



Revised July 2019

## Safety Planning

### Safety During an Argument

- Stay in an area with an exit and avoid letting the other person get between you and the exit.
- Practice getting out of your home safely.
- Avoid rooms with weapons, such as the kitchen.
- Have emergency 911 phones hidden throughout the home.
- Tell trustworthy neighbors about the violence. Ask them to call the police if they hear or see any disturbance.
- Devise a code word or signal to use with your children, family, friends, and trustworthy neighbors when you need the police.
- Trust your instincts and judgment. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.

### Safety When Preparing to Leave

- Establish your independence. Open savings and credit card accounts in your name only and specifically instruct institutions that your partner is not to have access.
- Leave money, extra keys, and copies of important documents, extra medicine and clothes with someone you trust so you can leave quickly.
- Determine safe people you can stay with and plan on leaving with.
- Review and rehearse your safety plan.
- Keep a packed bag at a trusted relative or friend's home.
- Plan where you will go if you have to leave.

### Safety in Your Own Home

- Change the locks on your doors. (Landlords are legally obligated to change locks within 24 hrs. if you are experiencing DV).
- Install locks on your windows. (Renters check with your property owner first.)
- Discuss and practice a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- Inform your children's schools or caregivers who has permission to pick up your children.
- Inform neighbors and property owner that your partner no longer lives with you and to call the police if they see him or her near your home.

### **Safety with a Restraining Order**

- Keep your protective order on you at all times, and give a copy to a trusted neighbor, friend or family member.
- Call the police if your abuser violates the protective order.
- Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.
- Inform family, friends, neighbors and health care providers that you have a restraining order in effect.

### **Safety on the Job and in Public**

- Decide whom at work you will inform of your situation, include building security.
- Provide a photo of your abuser for quick identification.
- Screen your telephone calls.
- Devise a safety plan for leaving work, such as exiting through the back door.
- Have someone escort you when leaving and wait with you until you are safely en route.
- Use a variety of routes to go home.
- Rehearse what you would do if something happened while going home, such as picking a safe place to go to.
- Create a safety routine when you arrive home: checking your house and property, checking in with someone to let him or her know you are safe, etc.

### **Your Safety and Emotional Health**

- Identify who you can rely on for emotional support and call our Crisis Line at 336-244-5714
- If you have to communicate with your abuser, determine the safest way to do so and avoid being alone with them.
- Advocate for yourself and your needs. Find people and resources you can safely and openly talk to and ask for help. You are not alone, and you do not have to go through this by yourself.
- Look into counseling and support groups that directly address your experiences and needs.
- Find ways to care for yourself: exercise, make time to relax, create a safe environment, do things you enjoy, get as much support as you can.

### **Internet and Computer Safety**

- Remember that all computer and online activity may be monitored.
- Abusers may monitor your emails and internet activity, if you are planning to flee to a particular location, don't look at classified ads for jobs and apartments, bus tickets, etc. for that place.
- It is safer to use a computer in a public library, at a trusted friend's house, at an internet cafe, or any other public terminals.
- Abusers may also track your activity and whereabouts through your cell phone; if you think there a chance this may be happening, take your phone into your provider, Apple store, or Best Buy Geek Squad and have it thoroughly checked.
- If your phone has been compromised and you get a new one, do NOT update your phone from the cloud.

## **Checklist: What You Should Take When You Leave**

### *Legal Papers*

- Restraining order/stalking order
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- Car registration
- Health and life insurance cards
- Divorce papers
- Custody papers

### *Other*

- House and car keys
- Medications
- Valuables, photos, etc.
- Address book
- Phone card/safety cell phone
- Clothes, blankets, small toys for children
- Clothes, hygiene necessities, etc. for yourself

### *Identification*

- Driver's license
- Children's birth certificates
- Social security card
- Self-sufficiency/disability identification

### *Papers*

- Medical records for you and your children
- Work permits/green card
- VISA