

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PERSONALIZED 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 violence, I do have a choice about how to respond to him/her and how to best get myself and my children to safety.

STEP 1: *Safety during a violent incident. I will not always be able to avoid violent incidents. In order to increase safety I may use a variety of strategies.*

I can use some of the following strategies:

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

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

C. I can tell _____ about the violence and request that she or he call the police if she or he hears suspicious noises coming from my house.

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

E. I will use _____ as my code with my children or my friends so they can call for help.

F. 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.)

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

H. 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. 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.

STEP 2: *Safety when preparing to leave. Victims of domestic violence frequently leave the residence they share with the abusive partner. Leaving must be done with a careful plan in order to increase safety. Abusers often strike back when they believe that a victim is leaving a relationship.*

I can use some or all of the following strategies:

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

B. I will keep copies of important documents or keys at _____.

C. I will open a savings account by _____, to increase my independence.

D. Other things I can do to increase my independence include: _____
_____.

E. I can keep change for phone calls on me at all times. I understand that if I use my telephone credit card, the following month's phone bill will show my abuser those numbers I called after I left. To keep my phone communications confidential, I must either use coins, or I might ask to use a friend's phone card for a limited time when I first leave.

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

G. I can leave extra clothes or money with _____.

H. I will sit down and review my safety plan every _____ in order to plan the safest way to leave the residence. _____ (domestic violence advocate or friend's name) has agreed to help me review this plan.

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

STEP 3: *Safety in my own residence. There are many things that a victim of domestic violence can do to increase their safety in their own residence. It may be impossible to do everything at once, but safety measures can be added step by step.*

Safety measures I can use:

A. I can change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.

B. I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.

C. I can install security systems including additional locks, window bars, and poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system, etc.

D. I can purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.

E. I can install smoke detectors and fire extinguishers for each floor of my house/apartment.

F. I can install an outside lighting system that activates when a person is close to the house.

G. I will teach my children how to make a collect call to me and to _____ (name of friend, etc.) in the event that my partner takes the children.

H. 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 of school)
- _____ (name of babysitter)
- _____ (name of teacher)
- _____ (name of Sunday-school teacher)
- _____ (name[s] of others)

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

STEP 4: *Safety with an Emergency Protective Order, Criminal Protective Order, or Temporary Restraining Order. Many abusive partners obey protection orders, but one can never be sure which violent partner will obey and which will violate protective orders. I recognize that I may need to ask the police to enforce my protective order.*

The following are steps I can take if I want to get a protective order:

A. If I call law enforcement during an abusive incident, law enforcement may be able to provide me with an Emergency Protective Order. I understand that this order will only last for a few days (usually 5 days).

B. If the District Attorney files criminal charges against my abusive partner there may be a Criminal Protective Order. I understand that this is a temporary order that usually will last only until the court proceedings end, even if my abusive partner is found guilty. To find out if I have a Criminal Protective Order or to get a copy of the order I can call the local District Attorney's Office _____ (phone number).

C. If I want the continued protection of a restraining order I need to pursue a Domestic Violence Restraining Order. I can call _____ (organization) to get help filling out the paperwork. I understand getting a Domestic Violence Restraining Order is a process that can take anywhere from days to weeks so I will make a plan to stay safe during this process.

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

A. I will keep a copy of my protection order _____ (location). I will keep a copy on my person at all times. I can give a copy to my child's school, my roommate or to _____.

B. I can although I am not required to inform my employer; my landlord; my family; my closest friend; or _____ that I have a protection order in effect.

C. If my partner destroys my protection order, I can get another copy from one of the people listed above who I have already given a copy to or I can contact the clerk's office at the courthouse (Address: _____).

D. If my partner violates the protection order, I can call the police and report the violation. If I need support during this process I can call an advocate at a local domestic violence agency _____ (phone number).

STEP 5: Safety on the job and in public. Each victim of domestic violence must decide if and when they will tell others that their partner has abused them and that they may be at continued risk. Friends, family, and co-workers can help to protect victims of domestic violence. Each victim of domestic violence should carefully consider which people to invite to help secure their safety.

I might do any or all of the following:

A. I can inform my boss, the security supervisor, and _____ at work.

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

C. When leaving work, I can _____.

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

E. If I use public transit, I can _____.

F. I will go to different grocery stores and shopping malls to conduct my business and shop at hours that are different from those I kept when residing with my abusive partner.

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

STEP 6: *Safety and drug or alcohol use. Many victims of domestic violence use drugs or alcohol to cope with the trauma they are experiencing. The legal outcomes of using illegal drugs can be very hard and may hurt relationships with children and family or may put the victim at a disadvantage in other legal actions with his or her abusive partner. Therefore, carefully consider the potential cost of the use of illegal drugs. Beyond this, the use of alcohol or other drugs can reduce awareness and ability to act*

quickly to protect oneself from an abusive partner. Specific safety plans must be made concerning drugs or alcohol use.

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

A. 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.

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

C. To safeguard my children I might _____.

STEP 7: *Safety and my emotional health. The experience of being abused and verbally degraded by partners is usually exhausting and emotionally draining. 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:

A. If I feel down and am returning to a potentially abusive situation, I can _____
_____.

B. When I have to communicate with my partner in person or by telephone, I can _____
_____.

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

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

E. I can read _____ to help me feel stronger.

F. I can call _____ and _____ for support.

G. I can attend workshops and support groups at the domestic violence program or _____
_____ to gain support and strengthen relationships.

STEP 8: *Items to take when leaving. When leaving it is important to take certain items if possible. Beyond this, folks sometimes give an extra copy of papers and an extra set of clothing to a friend just in case they have to leave quickly.*

Money: Even if I never worked, I can take money from jointly held savings and checking accounts. If I do not take this money, my abusive partner can legally take the money and close the accounts.

When I leave the most important things for me to take are:

Identification for myself; Mine and my Childs birth certificates and Social Security cards; Money; School and vaccination records; checkbook, ATM card; credit cards; spare keys - house, car, office; driver's license and registration; medications; copy of protection order; welfare identification, work permits, green cards.

If there is time, the other items might be taken, or stored outside the home. These items might best be placed in one location, so that if we have to leave in a hurry, I can grab them quickly.

Those items include: Passport(s), divorce papers; medical records - for all family members; lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage payment book; bank books, insurance papers; address book; pictures, jewelry; children's favorite toys and/or blankets; items of special sentimental value.

Telephone numbers I need to know:

Catalyst Domestic Violence Services 24 hour hotline 1.800.895.8476

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

Police/sheriff's department (work) _____

Police/sheriff's department (school) _____

Prosecutor's office _____

Local Domestic Violence Agency _____

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-SAFE (7233)

800-787-3224 (TTY)

www.ndvh.org

Organizations that can help with Restraining Orders

Catalyst Domestic Violence Services: 530-343-7711 or 532-6427

CLIC:

SHARP:

Other: _____

County registry of protection orders ? _____

State registry of protection orders? _____

Work number _____

Supervisor's home number _____

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

Review date: _____