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Immediate Release July 11th, 2014

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DA Launches PSA on Protective Orders

District Attorney Devon Anderson released a new public service announcement video today featuring information on protective orders. In the video, Nidia Cantu, a case worker and Kapriva Hutchinson, a social worker in the Office's Family Criminal Law Division, join DA Anderson to urge the victims of domestic violence to obtain a protective order to ensure their safety and the safety of their family members.

"Domestic violence is a serious problem in our community. Our office will continue to prosecute the batterers and ensure justice for all victims," said DA Anderson. "In light of recent cases, we want victims of domestic violence to know there are options and that protective orders can save lives."

The PSA is posted on the <u>Harris County District Attorney's Office website</u>. The PSA outlines how and when to apply for protective orders and for community members to report incidents of domestic violence.

A protective order is a civil lawsuit where the state must prove that domestic violence has occurred in the past and is likely to occur in the future. The legal process of obtaining a protective order can take up to 4 weeks, but in urgent situations a judge may issue a temporary protective order. Once granted, most protective orders are effective for 2 years. The order is enforceable in all 50 states and prevents the abuser from going to certain places, such as the victim's home or workplace, and from communicating with the victim in a threatening or harassing way. If the abuser violates this order, they can be arrested and charged with a criminal offense.

In order to file for a protective order, the following criteria must be met:

- The victim and abuser must be family members or have dated previously
- The victim and abuser must live in separate households
- There must be evidence of past violence and threats of future violence

If you or someone you know is the victim of domestic violence and needs a protective order, please call our office at (713) 755-5888, or come to 1201 Franklin Street, Suite 2160. The 24 hour, 7 days a week National Domestic Violence Hotline number is 1800-799-7233 for domestic violence information and resources.