

Personal Safety Plan

You Have a Right to be Safe!

I. Safety During an Explosive Incident

- ❑ If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room or area where you have access to an exit. Try to stay away from the kitchen, bedroom, or anywhere else where weapons might be available.
- ❑ Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, window, elevator, or stairwell would be best.
- ❑ Have a packed bag ready and keep it at a relative's or friend's home in case you need to leave quickly.
- ❑ Identify one or more neighbors you can tell about the violence, and ask that they call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.
- ❑ Devise a code word you can use with your children, family, friends, and neighbors if you need the police.
- ❑ Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will need to).
- ❑ Use your own instincts and judgment. If the situation is very dangerous, consider giving the abuser what he wants to calm him down. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.
- ❑ Always remember – **You don't deserve to be hurt or threatened!**

II. Safety when Preparing to Leave

- ❑ Open a bank account and/or credit card in your own name to start to establish or increase your independence. Think of other ways in which you can increase your independence.

- ❑ Get your own post office box so you can privately receive checks, letters, and other correspondence.
- ❑ Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents, extra medicines, and clothes with someone you trust in case you need to leave quickly.
- ❑ Determine who you could stay with if you need to leave suddenly.
- ❑ Keep a shelter or hotline phone number close at hand and keep some change or a calling card with you at all times for emergency phone calls.
- ❑ **Remember –leaving your batterer can be the most dangerous time.** Review your safety plan often in order to plan the safest way to leave your batterer.

III. Safety in Your Own Home

- ❑ Change the locks or tumblers on your doors. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure windows.
- ❑ Create a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- ❑ Screen your incoming phone calls using an answering machine, caller ID, or a trusted friend or relative.
- ❑ Inform neighbors and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see him near your home.



IV. Safety with a Protective Order

- ❑ Keep your protective order with you at all times. (If you change your purse, your order should be the first thing that goes in it.) Give a copy to a trusted neighbor or family member.
- ❑ Call the police if your partner breaks the protective order.
- ❑ Think about how to protect yourself and your children while you are waiting for the police to arrive.
- ❑ Inform your children's school, day care, etc., about who has permission to pick up your children.
- ❑ Inform family, friends, neighbors, and your physician or health care provider that you have a protective order in effect.

V. Safety on the Job and in Public

- ❑ Decide whom at work you will inform of your situation. Include office or building security. Provide a picture of your batterer if possible.
- ❑ Devise a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort you to your car, bus or train and wait with you until you are safely on your way. Vary the route you use to go home if possible. Think about what you would do if something happened while going home (i.e. in your car, on the bus, etc).

VI. Your Safety and Emotional Health

- ❑ If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust.
- ❑ If you have to communicate with your partner determine the safest way to do so.
- ❑ Have positive thoughts about yourself and be assertive with other

about your needs. Read books, articles, and poems to help you feel stronger.

- ❑ Decide whom you can talk to freely and openly, to get the support you need.
- ❑ Call a battered women's hotline. There are people available to talk to even if you cannot leave your batterer.
- ❑ Plan to attend a battered women's support group to gain support from others and learn more about yourself and your relationship. **You are not alone!**

VII. Especially for Teens

- ❑ Choose a friend, teacher, relative, or police officer you can feel safe talking to
- ❑ Call a battered women's hotline. Hotlines can help teens, too.
- ❑ Get information about restraining orders from your local police or court.
- ❑ Ask the person from the battered women's hotline if there is a teen relationship support group in your area.



**Checklist –
What You Should Take When You Leave**

Identification

- Driver's license
- Children's birth certificates
- Your birth certificate
- Social security card
- Welfare identification

Financial

- Money and/or credit cards
- Bank books
- Checkbooks

Legal Papers

- Your protective order
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- Care registration and insurance papers
- Health and life insurance papers
- Medical records for you and your children
- School records
- Work permits/green card/visa
- Passport
- Marriage license
- Separation agreement, divorce papers
- Custody papers

Other

- House and car keys
- Medications
- Small sellable objects
- Jewelry
- Address book
- Phone Card
- Pictures of you, children, and your abuser
- Children's small toys
- Toiletries/diapers
- Change of clothes for you and your children

**For More Information About Your
Options and Legal Rights**

Contact an advocate at a shelter or your local court. Fill in phone numbers of services in your area.

BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTERS

POLICE

EMERGENCY _____
LOCAL POLICE _____
STATE POLICE _____

COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICES

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE
Rape crisis center _____
Teen hotline _____
Women's center _____
Disabled abuse hotline _____
Elder abuse hotline _____
Child abuse hotline _____
Other _____

