**

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### **Authorization Card**

**The ACP issues each participant a laminated authorization card that identifies the individual as a program participant. The authorization card includes the participant's name, date of birth, authorization number, substitute address, expiration date and signature.** Cards issued to minors or incapacitated persons are signed by the parent or guardian. In addition, the authorization card contains the ACP toll-free telephone number should questions arise about the program or the valid use of the card. **An ACP participant must present his or her card to state and local government agencies in order for the substitute address to be accepted.**

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### **Service of Process**

The Office of Attorney General serves as each participant's agent for service of process and for receipt of mail. Mail received at the substitute address is forwarded to the program participant. Participants agree to accept all mail forwarded to them by the ACP.

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### **State and Local Agencies**

Program participants use the substitute address when interacting with state and local agencies. When presented with the authorization card, state and local agencies must accept the ACP substitute address as

though it is the participant's actual residence address. Agencies cannot require the participant to disclose his or her true address.

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## **Voter Registration**

Participation in the program allows eligible voters to apply to vote as an absentee voter. Neither the participant's name nor address will appear on any list of registered voters made available to the public.

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## **Public Schools**

When a student presents his or her authorization card, the school must accept the ACP substitute address. The student does not have to disclose his or her actual address. Verification of enrollment eligibility and transfer of school records are handled by ACP staff.

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## **Program Cancellation**

The Address Confidentiality Program may cancel a program participant's certification for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to notify the ACP of a change in address seven (7) days after moving.
- Mail forwarded by the ACP is returned undeliverable.
- Providing false or incorrect information upon making application to the ACP.
- Obtaining a name change.

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## **Confidentiality of Records**

Program participant's records are confidential and cannot be released by ACP staff unless directed by a court of law.

Verification of program participation is limited to state and local government.