

Creating a Domestic Violence Safety Plan



The following lists are things to keep in mind in order to keep you and your family safe. Some of these items may or may not pertain to your family.

If You Need to Get Out of the House Quickly

- ❖ If you don't have a car, think of a safe place close to your home where a friend could pick you up. Also, know the routes to the subway, bus stop, and train station nearest to your home.
- ❖ You may want to plan a code word or phrase to use on the telephone with a friend if you need to get help when your abuser is near you. Tell your friend that when you say that code word, it means you're in trouble and you need him/her to call 911 for you.
- ❖ If you feel comfortable, tell your neighbors about the violence and ask if they will call the police if suspicious noises are coming from your home.
- ❖ If you are in immediate danger, you should always call 911. This is a free call from all phones.
- ❖ Decide on a pathway if you have to leave at night. Think of public places that are open 24 hours a day. Know the route to police stations, hospitals, fire stations, and 24-hour convenience stores in your area.
- ❖ If you leave by car, make sure you lock the car doors immediately.
- ❖ Can you leave extra money, clothes, etc. with someone you trust?
- ❖ Consider making a plan for each room in your home/apartment building. What can you do to get out of the basement or upper floors of your home?
- ❖ If you can't get out of the home, know the safest rooms. Identify safe areas of the house where there are no weapons and where there are always ways to escape.
- ❖ Know which doors lock in your home.
- ❖ Think of all the ways to get out of the building safely. Is there a fire escape that could get you safely to the ground? Is there a stairwell you could use?
- ❖ Keep your essential belongings (credit cards/ID) and keys in a safe place, in case you have to leave quickly.
- ❖ Making a safety plan for work. Give the security guard or receptionist a copy of the FRO (if you have one) and picture of the abuser. Change work hours, if possible.
- ❖ Alert school authorities and your children's friends/caretakers.
- ❖ Reschedule appointments if the abuser is aware of them.
- ❖ Make sure your children know how to dial 911 in an emergency. Instruct your children on where to go in an emergency.
- ❖ Practice how to get out safely with your children.
- ❖ If you have a car, make a habit of backing the car into the driveway or parking spot and keeping it fueled.
- ❖ Know where you can get help!

Steps You Can Take to Make Your Home Safer

- ❖ Change the locks on doors and windows
- ❖ Install and keep smoke detectors up-to-date
- ❖ Rope ladder for escaping second floor
- ❖ Security system- (Placing something that will make a loud noise if door or windows are tampered or opened without your knowing, i.e. a can filled with coins)
- ❖ Motion detectors or floodlights.
- ❖ Have a cell phone on you at all times.

- ❖ Use caller ID
- ❖ Emergency numbers on speed/auto dial
- ❖ Obtain PO Box

Important Documents and Other Items

Keep important documents together in a safe place and know where they are located at all times. These documents and other necessities may include:

- ❖ Temporary or Final Restraining Order
- ❖ Keys
- ❖ Identification
- ❖ ATM card
- ❖ Money/cab fare
- ❖ Check book
- ❖ Credit card
- ❖ Immigration documents
- ❖ Passport
- ❖ Public Assistance ID
- ❖ Mobile phone/coins to use in a payphone
- ❖ Driver's license & registration
- ❖ Social security card
- ❖ Your partner's social security number
- ❖ Medical records
- ❖ Address book
- ❖ Insurance policies
- ❖ Important legal documents
- ❖ Police reports (request pictures taken by police from them)
- ❖ Record of violence
- ❖ Birth certificates
- ❖ Medications
- ❖ Clothing
- ❖ Eye glasses
- ❖ Lease
- ❖ Items for baby/children: diapers, formula, school and immunization records, snacks, etc.
- ❖ If safe, forward pictures or documentation of any past injuries/abuse to a trusted friend or family member in case you need access to them in the future.

Additional Tips

- ❖ Be careful who you give your address/phone number to
- ❖ Know the numbers/locations of local police stations
- ❖ Change your daily routine/schedule. Don't take the same route every time you go to a place.
- ❖ Use different stores, for example food shopping, laundromats, etc.
- ❖ Do not frequent the same social spots that you would have.

If the Restraining Order Is Violated CALL THE POLICE (911)

Follow your safety plan.

If you cannot exit your home, go to a lower risk area.

Avoid rooms without an exit.