

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SAFETY PLAN

Name: _____ Date: _____

The following steps represent my plan for increasing my safety and preparing in advance for the possibility for further violence. Although I do not have control over my partner's violent choices, I do have a choice about how to respond and how to get myself and my children to safety.

STEP 1: Safety during a violent incident. In order to increase safety, I can use some of the following strategies. Check off items when complete:

If I decide to leave, I will _____.
Practice how to get out safely. What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells, or fire escapes will you use?

I can keep my purse and car keys ready and put them _____
(location) in order to leave quickly.

I can tell _____ about the incident and request that she/he call the police if suspicious noises are coming from my house.

I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police, the fire department, and 911.

I will come up with a code word with my children, family members, or friends so they can call for help. Emergency code word: _____.

If I have to leave my home, I will go to _____.
(Decide this even if you don't think there will be a next time.)

I can also teach some of these strategies to my children.

When I expect we're going to have an argument, I'll try to move to a place that is low-risk, such as _____.
(Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen, near weapons, or in rooms without access to an outside door.)

I will use my judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, I can give my partner what he/she wants to calm him/her down. I have to protect myself until I/we: _____.

STEP 2: Safety when preparing to leave. Leaving must be done with a careful plan in order to ensure safety. I can use some or all of the following strategies:

I will leave money, clothing, and an extra set of keys with _____
so I can leave quickly.

I will keep copies of important documents at _____.

I will open a savings or checking account by this date _____ to increase my independence.

Other things I can do to increase my independence include:

To keep my phone communications confidential, I must borrow a friend's phone, use a disposable mobile phone, or set up a separate cell phone account.

I will check with _____ and _____ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me money.

I will review my safety plan every _____ (*weeks/months*) in order to plan the safest way to leave home. _____ (*name*) has agreed to help me review this plan.

I will rehearse my escape plan and, if appropriate, practice it with my children.

STEP 3: Safety in my home. There are many things a woman can do to increase her safety in her own home. It might be impossible to do everything at once, but safety measures can be added step by step.

Safety measures I can use:

- Change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.
- Replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
- Install security systems including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system, etc.
- Purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.
- Install smoke detectors and fire extinguishers for each floor of my house/apartment.
- Install an outside lighting system that activates when a person is close to the house.
- Teach my children how to call to me and _____ (*name of friend or family member*) in the event that my partner takes the children.
- I will tell the people who take care of my children which people have permission to pick up my children and that my partner is not permitted to do so. The people I will inform about pick-up permission include:

_____ (*name*)
_____ (*name*)
_____ (*name*)

I can inform _____ (*friend or neighbor*) and _____ (*friend or neighbor*) that my partner no longer resides with me and that they should call the police if he/she is observed near my residence.

STEP 4: Safety with an Order of Protection. I cannot be sure my violent partner will obey protective orders. I recognize I might need to ask the police and the courts to enforce my protective order.

The following are some steps I can take to help the enforcement of my protection order:

I will keep my protection order _____ (*location*).

I will give my protection order to police departments in the community where I work, where I visit friends or family, and in the community where I live.

I can check to make sure that my order is on the registry. *There should be county and state registries of protection orders that all police departments can call to confirm a protection order.*

The telephone numbers for the county and state registries of protection orders are: _____ (*county*) and _____ (*state*).

I will inform my employer, minister, rabbi, my closest friends, family members, and _____ that I have a protection order in effect.

If my partner destroys my protection order, I can get another copy from the clerk's office.

If the police do not help, I can contact an advocate or an attorney and file a complaint with the chief of the police department or the sheriff.

If my partner violates the protection order, I can call the police and report the violation.

STEP 5: Safety at my job and in public. *You must decide if and when you will tell others your partner has battered you and that you may be at continued risk. Friends, family, and co-workers can help you – carefully consider which people to invite to help secure your safety. I might do any or all of the following:*

Inform my boss, the security supervisor, or _____ at work.

I can ask _____ to help screen my telephone calls at work.

When leaving work, I can _____.

If I have a problem while driving home, I can _____.

If I use public transit, I can _____.

I will shop at different grocery stores and shopping malls to conduct my business.

I can use a different bank and go at hours that are different from those kept when living with my partner.

STEP 6: Safety and substance use. *Carefully consider the potential cost of the use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs. Using substances can reduce your awareness and ability to act quickly to protect yourself.*

If drug or alcohol use has occurred in my relationship with my partner, I can enhance my safety by some or all of the following:

If I am going to use, I can do so in a safe place and with people who understand the risk of violence and are committed to my safety.

If my partner is using, I can _____ and/or _____.

To keep my child(ren) safe I will _____.

STEP 7: Safety and emotional health. *You might feel exhausted and emotionally drained. The process of building a new life takes much courage and incredible energy.*

To conserve my emotional energy and resources and to avoid hard emotional times, I can do some of the following:

If I feel down, I can _____
_____.

When I have to communicate with my partner, I can _____
_____.

I will try to use "I can ...," statements with myself and be assertive with others.

I can tell myself _____
whenever I feel others are trying to control or abuse me.

I can read _____ to help me feel stronger.

I can call _____ and _____ for support.

I can attend local workshops and support groups or connect with online groups to gain support and strengthen relationships:

STEP 8: Items to take when leaving. Even if I never worked, I can take money from jointly-held savings and checking accounts. If I do not take this money, my partner can legally take the money and close the accounts.

The following items are the most important to take with me. These items are best placed in one location, so if we have to leave in a hurry, I can grab them quickly. When I leave, I should take:

- My birth certificate/children's birth certificates
- Social Security cards
- School and vaccination records
- Checkbook, debit card, credit cards
- Keys: house, car, office, etc.
- Driver's license and registration
- Medications
- Copy of protection order
- State assistance identification, work permits, green cards
- Passport(s)
- Divorce papers
- Medical records - for all family members
- Lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage payment book
- Bank books, insurance papers
- Pictures, jewelry
- Children's favorite toys and/or blankets
- Items of special sentimental value

Important Telephone Numbers:

Police/sheriff's department (local) - 911 or _____

Police/sheriff's department (work) _____

Police/sheriff's department (school) _____

Prosecutor's office _____

Local battered women's program _____

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-SAFE (7233) www.ndvh.org

County registry of protection orders _____

State registry of protection orders _____

Work/school numbers _____

Supervisor's home number _____

Other Important Information:

I will keep this document in a safe place and out of the reach of my potential attacker.