



Personal Safety Plan

◆ Why is a Safety Plan Necessary?

Once a violent act occurs in a relationship, the violence almost always reoccurs. In fact, the violence tends to occur more frequently and will most likely increase in severity. This happens even though the abuser is likely to apologize and will promise to change.

Therefore, it is extremely important that you have a plan and think ahead about what should be done in case of an attack, or repeated attacks from your abuser upon you or your children.

Although some abusers do not give any indications or signals prior to an abusive incident, you may be able to predict an attack by your abuser's behavior. For example, a certain look, a certain phrase that is said, certain times of the month or year, or when discussing various subjects which could provoke anger, are some things to consider.

In many cases, victims of domestic violence contemplate leaving their abusers several times before finally taking action. There are some practical steps which you can use to help keep you and your children safe.

◆ Safety with a Protective Order

If you or your children have been threatened or assaulted, you can request a protective order from your county District Court Clerk.

You may request a protective order 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. After business hours you will need to contact the Police Department to seek one. Among other things, you may request temporary custody, an order for no contact, and/or an

order for the batterer to vacate the home. Keep your protective order with you at all times. Give a copy of the order to your child's school. Call the police if your partner breaks the order.

◆ **Safety During an explosive incident**

If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room or area where you have access to an exit. Try to stay away from the bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, or anywhere else where weapons might be available.

Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator, or stairwell would be best. Practice these safety measures with your kids. Identify one or more neighbors you can tell about the violence and ask that they call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.

Devise a code word to use with your children, family, friends, and neighbors when you need the police. Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will need to.)

Use your instincts and judgements. If the situation is very dangerous, consider giving the abuser what he/she wants to calm him/her down. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.

◆ **Safety in Your Own Home**

Change the locks on your door as soon as possible. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure your windows.

Discuss a Safety Plan with your children. Designate a "safe meeting place" with your children.

Inform your children's school, daycare, etc. about who has permission to pick up your children. Inform neighbors and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see him/her near your home.

◆ Safety when preparing to leave

- **Savings Account and/or Credit Card.** Open a savings account and/or credit card in your own name. You can start to establish or increase your independence.
- **Post Office Box.** Get your own post office box or have information mailed to a safe address. You can privately receive checks and letters to begin your independence.
- **Store Important Items in a Secure Place.** Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents, extra medicines, and clothes with someone you trust or in a safe place so you can leave quickly.
- **Reliable Relative/Friend.** Determine someone who would be able to let you stay with them or lend you some money.
- **Important Phone Numbers.** Keep the shelter or hotline number nearby at all times for emergency phone calls. Memorize the number or program it into your cell phone under a different name.
- **Review and Update Safety Plan.** Review and update your safety plan as often as possible in order to plan the safest way to leave your batterer. Think of other ways to increase independence.

◆ Safety on the job or in public

- **Inform Your Employer.** Decide who at work you will inform of your situation. This should include office or building security. Provide a picture of your batterer if possible.
- **Screen Your Calls.** Arrange to have an answering machine, voicemail, caller ID, or a trusted friend or co-worker to screen your calls.
- **Safety Plan.** Devise a Safety Plan for when you leave work, the grocery store, the mall or any other public area. Always park in a well-lit area and try to walk with a buddy or security personnel.

◆ Checklist of what you need when you leave

Financial

- Money and/or credit cards
- Bank Books
- Checkbooks

Identification

- Driver's License
- Children's Birth Certificates
- Your Birth Certificate
- Social Security Cards
- Welfare Identification

Legal Papers

- YOUR PROTECTIVE ORDER
(keep this with you at all times)
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- Car registration & insurance papers
- Health & life insurance papers
- Medical records for you/your children
- School records
- Work permits/Greencard/VISA
- Passport
- Divorce & custody papers/marriage license

Other

- House & car keys
- Medications
- Jewelry
- Address book
- Pictures of you, your children, and your abuser
- Children's toys, toiletries and diapers
- Change of clothes for you/your children

◆ Emergency resources in Kentucky

Police Department

Sheriff's Department

Kentucky State Police Emergency Hotline: 1-800-222-5555

Domestic Violence National Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE

◆ Other community resources

Rape Crisis Center

Domestic Violence Center

Department for Community Based Services/Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Commonwealth Attorney's Office

Hospital

Mental Health Service

Detention Center

◆ KDVA Contact Information

Address: P O Box 356
Frankfort, KY 40602
Phone: 502-209-KDVA (5382)
Fax: 502-226-KDVA (5382)
Website: www.kdva.org

Kentucky's Domestic Violence Programs

- A. Ashland**
Safe Harbor/FIVCO, 1-800-926-2150
- B. Bowling Green**
Barren River Area Safe Space,
1-800-928-1183
- C. Elizabethtown**
SpringHaven, inc, 1-800-767-5838
- D. Hazard**
LKLP Safe House, 1-800-928-3131
- E. Hopkinsville**
Sanctuary, Inc, 1-800-766-0000
- F. Lexington**
Bluegrass Domestic Violence
Program, 1-800-544-2022
- G. Louisville**
The Center for Women and Families,
1-877-803-7577
- H. Maysville**
Women's Crisis Center,
1-800-928-6708
- I. Morehead**
DOVES of Gateway, 1-800-221-4361
- J. Mount Vernon**
Family Life Abuse Center,
1-800-755-5348
- K. Northern Kentucky**
Women's Crisis Center,
1-800-928-3335
- L. Owensboro**
OASIS,
1-800-882-2873
- M. Paducah**
Merryman House, 1-800-585-2686
- N. Prestonsburg**
Sandy Valley Abuse Center,
1-800-649-6605
- O. Somerset**
Bethany House Abuse, Shelter, Inc
1-800-755-2017

