

Domestic Violence Safety Plan



The following steps represent my plan for increasing my safety and preparing in advance for the possibility for further violence. Although I may not be able to predict or control my partner's violence, I do have a choice about how to respond to him/her and how to best protect myself and my children.

Safety During a Violent Incident:

- If my partner and I are having an argument, I can try to move to a space that is lowest risk, such as _____. *{Try to avoid the bathroom, garage, kitchen, rooms with weapons, or rooms without access to an outside door. Do try to pick a room that locks and has a phone.}*
- If it is not safe to stay, I can _____. *Practice getting out safely. What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells, or fire escapes can you use?}*
- I can keep my purse and car keys ready and put them _____ so I can leave quickly.
- I can leave an extra set of car keys with _____ (friend, co-worker, neighbor, etc.) or hide them _____.
- I can tell _____ and _____ about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.
- I can use _____ as my secret code word with my children or my friends so they can call for help.
- I can teach my children how to use the telephone to call 911.
- If I have to leave my home, I can go to _____ or _____. *{Decide this even if you don't think there will be a "next time."}*

Use your judgment. If the situation is very serious, give your partner what he/she wants to calm him/her down. You have to protect yourself until you (and your children) are out of danger.

Safety When Preparing to Leave:

- I can leave money and an extra set of keys with _____ so I can leave quickly.
- I can keep copies of important documents, extra clothes and medications with _____.
- I will open a bank account by _____, to increase my independence, even if I can only put a few dollars in it. I can check with a bank, a credit union about opening an account, or I can _____. *{Preferably opened in a different bank than you and your partner use jointly.}*
- Other things I can do to increase my independence are _____.
- The domestic violence hotline telephone number is _____. *(In Durham, 403-6562.)* I can keep change for phone calls with me at all times. I understand that if I use my telephone credit card, the following month's bill will tell my partner those numbers that I called after I left. To keep my telephone communications confidential, I can use change or get a friend's permission to use his or her calling card or cell phone for a limited time when I first leave. I could also purchase a pre-paid calling card for this purpose.
- I can check with _____ and _____ and _____ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money.
- I can review this Safety Plan every _____ (day of the week) so I know the safest way to leave my home. _____ (friend, relative or DCRC Advocate) has agreed to help me review this plan.
- I can rehearse my escape plan and, as appropriate, practice it with my children.

Safety in My Home:

- If my partner does not live with me or no longer lives with me, I can take steps to ensure my safety and my children's safety in the home. Safety measures I can take include:
 - Changing or adding locks on the doors and windows.
 - Replacing wooden doors with steel or metal doors.
 - Installing security systems, including window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an alarm system, etc.
 - Purchasing rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.
 - Installing smoke detectors and purchasing fire extinguishers for each floor of my home.
 - Installing an outside motion-sensitive lighting system that activates when a person approaches my home. *(Durham Crisis Response Center- DCRC, 403-6562, can help you get an alarm system, 911 cell phone or lock changes free in certain circumstances.)*
- I can teach my children to recite their names, addresses, home telephone number and parents' names.
- I can teach my children how to use the telephone to make a collect call to me and to _____ in the event that my partner abducts them.
- I will tell people who take care of my children who has permission to pick up my children and that my partner is not permitted to do so. The people I inform about pick-up permission include:
 - _____ (school / teacher)
 - _____ (day-care or after school staff)
 - _____ (baby sitter)
 - _____ (relatives)
 - _____ (friend)
 - _____ (Sunday school teacher)
 - _____ (others)
- I can inform _____ and _____ that my partner no longer resides with me and they should call the police if he/she is observed near my home.

Safety with Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO):

- I can keep a copy of my DVPO _____. *{Always keep it on or near your person. If you change purses, for instance, be sure that the first thing into the new purse is the DVPO.}*
- I can make extra copies of my DVPO and keep them at _____, _____, and _____. *(Always give a copy to all people and/or places that the abuser has been ordered to stay away from, i.e. day care centers, schools, churches, workplace, family residences, etc.)*
- If my partner violates the DVPO, I can _____.
 - Call law enforcement (911) immediately to report the violation. *(If law enforcement finds the abuser near you, they should arrest him immediately. Show them a copy of your DVPO.)*
 - File a Motion to Show Cause in District Court with the Civil Clerk of Court located at _____; the batterer will have to go back before the judge to address the motion. *(In Durham, go to the Durham County Judicial Building, 201 East Main Street, on the 3rd Floor.)*
 - Charge the abuser for the crimes he commits in violating the order by going to the Criminal Magistrates' office located at _____. *(In Durham, 206 E. Pettigrew St, at Mangum St.) (For help, you can call DCRC crisis line, 403-6562, or the DCRC Legal Advocate, 403-9425 x 240.)*

- If law enforcement and the courts are not responsive, I can:
 - File a complaint with the police department or sheriff's office by calling _____. *(If in Durham, you may want to contact the Domestic Violence Unit in the Durham Police Department, 560-4910, or the Crisis Unit in the Durham County Sheriff's Office, 560-0901)*
 - Contact my domestic violence advocate who may advocate for me and help me file a complaint with the police department or sheriff's department, if necessary. *(In Durham, call the DCRC crisis line 403-6562 or the DCRC Legal Advocate, 403-9425 x 240.)*
 - Contact my attorney who can advocate for me with law enforcement and the courts.
- I can inform _____ and _____ and _____ *(friend, relative, church/synagogue leader, etc.)* that I have a DVPO.
- If my partner destroys my DVPO, I can get another copy from the Civil Clerk's office at the courthouse located at _____. *(In Durham County, the Clerk's Office is located on the third floor of the Durham County Judicial Building, 201 East Main Street, Durham.)*

Safety on the Job and in Public:

- I can inform _____ and _____ and _____ at work of my situation. *(boss, security supervisor, co-worker, etc.)*
- I can give a copy of my DVPO to _____ *(boss, security supervisor, co-worker, etc.)* or other co-worker.
- I can use _____ *(voice mail, the receptionist or a co-worker)* to help screen my telephone calls at work.
- I can park my car in a visible, well-lighted area at _____.
- When I am leaving work, I can _____

(walk out with co-workers, ask Security for an escort, take a different route home, etc.).

- If problems occur while I am driving home, I can:
 - Use my cellular phone to call for help. *(DCRC can help you get a free 911 cell phone if needed.)*
 - Drive to a local police or fire department
 - Go to a well-lighted, heavily trafficked place, like a gas station, restaurant or drive-thru to ask for help.
- If I use public transportation, I can make the driver aware of any threatening situation.
- I can also _____ *(request a transfer to another job site or another department, change my job hours, change jobs altogether, etc.)*.
- I change where I shop to _____ *(grocery stores and shopping malls)* and shop at hours that are different from my typical routine.

Safety and Drug or Alcohol Consumption:

- If I am going to consume alcohol or other drugs, I can do so in a safe place and with people who understand the risk of violence and are committed to my safety, such as _____.
- If my partner is consuming or using, I can be prepared to leave the home.
- To protect my children when using alcohol or other drugs, I can _____ *(have them stay with a trusted friend, relative, etc.)*.

Remember that the use of alcohol or drugs can impair your judgment, awareness and ability to react quickly. It may also put you at a disadvantage in other legal actions with your abuser.

Safety and My Emotional Health:

The experience of being battered and verbally degraded by partners is usually exhausting and emotionally draining. The process of building a new life for myself takes much courage and incredible energy. To conserve my emotional energy and resources, and to avoid hard emotional times, I can do some of the following:

- I can attend a domestic violence support group. (*In Durham, call DCRC at 403-6562.*)
- I can see an individual counselor or therapist.
- If I feel down and ready to return to a potentially abusive situation, I can _____
- When I must communicate with my partner in person or by telephone, I can _____
- I can use positive self-talk with myself and be assertive with others. I can tell myself that I do not deserve to be beaten whenever I feel others are trying to control or abuse me.
- I can read _____ to help me feel stronger.
- I can call the police, my attorney or _____ as other resources to support me when I feel threatened.

Items to Take With Me When Leaving:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identification for myself | <input type="checkbox"/> Address book |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driver's license and registration | <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's birth certificates | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical records for all my family members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My birth certificate | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security cards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clothes for myself and my children | <input type="checkbox"/> Welfare identification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money | <input type="checkbox"/> School and vaccination records |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lease, rental agreement, house deed, mortgage payment book | <input type="checkbox"/> Work permits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bank books | <input type="checkbox"/> Green card, visa and/or passport |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check books and ATM cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce papers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Credit cards | <input type="checkbox"/> DVPO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance papers | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewelry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keys to the house, cars and office | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's favorite toys / blanket |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medication for myself and the children | <input type="checkbox"/> Items of special sentimental value |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small saleable objects (jewelry, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

I can keep these items in one location. If I have to leave, I can grab these items quickly.

Important Telephone Numbers:

- Police Department: **911**
- Police Department Domestic Violence Unit: (Durham – 560 4910) _____
- Civil Clerk of Court: (Durham - 560-8281) _____
- Domestic violence crisis hotline: (Durham – 403-6562) _____
- Work Number: _____
- Supervisor's Home Number/Pager: _____
- My attorney: _____
- Other: _____