

PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN

I. Safety during an explosive incident

- A. If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room or area that has access to an exit and not in the bathroom, kitchen or anywhere near weapons.
- B. Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator or stairs would be best.
- C. Have a packed bag ready and keep it in a secret but accessible place in order to leave quickly.
- D. Identify a neighbor you can tell about the violence and ask that they call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.
- E. Devise a code word to use with you children, family and neighbors when you need the police.
- F. Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will need to).
- G. If the situation is very dangerous, use your own instincts and judgements to keep yourself safe, call the police as soon as it is safe to do so. (You have the ability to obtain a protective order at your local court during business hours and if the abuser is arrested, through the police at any hour of the day).
- H. Always remember –YOU HAVE THE RIGHT NOT TO BE ABUSED IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP- PHYSICALLY, VERBALLY, EMOTIONALLY, OR SEXUALLY.

II. Safety when preparing to leave

- A. Determine who would let you stay with them or lend you some money.
- B. Always try to take your children with you or make arrangements to leave them with someone safe.
- C. Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents and extra clothes with someone you trust.
- D. Open a savings account in your own name to start to establish or increase your independence. Think of other ways in which you can increase your independence.
- E. Keep the shelter numbers close in hand and keep change or a calling card with you at all times.
- F. Review your safety plan with a domestic violence advocate in order to plan the safest way to leave your batterer.

REMEMBER – LEAVING YOUR BATTERER CAN BE THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME.

III. Safety in your home

- A. Inform neighbors and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see your abuser near your home.
- B. Rehearse a safety plan with you children for when you are not with them.
- C. Inform your children's school or day care about who has permission to pick up you children. Give them a copy of you protective order.
- D. Change or add locks on your doors and windows as soon as possible. Add peephole and increase outdoor light if possible. Try to borrow a portable or cellular phone. Check with you local battered women's center to see if they distribute cell phones for 911 use.
- E. Change you telephone number.

IV. Safety with a protective order

- A. Keep your protective order with you at all times. Leave extra copies at work, with a friend, in your car, etc.
- B. Call the police if your partner break the protective order. Be sure to tell the police you want to report a violation of a protective order.
- C. Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police do not respond the right way or quickly enough.
- D. Inform family, friends and neighbors that you have a protective order in effect.
- E. Try to avoid places in the community where your batterer may frequent.

V. Safety on the job and in public

- A. Decide which co-worker you will inform of your situation. This should include office or building security. Provide a picture of your batterer if possible.
- B. Arrange to have someone screen your telephone calls if possible.
- C. Devise a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort your to you car, bus or train. Use a variety of routs to go home if possible. Think about what you would do if something happened while going home.

VI. Your safety and emotional heath

- A. If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust.
- B. If you have to communicate with your partner, determine the safest way to do so.
- C. Have positive thoughts about yourself and be assertive with others about your needs.
- D. Plan to attend a domestic violence support group for at least a few weeks to gain support from others and learn more about yourself and the relationship.
- E. Read books or articles to make you feel stronger.

VII. If you are a teen in a violent dating relationship

- A. If things in your relationship don't feel right to you, talk to someone you trust about it.
- B. Decide which friend, teacher, relative or police officer you can go to in an emergency.
- C. Contact a domestic violence advocate, a representative from the County or District Attorney's Office or a victim services counselor from a law enforcement agency to learn how to obtain a protective order or restraining order and make a safety plan.
- D. Remember – you should never have to feel afraid in your relationship.
- E. NO MEANS NO!

CHECKLIST – WHAT YOU NEED TO TAKE IF YOU LEAVE

I. Identification

- Drivers license, car title and registration
- Children's birth certificate
- Your birth and marriage certificates
- Social security card
- Welfare identification

II. Financial

- Money
- Bank books
- Checkbooks

III. Legal Papers

- YOUR PROTECTIVE ORDER
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- Car registration and insurance papers
- Custody papers
- Divorce papers
- Health and Life insurance papers
- Medical records for all family members
- Work permits
- Green card and/or immigration papers
- Passport

IV. Other

- House and car keys
- Medications
- Small objects you can sell
- Address book
- Photos of you, your children and you abuser
- School records
- Jewelry
- Children's small toys
- Pets, if you can
- Changes of clothing for you and your kids
- Phone card