Year: 2026 **Vol:** 01 **Case No:** 18

Categories: self- representation; religious difference; allegations of assault on child; cross-applications; consent; court support service; video evidence; undertakings

Safety orders granted by District Court where assault alleged

Dublin District Court granted a safety order for two years to an applicant mother where both parties, representing themselves, were in court. The applicant alleged that the father of their child, the respondent, had assaulted her and also their child.

A report had been prepared for the judge and the mother had arranged to read it. The judge explained that, as both parties were representing themselves, they could not directly question each other. The judge told them that each could give evidence from the witness box.

The mother said the respondent father had assaulted her at her home. She also said he had assaulted the child on the child's way home from school. This had arisen when the school had told the father that the child had not handed in homework for two days.

The judge asked whether there had been a criminal prosecution. There had not. The applicant said she had been advised to apply for a safety order.

The judge also considered whether the respondent had breached an earlier protection order. Some matters had not been reported to the Gardaí, but the judge appeared to identify one breach of the safety order.

The father denied the allegations. He said the mother was lying. He said he was concerned because the child had not done homework and because the teacher had said the child was being disrespectful. He said he collected the child from school and spoke to him about doing his homework and being respectful.

The father accepted that he threw a phone into a bag. He said the mother pushed him and that he only pushed her back. He denied hitting her.

The father also made allegations about the mother drinking and not supporting the child properly. A religious difference between the parties was raised, but the judge focused on the allegation of assault and the safety concerns. The judge appeared concerned that the child had been exposed to conflict between the parents.

After hearing the evidence, the judge granted a safety order in favour of the mother for two years.

Safety order following video evidence

In another case a safety order was made for two years following video evidence. The applicant was legally represented and required an interpreter. A member of Court Support Services was also present. The respondent represented himself.

The matter was allowed to stand so that video evidence could be shown to the respondent.

When the case returned before the judge the respondent consented to a safety order being made in favour of the applicant and the judge granted a safety order for two years.

Cross-applications withdrawn with undertakings given

In another case cross applications for safety orders were withdrawn. The parties were married but living apart. The matter settled between counsel outside the Court. Both applications for safety orders were withdrawn on the basis of undertakings given to the judge.