

*Linda M. Peterman, CRC, LMHC
Licensed Mental Health Counselor
13039 W. Linebaugh Ave., Suite 101
Tampa, Fl 33626
813-404-3174*

SAFETY PLAN

MONEY: Open your own checking or savings account. Put away as much money as you can. Have an ATM card and credit card in your name only. Hide some money or leave it with a friend. Have a calling card with you or cell phone. (Free cell phones for 911 use are available at all shelters or The Crisis Center).

CAR: Have an extra set of keys made for your car and house—hide the keys where you can get them in a hurry if you need them. Keep your car full of gas. Keep driver side door open and all others locked.

BELONGINGS: Have a small bag of clothing for you and your children packed and keep it with friends or family for an emergency. Have important papers ready to leave quickly (see list of "what you need when preparing to leave")

EVIDENCE: Call the police. Notify a neighbor(s) to be alert to abuse and call the police in case you can't. Devise a code word with the neighbor, your children, friends and family for when you need the police. Keep a journal of incidents; go to emergency room for injuries.

WEAPONS: Get rid of weapons in the house. Try to avoid arguments where there are potential weapons (kitchen, bathrooms). Don't wear scarves or long jewelry that could be used to strangle you.

ESCAPE: Decide and plan where you'll go if you leave home. Practice the best way to get out of the house.

CHILDREN: Make a plan to escape with your children. Use a code word with them so they know when to call the police. Teach them how to call 911 and what to say or how to escape to a neighbor's house to call the police. Teach them not to get physically involved.

WORK: Decide whom to tell at work to help keep you safe. This should include building security (provide a picture of abuser). Arrange to have someone screen your telephone calls and escort you to and from the building. Use a variety of routes to go home.

RESTRAINING ORDERS: File a restraining order for violence or stalking. The fees will be waived if you can't afford them. Keep a copy with you at all times. Leave a copy at work, at your children's school, in your car, with a friend or relative. Call the police if the abuser violates the order. Avoid places where the abuser may go.

SEPARATION: After separation, tell neighbors and landlord that the abuser no longer lives with you. Show them pictures. Tell your children's school about the injunction and tell them who has permission to pick up your children. Change schools. Change the locks on your doors and windows. Change your telephone number. Replace wood doors with metal or steel ones.

COMMUNICATION: If you have to communicate with the abuser, determine the safest way to do so (e-mail, phone, via a 3rd party, etc.). Get a post office box for your mail.

SELF-CARE: Get counseling; join a support group, read self-help books, poetry and articles to help you feel stronger. Take care of yourself through exercise, yoga, tai chi, etc. and a good diet. Treat yourself to something special, relax, enjoy your children, and keep in touch with positive, supportive friends and family members.

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Personalized Safety Plan

Step 1. Safety during violence.

I can use the following options:

- a. If I decide to leave, I will _____
- b. I can keep a bag ready and put it _____ so I can leave quickly.
- c. I can tell _____ about the violence and have them call the police when violence erupts.
- d. I can teach my children to use the telephone to call the police and the fire department.
- e. I will use this word code _____ for my children, friends, or family to call for help.
- f. If I have to leave my home, I will go _____. (Be prepared even if you think you will never have to leave.)
- g. I can teach these strategies to my children.
- h. When an argument erupts, I will move to a safer room such as _____.
- i. I will use my instincts, intuition, and judgement. I will protect myself and my children until we are out of danger.

Step 2. Safety when getting ready to leave.

I can use the following strategies:

- a. I will leave money and an extra set of keys with _____.
- b. I will keep important documents and keys at _____.
- c. I will open a savings account by this date _____ to increase my independence.
- d. Other things I can do to increase my independence are:

- e. The domestic violence hotline is _____.
- f. The shelter's hotline is _____.
- g. I will keep change for phone calls with me at **ALL** times. I know that if I use a telephone credit card, that the following month the telephone bill will tell the batterer who I called after I left. I will keep this information confidential by using a prepaid phone card, using a friend's telephone card, calling collect, or using change.
- h. I will check with _____ and _____ to know who will let me stay with them or who will lend me money.
- i. I can leave extra clothes with _____.
- j. I will review my safety plan every _____ (time frame) in order to plan the safest route. I will review the plan with _____ (a friend, counselor or advocate.)
- k. I will rehearse the escape plan and practice it with my children.

Step 3. Safety At Home

I can use the following safety methods:

- a. I can change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.
- b. I can replace wooden doors with steel doors.
- c. I can install security systems- i.e. additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, electronic sensors, etc.
- d. I can purchase rope ladders to be used for escape routes from the second floor.
- e. I can install smoke detectors and buy fire extinguishers for each floor of my home.
- f. I can install an outside lighting system that lights up when someone approaches my home.
- g. I will teach my children how to use the phone to make collect calls to me and to _____ (friend, family, minister) if my partner tried to take them.
- h. I will tell the people who care for my children, who has permission to pick up my children. My partner is NOT allowed to. Inform the following people:
 - School _____
 - Day Care _____
 - Babysitter _____
 - Sunday School _____
 - Teacher _____
 - And _____
 - Others _____

- i. I can tell my the following people that my partner no longer lives with me and that they should call the police if he is near my residence:
 - Neighbors _____
 - Church Leaders _____
 - Friends _____
 - Others _____

Step 4. Order of Protection

The following steps will help enforce the order of protection:

- a. I will keep the protection order _____ (the location). Always keep it with you.
- b. I will give my protection order to police departments in the areas that I visit my friends, family, where I live, and where I work.
- c. If I visit other counties, I will register my protection order with those counties.
- d. I can call the local domestic violence agency if I am not sure how to register my protection order with the police departments.
- e. I will tell my employer, my church leader, my friends, my family and others that I have a protection order.
- f. If my protection order gets destroyed, I know I can go to the County Courthouse and get another copy.
- g. If my partner violates the protection order, I will call the police and report it. I will call my lawyer, my advocate, counselor, and/ or tell the courts about the violation.
- h. If the police do not help, I will call my advocate or my attorney AND I will file a complaint with the Chief of the Police Department.
- i. I can file a private criminal complaint with the district judge in the jurisdiction that the violation took place or with the District Attorney. A domestic violence advocate will help me do this.

Step 5. Job and Public Safety

I can do the following:

a. I can tell my boss, security, and _____ at work about this situation.

b. I can ask _____ to help screen my phone calls.

c. When leaving work I can do the following:

d. When I am driving home from work and problems arise, I can

e. If I use public transportation, I can _____

f. I will go to different grocery stores, stores, and banks at different hours than I did when I was with my partner.

g. I can also do the following: _____

Step 6. Drug and Alcohol Use.

I can enhance my safety if I do the following:

a. If I am going to use, I am going to do it in a safe place with people who understand the risk of violence and who are committed to my safety.

b. I can also _____

c. If my partner is using, I can _____

d. To protect my children, I can _____

Step 7. Emotional Health

I can do the following:

a. If I feel depressed and ready to return to a potentially violent situation/ partner, I can

I can call _____

b. When I have to talk to my partner in person or on the phone, I can

c. I will use "I can..." statements and I will be assertive with people.

d. I can tell myself “_____”

when I feel people are trying to control or abuse me.

e. I can call the following people and/ or places for support:

f. Things I can do to make me feel stronger are:

What you need when preparing to leave

- ⊙ Money
- ⊙ Keys to car, house, work
- ⊙ Extra clothes
- ⊙ Medication
- ⊙ Birth and marriage certificates
- ⊙ Social security cards
- ⊙ School and medical records (immunizations)
- ⊙ Bankbooks, credit cards
- ⊙ Driver's license
- ⊙ Car registration and titles
- ⊙ Welfare identification
- ⊙ Passports, green cards, work permits
- ⊙ Lease/rental agreement
- ⊙ Mortgage payment book
- ⊙ Unpaid bills
- ⊙ Insurance papers
- ⊙ Injunction papers
- ⊙ Divorce papers
- ⊙ Custody orders
- ⊙ Address book
- ⊙ Pictures, jewelry, sentimental items
- ⊙ Children toys, blankets

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SAFETY PLAN

BEFORE YOU SEPARATE

- ⊙ Avoid having arguments where there are dangerous items.
- ⊙ Get weapons out of the house.
- ⊙ Have an extra set of keys for your car and home.
- ⊙ Keep your car full of gas.
- ⊙ Keep driver's door open and all others locked.
- ⊙ Open a bank account and/or get a credit card in your name.
- ⊙ Get an extra cell phone.
- ⊙ Put together a bag of necessities. Hide it where it is easy for you to get.
- ⊙ If you have children, teach them how to dial 911.
- ⊙ Keep important phone numbers nearby.
- ⊙ Make up a code word that you can use when you need help.
- ⊙ Think about how to leave.
- ⊙ Think of places you could go.
- ⊙ Think of people who might help you keep a bag, lend you money, and keep your pets.
- ⊙ Go to the emergency room if you have been injured.
- ⊙ Document incidents, consider calling the police.

AFTER YOU SEPARATE

- ⊙ Get an Injunction. Keep a copy with you.
- ⊙ Enlist help of neighbors, family and friends.
- ⊙ Tell school and childcare workers the names of people who are allowed to pick them up.
- ⊙ Think about and practice a safety plan for your workplace.
- ⊙ Change the locks. Get stronger doors, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, a security system and outside lights.
- ⊙ Change your telephone number.
- ⊙ Get different cell phone provider.
- ⊙ Change all your passwords.
- ⊙ Get a post office box for your mail.
- ⊙ Use different stores or businesses.
- ⊙ If you are tempted to go back to your abuser, have someone that you can call to talk to.
- ⊙ Find a safe way to speak with your abuser if you must (phone, email, text).
- ⊙ Go over your safety plan often.

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