



**Connecticut Secretary of the State
Safe at Home -
Address Confidentiality Program
New Participant Guide**

Welcome to the Connecticut Address Confidentiality Program.

This program has been established by the State Legislature as a way to assist victims of family violence, sexual assault, injury or risk of injury to a minor, or stalking, to limit their abuser's ability to reach them by tracking their address through public records. Because the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) utilizes a special mailing system, it is important that you understand how it works. Please take a moment to read this pamphlet and become familiar with the mailing procedures used by the ACP.

Substitute Address:

Now that you are an Address Confidentiality Program participant, you can begin using your ACP address. You can request that public agencies (state and municipal) in Connecticut use the ACP address as your residential, work or school address for all purposes for which the agency requires or requests such address. Your substitute address includes your certification code and should look like this:

Your Name
P.O. Box 150469
Your certification code
30 Trinity Street
Hartford, CT. 06115-0470

Private companies (like department stores, banks, phone companies, insurance agents) do not have to accept the substitute address. However, many businesses are willing to do so. Don't hesitate to ask them to send all your mail to your ACP address.

To Keep Your Real Address Private:

It is your responsibility to help keep your real address private. It is up to you to decide who, if anyone, has your real address. If you choose to give your real address to a public agency, they don't have to keep the information confidential. Remember that you will need to individually request that public agencies, business, family or friends use the ACP substitute address. You will also need to make sure that they know how to properly address your mail. Mail that is not properly addressed may be delayed or will be returned to sender. Your mail needs to be addressed exactly as it appears on your ACP certification card.

Certification Card:

Your ACP certification card includes your name and signature, a certification code, the program address and the certification expiration date. It is your responsibility to tell public agency employees that you are a participant in the Address Confidentiality Program and to ask them to use the address printed on your certification card. Remember to ask everyone who sends mail to the program address to include your certification code. The certification code separates your mail from the mail of other program participants. Remember also, that if you change your name or confidential address from the name or address listed on the program application, you must notify the Secretary of the State, in writing, no later than thirty days after the change.

Marriage Records and Voter Registration:

If you get married, you may request that your marriage records be kept confidential. To do so, you must appear in person, with your spouse or intended spouse, before the authorized personnel for the office of the registrar of vital statistics in the municipality where the marriage was or is to be celebrated, and present your ACP certification card.

When you register to vote or when you change your registration information, you may request to be listed on a voter registry without your street and house number. To do so, you must present your ACP certification card to the authorized personnel for the office of the registrar of voters for the municipality in which you are eligible to vote or where you have applied for such eligibility.

We Are Your Legal Agent:

When you signed the ACP application, you designated the Secretary of the State as your agent for service of process and for receipt of first class mail. You cannot refuse to accept mail the ACP forwards to you. It is important that you understand that participating in the ACP means it will take longer for you to receive legal process. However, service of such process is effective as of the date and time it is received by the Secretary and not when it is received by you.

Program Renewal and Cancellation:

You have been certified in the ACP as a program participant for a period of four (4) years. Near the end of the four (4) year period you will be notified by the Secretary of the State concerning the filing of a renewal application to continue in the ACP.

The Secretary of the State may cancel your participation in the ACP if:

- 1) You change your name or confidential address and fail to notify the Secretary of the State in writing not later than thirty days after the change;
- 2) Mail forwarded to you is returned to the Secretary of the State as nondeliverable (please note: the Secretary of the State will return such mail to sender);
- 3) Your certification expires and you have not applied for renewal;
- 4) Your application for program participation or renewal contains false information.

The Secretary of the State will mail a cancellation notice to you if your participation in the ACP is cancelled. There are procedures that allow you to appeal the cancellation. You must file this appeal within 30 days of the date the cancellation notice is mailed to you. You may reapply to the program after a cancellation.

Confidentiality of Records:

Your records are confidential and cannot be released by ACP staff unless directed by a court order or directed by an approved written request made by the head of a law enforcement agency or the State Elections Enforcement Commission, or if your participation has been cancelled. In unusual situations, an agency may petition the Office of the Secretary of the State for an exemption to the ACP laws. If the Office of the Secretary of the State grants the agency an ACP exemption, program participants involved with that agency may have to reveal their actual location. Prior to granting an exemption, the Secretary of the State shall notify the program participant of the exemption, including the name of the agency and the reason or reason(s) for the exemption. Generally, an agency that is granted an exemption may not make the program participant's confidential address available for inspection or copying by persons other than those identified in the exemption request as having access to the confidential address. The law provides that you may appeal the Secretary of the State's decision to grant an exemption.

The ACP is Only One Part of Your Safety Strategy:

The Address Confidentiality Program is only one small piece of your overall safety plan. Combined with other safety strategies, the ACP can help you start a new life. However, by itself, the ACP cannot keep you safe. Local domestic violence and sexual assault programs provide help and advice to crime victims about how to stay safe.