

Client Factsheet

SA Workplace Protection Order Laws

If you have been threatened at work by a client or member of the public (in person or electronically) you now have greater protections under new Workplace Protection Laws that commenced on 4 May 2026.

The South Australian *Workplace Protection (Personal Violence) Act 2025* (SA) implements a Workplace Protection Orders (WPO) scheme giving businesses, employers, industry groups and unions the ability to apply to the courts for a WPO.

Under a WPO, the Courts may bar individuals for up to 12 months from entering or being within a particular distance of a workplace, or impose other conditions, where there are concerns a person will continue to act in a violent manner or display intimidating behaviour such as:

- physical and sexual violence or abuse
- threatening behaviour
- stalking, harassing, intimidating or offensive behaviour and
- damaging property.

A WPO is just one of the possible tools available to ensure your protection at work and could form a part of your employer's broader risk management strategies to ensure your safety.

Where there is concern that a client's threatening or violent behaviour will continue and other risk management strategies are inadequate, legal advice might be sought about whether a WPO may be appropriate in the circumstances.

Included workplaces

The scheme applies to a workplace where there is interaction with the public - in person or electronically, even if the public cannot physically enter the premises - providing greater protections to employees.

Applying for a WPO

Applications for a WPO can be made to the Magistrates Court (or Youth Court where the individual is under 18) by:

- an employer
- the owner/occupier of a workplace premises
- a representative of an employer association
- a workplace health and safety representative, or
- a union entitled to represent the industrial interests of workers at the workplace.

Under the scheme, individual employees do not make applications for WPOs.

Penalties

Breaching a WPO is a criminal offence. The maximum penalty for breach of a WPO that:

- does not involve personal violence - 2 years imprisonment
- involves personal violence - 5 years imprisonment.

More information

For more information about the Workplace Protection Order Scheme visit www.agd.sa.gov.au/law-and-justice/legislation/workplace-protection-laws.

