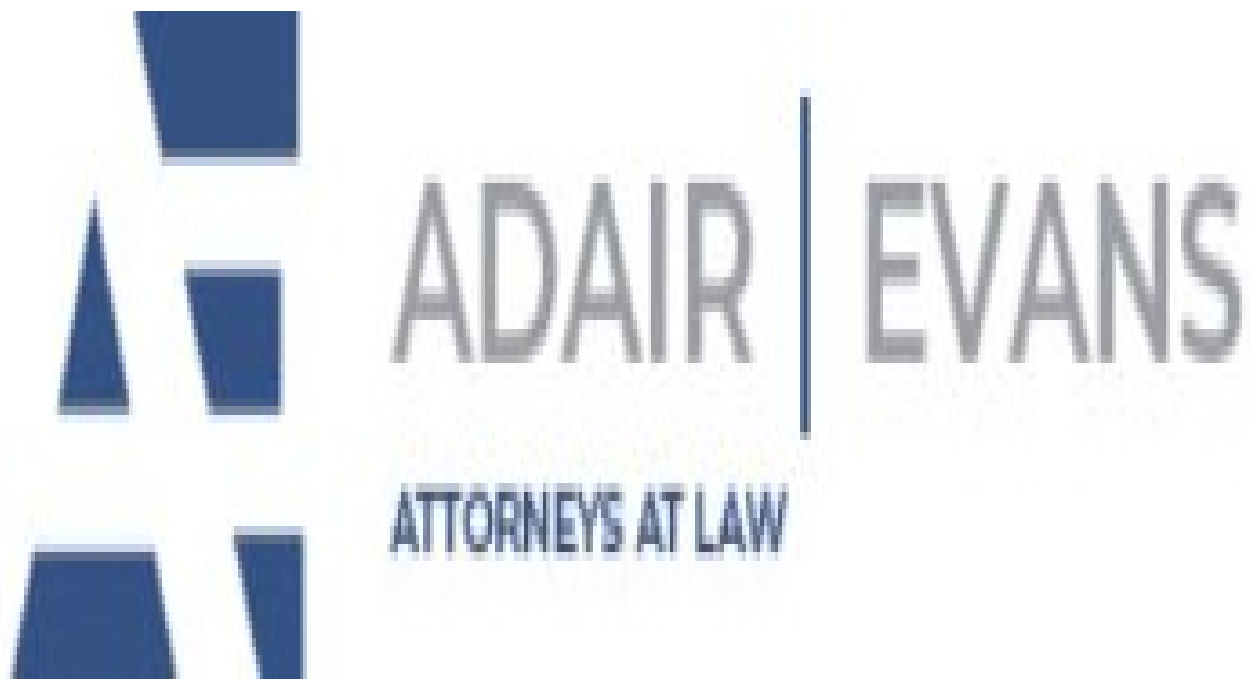




Domestic Violence Attorney Addresses Protective Orders

September 17, 2026

SALT LAKE CITY, UT - September 17, 2026 -

Utah lawmakers continued to update the state's protective order laws during the 2026 General Session, amending the definitions section governing child protective orders under Utah Code § 78B-7-201 (effective May 6, 2026, under Chapter 247) and passing Senate Bill 304, which creates new procedures for challenging a protective order obtained through a knowingly false statement. Against that backdrop, Adair Evans continues to help individuals and families in the Salt Lake City area evaluate their options under Utah's protective order and stalking injunction statutes. As a domestic violence attorney in Salt Lake City, Adair Evans focuses on helping clients understand which legal remedy fits their situation and what the filing process requires.

Utah Code Title 78B, Chapter 7 establishes three distinct civil remedies, each with its own eligibility rules. A cohabitant abuse protective order under Utah Code § 78B-7-601 et seq. is available to someone who has been abused by a spouse, former spouse, cohabitant, co-parent, or certain other family or household members. A civil stalking injunction under Utah Code § 78B-7-701 et seq. does not require any prior relationship between the parties; it applies when a person has engaged in a course of conduct, such as repeated unwanted contact, surveillance, or threats, that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their

safety. A child protective order under Utah Code § 78B-7-201 et seq. is filed in juvenile court by an interested adult on behalf of a minor under 18, or in some cases by a minor who is 16 or older on their own behalf; state law requires that the alleged abuse first be reported to the Division of Child and Family Services before a court will consider the petition, under Utah Code § 78B-7-202.

None of these processes requires a person to act immediately after an incident occurs. Utah's courts note that a petition for a protective order or stalking injunction can be filed regardless of how much time has passed since the abusive conduct, and a delay in reporting does not by itself disqualify a petitioner from relief. That flexibility can matter for people who were unable to come forward right away because of fear, threats, financial dependence, or intimidation.

The distinctions between these remedies can affect how a case proceeds, particularly when children are involved. A child protective order can intersect with an existing or future custody and visitation case, adding another layer of legal considerations for families dealing with allegations of abuse. Senate Bill 304 is a recent example of the legislature revisiting this area: once its falsification provisions take effect in 2027, a respondent in a child protective order or cohabitant abuse case will be able to ask a court to review whether a petition included a knowingly false material statement, under new Utah Code §§ 78B-7-208 and 78B-7-610.

For individuals weighing whether to seek a protective order, understanding which remedy applies and what a court will require is an important first step. A domestic violence attorney in Salt Lake City can help explain the differences between these options and how they interact with other family law matters, such as custody and visitation. The right approach depends on the facts of each situation, including the nature of the alleged conduct, the relationship between the parties, and whether children are involved.

Adair Evans provides family law representation in Utah, including matters involving domestic violence, stalking, child custody, visitation, and related protective proceedings. The firm works with individuals navigating these circumstances and helps clients understand the protections available under Utah law. Those interested in learning more about the firm's family law practice in the Salt Lake City area can visit <https://adairevanslaw.com/>.

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