

# Courts



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES

DFS Division of  
Family Services

## What is it?

### **Government system for legal action**

Survivors may choose to access Virginia's court systems for protective orders and court cases related to domestic violence, child abuse, & neglect. Some survivors may be witnesses with criminal charges against their abuser.

## Why is it important?

The court environment is intimidating and can be even more so for a trauma survivor. Advocacy can help with going to court by supporting a survivor to be prepared and to have coping techniques. Connections with Victim Witness personnel can increase the support.

## Is this required?

### **Maybe!**

Justice Systems Advocacy is a required part of Professional Standards.

## How do we make it happen?

Learn about the different court options available and what services each court provides. Visit the different courts in your service area to gain familiarity with the settings. Connect with Victim Witness personnel and meet with Commonwealth Attorneys.