

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SAFETY PLAN

Everyone has a right to be safe!

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 stairwell would be best.
- C. Have a packed bag ready and keep it in an undisclosed 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 your children, family, friends, 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. 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 your self until you are out of danger.

II. Safety When Preparing to Leave.

- A. Open a saving account in your own name to start to establish or increase your independence. Think of other ways in which you can increase your independence.
- B. Leave money, an extra set of key, copies of important documents and extra clothes with some one you trust so you can leave quickly.
- C. Determine who would be able to let you stay with them or lend you some money.

- D. Keep the shelter phone number close at hand and keep some change or a calling card on you at all times for emergency phone calls.
- E. Review your safety plan as often as possible in order to plan the safest way to leave your abuser. Remember: Leaving your abuser is the most dangerous time.

III. Safety in Your Own Home.

- A. Change the locks on your doors as soon as possible. Buy additional locks and safety devises to secure your windows.
- B. Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- C. Inform your children's school, day care, etc., about who has permission to pick up your children.
- D. 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.

- A. Keep your protective order on you at all times. (When you change your purse, that should be the first thing that goes in it.)
- B. Call the police if your partner breaks the protective order.
- C. C. Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.
- D. Inform family, friends, neighbors that you have a protective order in effect.

V. Safety on the Job and in Public.

- A. Decide who at work you will inform of your situation. This should include office or building security (provide a picture of your abuser 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 you to your car. Use a variety of routes to go home by if possible. Think about what you would do if something happened while going home (i.e., in your car).

VI. Your Safety and Emotional Health.

- 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. Read books, articles, and poems to help you feel stronger.
- E. Decide who you can call to talk with freely and openly to give you the support you need.
- F. Talk to a professional counselor or support group to gain support from others and learn more about yourself and the relationship.