

DEVELOPING A SAFETY PLAN

I. Non-Emergency Preparation and Planning:

- A. Make an extra set of car keys and hide them in an easy place to reach ()
- B. Prepare clothing needs – clothes for self and children. Store in a suitcase in home and hide in a secure location. Or, store them at a **trusted** friend's home. Try to avoid using next-door neighbors, close family members, and mutual friends. ()
- C. Prepare for financial needs (place in accessible location): ()
 - 1. Extra Cash ()
 - 2. Check and Savings Books ()
 - 3. Other Valuables (i.e. jewelry, coins, etc.) ()
- D. Prepare for children's needs (where children are involved):
 - 1. Take something meaningful for each child (blanket, pillow, etc.) ()
 - 2. Discuss what is happening if you must leave the home. ()
 - 3. Identify a safe place for children to go and plan with them. ()
- E. Prepare for possible legal action. Keep all documents in a safe place:
 - 1. Financial documents
 - a. Pay stubs: yours (if you are working) and spouse's ()
 - b. Household bills (including mortgage payments, utilities, etc.) ()
 - c. Stocks, bonds, and any other joint financial holdings ()
 - 2. Identification (driver's license, birth certificates, social security card) ()
 - 3. Copies of restraining orders, evidence of past abuse ()
 - 4. Copies of medical and doctor's records, police reports, evidence of physical abuse such as photographs ()
 - 5. Names of any witness(es) to present or past incidents ()
 - 6. Keep handy a record of critical phone numbers ()

II. Emergency Safety Plan (when living with the abuser):

- A. Plan an escape route from home before it is needed. ()
- B. Make a habit of backing the car into the driveway and keeping it fueled. ()
- C. Make a list of situations in which violence may occur or escalate. ()
- D. Carefully explore the layout of your house and access to telephones. ()
- E. Develop and rehearse a place for leaving the home if violence occurs. ()
- F. If violence occurs away from home, develop a plan for escaping the abuser. ()
- G. Notify **trusted** neighbors to be on alert to suspicious noises and to call the police. ()
- H. Develop a code word with children when you want them to call for help. ()
- I. Teach children how to use the phone to contact the police. ()

Developing A Safety Plan

Page 2

- J. Know safe places you can go to leave a dangerous situation. ()
(AVOID KITCHENS, BATHROOMS, GARAGE OR ANY OTHER ROOM CONTAINING POSSIBLE WEAPONS. REMOVE POSSIBLE WEAPONS, SUCH AS KNIVES, FROM EASY ACCESS)
- K. Don't run to where the children are, as your partner may hurt them as well. ()
- L. Try not to wear scarves or long jewelry that could be used to strangle you or otherwise hurt you. ()
- M. Keep the number of the local battered women's agency in a safe place. ()

III. When a Violent Incident Occurs:

- A. Leave the home immediately. ()
- B. If leaving is not possible, move ASAP to a room of low risk. **TRY TO AVOID THOSE ROOMS OF HIGH RISK** (SEE II., J.) ()
- C. Call 911 for the police. ()
- D. Have children scream to alert neighbors. ()
- E. If able to leave by car, **LOCK CAR DOORS IMMEDIATELY.** ()

IV. Safety Plan with a Restraining Order:

- A. Keep a copy of the restraining order on or near you at all times. ()
- B. Give copies of restraining orders to local police departments, children's schools, **trusted** family and friends. ()
- C. Inform as many neighbors, relatives, friends, and your co-workers as soon as possible that the restraining order is in effect. ()
- D. If the abuser violates the restraining order, **CONTACT THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY.** ()
- E. **CONTACT YOUR ATTORNEY/ADVOCATE AND ADVISE THE COURT.** ()
- F. If your abuser is charged with a crime, **STAY IN CONTACT WITH THE POLICE AND/OR VICTIM WITNESS COORDINATOR TO BE ADVISED IF ABUSER IS BEING RELEASED FROM JAIL!** ()
- G. When the final restraining order is in effect, **CHANGE ALL LOCKS TO YOUR RESIDENCE!** ()

Developing A Safety Plan

Page 3

V. Once you Leave:

- A. Consider renting a post office box or using the address of a friend for your mail. ()
- B. Be careful to whom you give your new address and phone number. ()
- C. Change routines wherever possible:
 - 1. Work hours.
 - 2. Routes you travel to work, children's schools or any other place you frequent. ()
- D. Change place of worship. ()
- E. Alert school authorities of situation. ()
- F. Consider changing your children's schools ()
- G. Reschedule appointments of which the offender is aware. ()
- H. Use different stores and go to different social spots. ()
- I. Tell people at work to have phone calls screened. ()
- J. Tell people who take care of your children which people are allowed to pick up your children. Provide them with a copy of the restraining order. ()
- K. Request caller ID. Ask that your phone be blocked so that your new number does not show up on anyone else's display. ()