

PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN

WHY DO I NEED A SAFETY PLAN?

When a person is in a violent or abusive relationship, or leaving one, it is important to know that your safety is a priority. An abuser's actions are not able to be controlled or changed by his victim. Use this guide to safety planning to be prepared to leave in an emergency situation, as you plan to leave your abuser, and also after leaving.

WARNING: Abusers try to control their victim's lives. When abusers feel a loss of control, the abuse often gets worse. Take special care when you leave. Keep being careful even after you have left.

WHAT IS A SAFETY PLAN?

A safety plan is a way to be prepared to handle a violent or abusive situation and lower the risk of being hurt by your abuser. A safety plan will be specific to your information and needs. This practical guide will assist you in an emergency situation and help you to be prepared to leave if you choose to. It will also provide tips on commuting, internet and cell phone safety, and personal safety.

HOW DO I MAKE A SAFETY PLAN?

Take some time to be able to go through each section of this safety plan. The workbook provided can be completed on your own or with the assistance of an advocate, or someone else that you trust.

KEEP IN MIND:

- **A safety plan is personalized to your situation in order to use the information you need most.**
- **Once you have completed your safety plan, be sure to keep it in a place that is secure and accessible. You may consider having someone you trust keep a copy as well.**
- **Getting support and information from people you trust and someone who has experience working with people in abusive relationships can be very helpful to you as well.**

MY SAFETY PLAN – PAGE 1

Staying Safe at Work/in public:

The safest way to get to work is: _____

These are places at work/in public that I may run into my abuser: _____

I will try to avoid those places as much as possible or try to go when s/he won't be there.

There may be places where it is impossible to avoid my abuser. If I need to go to one of those places I can make sure a friend can go with me. I will ask _____ or _____.

If I feel threatened or unsafe when I am out, I can go to these areas where I feel safe:

I could talk to the following people if I need to rearrange my schedule for work or find a temporary place to stay to avoid my abuser; or if I need help being safe in general:

- Work Supervisor _____
- Family Member _____
- Family Member _____
- Friend _____
- Friend _____
- Counselor _____
- Family doctor _____
- Church officiate _____
- Victim's Advocate _____
- Safe Space Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Advocate (available 24 hours/day) 406-782-8511

If I live with or near my abuser, I will have a bag ready with these important items in case I need to leave quickly (Check all that apply):

- Cell phone & Charger
- Spare Money
- Keys
- Driver's License or other ID
- Copy of Restraining Order
- Birth Certificate, Social security Card, Immigration Papers, and other important documents
- Change of clothes
- Medications
- Special photos or other valuable items
- If I have children – anything they may need (formula, diapers, important papers, special security item like a blanket or stuffed animal)

This bag may be kept with a trusted friend or family member to pick up from.

Staying Safe at Home:

I can tell this family member/friend about what is going on in my relationship: _____

If I feel unsafe at home, I can call this person to stay with me:

Or this person: _____

The safest way for me to leave my home in an emergency is:

If I have to leave in an emergency, I should try to go to a place that is public, safe and unknown by my abuser. I could go here:

and/or here: _____

I will use a code word so I can alert my family, friends, and neighbors to call for help without my abuser knowing about it. My code word is:

MY SAFETY PLAN – PAGE 2

Staying Safe Emotionally:

My abuser often makes me feel bad by saying this:

When s/he does this, I will think of these reasons why I know my abuser is wrong:

_____,
_____,
and _____

I will do things I enjoy, like:

_____,
_____,
and _____

I will join clubs or organizations that interest me, like:

_____,
_____,
or _____

If I feel confused, depressed or scared, I can call the following friends or family members:

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

**Safe Space Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day
406-782-8511**

During an emergency, I can call the following friends, family members or trusted persons at any time of day or night:

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Safe Space Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day

406-782-8511

Getting Help in Your Community:

For Emergencies: . 911 .

Safe Space 24 hour crisis line: 406-782-8511 .

Local Hospital: _____

Family Doctor: _____

Counselor: _____

Montana Childhelp (Report Child Abuse): 1-800-332-6100

Parental Stress Hotline: 1-800-367-2543

Local Food Bank: _____

Pro Se/Legal Assistance Office: _____

Victim Services Office: _____

Shelter: (Safe Space) 406-782-8511

I can contact Safe Space 24 hours a day to ask for other referrals or information that will help me to be safe or to leave an abusive relationship. Safe Space's number is **406-782-8511**.

MY SAFETY PLAN – PAGE 3

These are things I can do to help keep myself safe everyday:

- I will carry my cell phone and important telephone numbers with me at all times
- I will keep in touch with someone I trust about where I am or what I am doing
- I will stay out of isolated places and try to never walk around alone.
- I will avoid places where my abuser and/or his/her friends and family are likely to be.
- I will keep doors and windows locked when I am home, especially if I am alone.
- I will avoid speaking to my abuser. If it is unavoidable, I will make sure there are people around in case the situation becomes dangerous.
- I will call 911 if I feel my safety or that of my children is at risk.
- I can look into getting an Order of Protection so that I'll have legal support in keeping my abuser away.
- I will remember that **it is not my fault** and that **I deserve a healthy and safe relationship**.

These are things I can do to help keep myself safe in my social life:

- I will ask my friends to carry their phones on them and keep them on when we are out together in case we get separated and I need help.
- If possible, I will go to different bars, banks, grocery stores, restaurants, etc. than my abuser goes to.
- I will avoid going out alone, especially at night.
- No matter where I go, I will be aware of how to leave safely and quickly if there is an emergency.
- I will use different, but familiar, routes to get to places I frequent so that I do not become predictable to my abuser.
- I will leave if I feel uncomfortable in a situation.
- If I am drinking, I will arrange for a sober driver that is *not* my abuser.
- I will be around people who make me feel safe, supported and good about myself.

These are things I can do to stay safe online or using my cell phone:

- I will not say or do anything online that I would not do in person.
- I will set all of my social networking profiles and email account profiles to be as private as they can be.
- I will save and keep track of any abusive, threatening, or harassing comments, posts, emails, or texts.
- I will never give my password to anyone.
- If the abuse/harassment does not stop, I will change my usernames, email addresses, and/or cell phone number.
- I understand that anything done on a computer can be hidden, but not lost forever.
- I will not answer calls from unknown or restricted phone numbers.
- I can see if my phone company can block my abuser's phone number from contacting my phone.
- If my abuser has access to my cell phone account, I will take him/her off the account or set up a new account so that my abuser cannot track me through GPS or access who I am communicating with.
- I will not communicate with my abuser using any type of technology if unnecessary, as any type of communication c

MY SAFETY PLAN – PAGE 4

If you are making plans to leave your abuser:

I can contact these people to help me to leave:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

I can safely go to these places, where my abuser would not know of or be able to find me:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

These are steps I can take to be secure when I leave:

- I will consider keeping change for a phone call or purchasing a prepaid cell phone for emergencies
- I will consider opening a bank account or credit card in my own name.
- Preparing a bag of important documents, basic necessities, and other needs (see page 1).
- I will have a plan to leave – when is the best time to go, where will I go, how much time will I have?
- I will practice by doing things that get me out of the house, grocery shopping, walking the dog, taking out the trash.
- I will inform someone I trust of where I am going and what I am doing – someone who will not let my abuser know any details.
- I will call 911 immediately if my life or that of my children are in danger.

These are things I can do to stay safe while living in an abusive relationship:

- I will have important phone numbers on hand to contact family, friends, a shelter or police at any time.
- I will tell someone I trust about the abuse. If I trust a neighbor, I will ask them to call 911 if they hear angry or violent noises.
- If I have children, I will teach them how to dial 911.
- I will know where all the weapons or possible weapons in the home are and avoid those areas.
- I will avoid rooms with no exits.
- I will be safe about my plans to leave, keeping documents secure from my abuser.
- I will be safe about using the internet to research leaving – I will try to use public resources such as the library to gather information to leave.
- I will remember that it is not my fault and that I deserve a safe and healthy relationship.