

# Tips For Developing A Safety Plan

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Although I cannot control my partner's violence or abusive behavior, I recognize there are other ways to increase my safety and well-being as well as the safety of the children that are in my care. The following steps represent my choices for a plan that I would use in the event of future violence.

## SAFETY DURING A VIOLENT INCIDENT

1. If you can see an argument coming (often you can't), try to go to a room or area that has access to an exit and not in a bathroom, kitchen, or anywhere near weapons.
2. Try to stay in a room with a phone so you can call 911, a friend, family, or a neighbor. I could call:
3. If weapons are in the home, inform law enforcement.
4. Practice how to get out of your home safely. Visualize your escape route. Identify the best doors, windows, elevator, or stairwell. If I must leave quickly I will get out by:
5. Have a packed bag ready with any medications and other important items. Keep it hidden in a handy place in order to leave quickly. See list on last page.
6. Ask a neighbor to call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home. I could tell:
7. Devise a code word to use with your children, grandchildren, and others to communicate that you need the police. Code Word:
8. Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home. List 3 places to go (decide this even if you don't think there will be a next time)
9. Use your instinct and judgment. If the situation is very dangerous, consider any action that may calm things down to give you time to assess what to do next. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.
10. Always remember – YOU DON'T DESERVE TO BE HIT OR THREATENED!

## SAFETY WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE

1. Open savings account in your own name to start to establish or increase your independence. Consider direct deposit of your paycheck or benefit check. Think of other ways to increase your independence.
2. Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents and extra clothes with someone you can trust so you can quickly leave. I can trust:
3. Bring any medications, prescriptions, and glasses, hearing aids or other assistive devices you may need.
4. Determine who would be able to let you stay with them or lend you some money. I could ask:
5. Keep the domestic abuse programs numbers close at hand and keep some change or a telephone calling card with you at all times for emergency phone calls. Consider getting a cellular phone if possible, or call a domestic abuse program and ask about 911 phones.
6. If you are 60 years or older, contact your county/tribal aging unit to learn about eligibility for public and private benefits and services such as Social Security, pensions, housing, transportation and medical insurance.
7. Call a local domestic abuse program about obtaining a restraining order. Restraining order room 262-653-2767.
8. Review your safety plan as often as possible in order to plan the safest way to leave your abuser. **Remember – LEAVING CAN BE THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME.**

## SAFETY IN YOUR OWN HOME

1. Change the locks on your doors as soon as possible. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure your windows. Consider installing or increasing your outside lighting, or get a motion detector.
2. If you have young children, grandchildren, or other dependents living with you, discuss a safety plan for when you are not with them and inform their school, day care, etc., about who has permission to pick them up.
3. Inform neighbors and your landlord if your abuser no longer lives with you and they should call the police if they see your abuser near your home.
4. Program your phone to speed dial 911.

## SAFETY WITH A RESTRAINING ORDER

1. Keep your protective order on you at all times. If it is lost or destroyed you can get another copy from the County Clerk in the Courthouse.
2. Call the police if your abuser violated the conditions of the restraining order.
3. Think of alternative ways to keep safe in case the police do not respond right away. Ask an advocate from a local domestic abuse agency to help you within the system if your abuser is not arrested.
4. Inform family, friends, teachers, and neighbors that you have a restraining order in effect.

## SAFETY IN PUBLIC AND ON THE JOB

1. Decide who you will inform of your situation. This could include your school, office, or building security. Provide a picture of your abuser if possible. Who I could tell:
2. Arrange to have someone screen your telephone calls, if possible. Devise a safety plan when you are out in public. Have someone escort you to your car, bus, or taxi. If possible, use a variety of routes to go home. Think about what you would do if something happened while going home. If I see my partner following me while driving I can :

## YOUR SAFETY AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

1. If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust. I can talk to:
2. If you have to communicate with your abuser, arrange to do so in the way that makes you feel safest, whether by phone, mail, in the company of another person, etc.
3. Have positive thoughts about yourself and be assertive with others about your needs.
4. Read books, articles, and poems to give you strength.
5. Decide who you can talk to freely and openly, and who can give you the support you need. Consider calling a domestic abuse crisis helpline.
6. **Plan to attend a women's or victim's support group for at least two weeks to gain support from others and learn more about the relationship.**

## IF YOU ARE A TEEN IN A CONTROLLING OR ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

1. Decide which friend, teacher, relative, or police officer you can tell.
2. Contact an advocate from a domestic abuse program to learn how to obtain a restraining order and make a safety plan.

### CONSIDER TAKING THE FOLLOWING WHEN YOU LEAVE:

- ✓ **Driver's license or other forms of ID**
- ✓ **Yours and other family member's birth certificates**
- ✓ Money, bank books, checkbooks, credit cards, ATM cards, and mortgage payment book.
- ✓ Papers such as a Social Security card, work permit, green card, passport, divorce or custody papers, insurance papers and medical records, lease, rental agreement, and/or house deed
- ✓ Keys for the house, car, or office
- ✓ Medications, glasses, hearing aids, and assistive devices needed for you and your children, grandchildren, and other dependants
- ✓ Personal items such as an address book, pictures, jewelry and items of sentimental value for you and your children or grandchildren