

## **SAFETY PLANNING GUIDE**

### **Safety During an Argument**

- Stay in an area with an exit and avoid letting the other person get between you and the exit.
- Practice getting out of your home safely.
- Avoid rooms with weapons (bedroom, kitchen etc.).
- Tell trustworthy neighbors about the violence. Ask them to call the police if they hear or see any disturbance.
- Devise a code word or signal to use with your children, family, friends, and trustworthy neighbors when you need the police.
- Trust your instincts and judgment. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.

### **Safety When Preparing to Leave**

- Establish independence. Open accounts in your name only and specifically instruct institutions that your partner is not to have access.
- Leave money, extra keys, copies of important documents, extra medicine and clothes with someone you trust so you can leave quickly. Keep a packed bag at a trusted relative's or friend's home.
- Determine safe people you can stay with when you are ready to leave.
- Review and rehearse your safety plan.

### **Safety After You Leave**

- Secure your home. Install or change door locks, add security devices to windows, install security cameras.
- Discuss and practice a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- Inform your children's school or caregivers who can pick up your children.
- Inform neighbors and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and to call the police if they see him or her near your home.

### **Safety with a Protective Order**

- Keep your protective order with you at all times, and give a copy to a trusted neighbor, friend or family member.
- Call the police if your abuser violates the protective order.
- Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police are unable to respond right away.
- Inform family, friends, neighbors & Law Enforcement that you have a protective order in effect.

### **Safety on the Job and in Public**

- Decide who at work you will inform of your situation, include building security, and provide a photo of your

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### Safety on the Job and in Public (continued)

- abuser for quick identification and a copy of your protective order.
- Devise a safety plan for leaving work, such as exiting through the back door.
- Have someone escort you when leaving.
- Use different routes going to and leaving work.
- Rehearse what you would do if something happened while going home, such as picking a safe place to go.
- Create a safety routine when you arrive home: check your surroundings, house and property; check in with someone to let them know you are safe, etc.

### Your Safety and Emotional Health

- Identify who you can rely on for emotional support
- If you must communicate with your abuser, determine the safest way to do so to avoid being alone with them.
- Advocate for yourself and your needs. Find people and resources you can safely talk to; ask for help.
- You are not alone, and you do not have to go through this by yourself; look into counseling and support groups.

### Internet and Computer Safety

- Remember that all computer and online activity can be monitored by your abuser.
- Abusers may also track your activity and whereabouts through your cell phone; if you think there is a chance this may be happening, check and change your security and/or location settings on your phone.
- If your phone has been compromised and you get a new one, do NOT update your phone from the cloud.

### Checklist. What Should You Take When You Leave

- |                             |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| • Protective Order          | House/Car keys       |
| • Lease, rental agreement   | Phone/Charger        |
| • Car registration          | DL/ID Card           |
| • Health and life insurance | Birth Certificate(s) |
| • Divorce/custody papers    | Clothing, toys       |
| • Work Permit/Visa          | Hygiene items        |
| • Passport                  | Contact numbers      |
| • Medication                | Valuables/photos     |

#### IN AN EMERGENCY, DIAL 9-1-1

Personalized safety planning can be requested by contacting:

- ♥ National Domestic Violence Hotline [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org) or
- ♥ National Domestic Violence Hotline 24/7: 800-799-7233
- ♥ Aware Central Texas: 254-444-1748 or 24/7 Hotline: 254-818-0968.
- ♥ Families in Crisis: 254-634-1184 or 24/7 Hotline: 888-799-7233.