Personalized Safety Plan



**Reduce your risk**
No one who experiences domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking has control over their perpetrator’s violence, but you can find ways to reduce your risk of harm. This safety plan is a tool to assist you in identifying options to reduce your risk when confronted with the threat of harm or with actual harm. Safety plans are particularly important when a person is considering leaving a violent relationship, getting a PPO, reporting the violence to law enforcement, or taking other legal action. This is the most dangerous time, because abusive people do not want to let their partners go easily, or be held accountable.

There’s no right or wrong way to develop a safety plan. Use what applies. Add to it. Change it to reflect your particular situation. Make it your own. An advocate from a domestic violence or sexual assault program can also assist you with safety planning.

# Being ready for a crisis- If you have to flee

* If I decide to leave my home, I will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (Practice how to get out safely. What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells or fire escapes would you use?)
* I can keep my purse/wallet and car keys ready and put them \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_in order to escape quickly.
* I can leave necessities such as an extra set of keys, extra clothes, copies of important documents and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ so I have access to these items if I go (see the list below, Items to take when leaving).
* What other things should you anticipate if you had to flee your home suddenly?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I can get help**

* I can tell neighbors I trust about the abuse and request they call the police if they hear noises coming from my house, or suspect that I might be in danger.
* I can tell neighbors that I will use the panic button on my car alarm if I am in danger, and ask them to call 911.
* Any cell phone can be used to call 911, even if there are no minutes on it. I can keep an extra cell phone hidden, turned on and charged in the event that I am not able to use my primary cell phone to call 911.
* I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police/fire department/ambulance. I will make sure they know our address. I can program emergency numbers into my phone and teach my children how to use it.
* I will use \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as my code word with my children or my friends so they will call for help when I use it.
* I will check with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money if needed.
* I will familiarize myself with the resources in the community that can help me (see list at the end of the safety plan). I can call these organizations if I have questions, concerns, or just need someone to talk to. I do not have to deal with this alone.
* If it’s not safe to talk openly, I will use \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as the code word/signal to my children that we are going to go, or I can use this word with my family or friends to let them know that we are coming.

**I can use my judgment** **and intuition**

* When I expect my partner/the perpetrator could become violent, I will try to move to a space that is lowest risk, such as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (You may want avoid rooms with knives and tools that can be used as weapons, like the kitchen or garage. Also avoid rooms without an outside exit like the bathroom if possible.)
* I will use my judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, I can give the person what they want to try and calm them down. I have to protect myself until I am out of danger.
* I will not understimate the lengths to which my partner/perpetrator could go to control me. I will treat all threats (direct and indirect) as legitimate, and document them. I can report these threats to law enforcement.
* I can also teach some of these strategies to some/all of my children, as appropriate.

**Planning to leave**

* I can leave an extra set of keys, extra clothes, copies of important documents , and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (see the list below, Items to take when leaving) with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I will keep important numbers and/or my cell phone with me at all times. I know that my partner can learn whom I’ve been talking to by looking at phone bills, my cell phone, and the caller ID. I can use the phone at the shelter, at my work, or see if friends will let me use their phones.
* I can increase my independence from my abusive partner by opening a bank account, getting credit cards in my own name, taking classes, getting additional job skills, or\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I can rehearse my escape plan and, if appropriate, practice it with my children.

**Items to take when leaving**

* Driver’s license/state ID
* My birth certificate
* Diplomas, professional licenses
* Social Security cards for myself and my children
* Children’s birth certificates
* Children’s school/vaccination records
* Money, checkbook, debit/credit cards
* Medication
* Keys - house, car, office
* Car title
* Proof of home or renter’s insurance
* Bridge Card/DHHS Documents/Medicaid cards
* Passports, green cards, work permits, immigration paperwork
* Divorce or separation papers
* Lease, rental agreement or house deed
* Car/mortgage payment information
* Children’s toys, security blankets, stuffed animals
* Sentimental items, jewelry, photos

**Finances**

* If I am married to my assailant, I can legally take out ½ of the funds from our checking and savings accounts. If I don’t take out my share, they could take out aIl of the money and it may be difficult for me to get any funds.
* I’ll make a list of all of the accounts that are in both my name and my partner’s name (checking, savings, credit cards, shared cell phone plans, utilities, mortgage, etc.) in order to make arrangements to have my name or their name removed.
* I will change the passwords on accounts that are in my name only to try to prevent my partner from accessing them without my permission.
* I will check my credit report to make sure it is accurate, and that my partner has not been taking out credit in my name without my knowledge. I can go to [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) for a free credit report.
* I can contact companies directly if I am concerned my partner would try to gain access to accounts soleley in my name, to alert them to this possibility.

**After I leave/safety in my home**

* I can get a new phone number without disconnecting the old number. I can have an advocate or friend screen the recent calls and voicemail on the old number, and save incoming calls/messages from the perpetrator to use as evidence.
* I can change the locks on my doors, replace wooden or steel doors with fiberglass doors, secure windows, and/or install an outside lighting system with motion detector to light up when someone comes up to the house. I can also install security systems including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic alarm system, etc. (If you rent your home or apartment, be sure to check with your landlord first.)
* I can purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.
* I can install smoke detectors and put fire extinguishers on each floor in my home.
* I will teach my children how to use the phone to call me or 911 when they are not with me, if they are concerned about their safety. My children could also call \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_if they are in danger.
* I can tell the people who take care of my children which people have permission to pick up the children and make sure they know how to recognize those people.
* I will give the people who take care of my children copies of custody and Personal Protection Orders, and emergency numbers.

**At work/school and in public**

* I can inform my boss, the security supervisor and/or Employee Assistance Program about my situation. It is my employer’s responsibility to keep me safe at work.
* I can ask \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to screen my calls and visitors at work.
* When leaving work or class, I can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ if I am being followed or threatened.
* When traveling to and from work/school, if there’s trouble, I can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I can change my patterns and avoid stores, banks, laundromats and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, places where my partner/perpetrator might find me.
* I can tell \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to call the police if they believe that my children or I am in danger.

**Safety with a Personal Protection** **Order (PPO) or no-contact order**

*A PPO is a court order that you petition for in civil court. A no-contact order is issued by a judge in a criminal case at your assailant’s arraignment or sentencing. You can have both, just one, or neither. They are similar in that they are designed to keep the abusive person away from you, but they are enforced differently. In a PPO, you are the petitioner and the assailant is the respondent. For more information on PPOs and no-contact orders, call the Personal Protection Order Office at 517-483-6545 or talk to your advocate.*

* I understand that for some abusers, calling the police or getting a PPO stops the abusive behavior, but for other assailants, their harassing behavior escalates. I will try to anticipate how my assailant will react and plan accordingly.
* I will keep my PPO \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (Always keep it on or near your person.)
* I can tell others about my PPO and or no-contact order in case the respondent is looking for me. I can give copies of my PPO to my employer, my religious advisor, my closest friend, my children’s school, day care center and\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* If the respondent destroys my PPO or if I lose it, I can get another copy from the county clerk in the county where my PPO was issued. If an Ingham County judge issued the order, go to the Circuit Court building located at 313 Kalamazoo St. in Lansing.
* If the respondent violates the PPO or no-contact order, I can call the police to report a violation. For PPOs, I should also file for a show-cause hearing with the court if I want the judge to hold my assailant accountable. The PPO Office can help me file for a show-cause hearing if my PPO was issued in Ingham County. I can also contact my attorney or call my advocate.
* If the respondent violates the PPO, I will keep a stalking log. Go to http://www.victimsofcrime.org/docs/src/stalking-incident-log\_pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=4 for a sample stalking log.
* If the PPO prohibits the respondent from stalking me, I will keep all packages, letters, etc. that the respondent sends to me and report those as violations of the PPO.
* I can file a motion to obtain more protections from my PPO, if all of the protections were not checked by the judge.
* I can call the Personal Protection Order Office at 517-483-6545 if I have any other questions about how to enforce an order or if I have problems getting it enforced.

**My physical and emotional health**

* If I am feeling down, lonely or confused, I can call my advocate, counselor, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and/or I can utilize resources listed at the end of this document.
* I can take care of my physical health needs by getting a checkup with my doctor and dentist.
* I can make sure that I am getting adequate sleep and exercise, and that I am eating right.
* If I am religious or spiritual, I will seek support from my place of worship, my religious advisor, prayer, and/or rituals.
* If I have left my partner and am considering returning, I will call \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or spend time with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_before I make a decision.
* I will remind myself daily of my best qualities. They are: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I can make time for me, to do things I enjoy: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* I can make a list of things I know my partner will say or do to get me back. Then I will be prepared when he/she tries to convince me to return.
* I can journal about my feelings.
* I can make a list of things that I am thankful for.
* I can make a counseling appointment or attend a support group.
* I can read books and look at websites about domestic violence to better educate myself. *The Verbally Abusive Relationship* by Patricia Evans and *Why Does He Do That* by Lundy Bancroft are excellent books about abusive behavior.
* Other things I can do to feel stronger are: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Safety and alcohol/other drug use**

* Many people in our culture use alcohol and many use illegal drugs as a means to cope with trauma. However, the consequences of using alcohol and illegal drugs can be very serious for someone who has experienced domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking: by hurting your relationship with your children; by putting you at a disadvantage in legal actions with your abuser; reducing your ability to react quickly and protect yourself; and lead to addiction. Therefore, individuals should carefully consider the cost of using alcohol and other drugs. If you would like help to stop using, you can go to [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) or [www.na.org](http://www.na.org), or call 211 or your advocate for a referral to a substance abuse program.

**Weapons**

* If your abuser has weapons or has threatened you with a weapon, this safety plan is particularly important. If your abuser has threatened suicide, that is an additional cause for concern. You may want to talk to your advocate about getting weapons removed or taking added safety precautions.
* If you are considering purchasing a weapon (gun, knife, pepper spray, etc.) for your protection, weigh your decision based on these cautions from the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence:
	+ The offender may use it against you
	+ Most people hesitate to shoot an intruder
	+ There is potential for accidental injury, especially if you have children in the house
	+ Additionally, for students, staff and faculty- weapons of any kind are not allowed on the campus of Michigan State University
	+ If you are considering purchasing a gun, you should strongly consider taking handgun lessons to learn proper weapon handling, safety, and familiarity, as well as the legal aspects of deadly force. Michigan residents will also need to register the handgun.

**Safety and technology**

* There is a tremendous amount of information available online about ways abusers use technology to harass, threaten, coerce, surveille, exploit, and violate their victim(s)- too much information to cover here. For more information, go to: <https://nnedv.org/content/technology-safety>. If you do not have computer access, or if it is not safe for you to use your computer, contact an advocate for assistance in learning more.

**Local, Statewide & National Resources**

***For Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Human Trafficking***

**Capital Area Response Effort (CARE)**

2500 S. Washington, Lansing, MI (571) 272-7436 lpdcare@yahoo.com

* *Information, referrals and advocacy for survivors of domestic violence*

**EVE (End Violent Encounters)**

*Lansing, MI* (517) 372-5572 (crisis line) (517) 372-5976 (business line) [www.eveinc.org](http://www.eveinc.org)

* *24 hour hotline for crisis intervention and referrals,**counseling, support groups, advocacy and/or shelter**for survivors of domestic violence, elder abuse and sexual assault*
* *Assistance and transportation accessing free medical exam and evidence collection for survivors of sexual assault.*

**Firecracker Foundation**

2450 Delhi Commerce Dr. #9, Holt, MI 48842 (517) 742-7224 <http://thefirecrackerfoundation.org/>

* *Title IX advocacy, counseling and yoga therapy for child survivors under the age of 18 who have experienced sexual trauma; caretaker support group for parents/guardians of children who have experienced sexual trauma*

**Ingham County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, Victim Witness Unit**

303 W. Kalamazoo, Lansing, MI (517) 483-6108 <http://pa.ingham.org/DomesticViolenceUnit.aspx>

* *For victims/survivors/witnesses who have questions or concerns regarding their court case*

**MSU Safe Place**

(517) 355-1100 x2 noabuse@msu.edu <http://safeplace.msu.edu>

* *Located on the campus of Michigan State University*
* *Counseling, support group, advocacy and/or shelter**for survivors of domestic violence and/or stalking*
* *Support and consultation for survivors’ family, friends and co-workers*
* *Professional trainings to improve system responses*
* *Those not affiliated with MSU can receive services as staffing and/or shelter space allow*

**MSU Center for Survivors**

(517) 372-6666 [centerforsurvivors.msu.edu](http://www.endrape.msu.edu)

* *Located on the campus of Michigan State University*
* *24 hour hotline for any survivor of sexual assault or sexual harassment, or their friends/family, seeking support, information and referrals*
* *Crisis chat available through endrape.msu.edu, 7 days/week, 10am to 10pm*
* *Advocacy services for any survivor of sexual assault*
* *Counseling and support groups for MSU students only*

**MSU Sexual Assault Healthcare Program**

(517) 353-2700 <https://centerforsurvivors.msu.edu/sexual-assault-healthcare-program/index.html>

**National Domestic Violence Hotline**

1-800-799-SAFE (7233) (800) 787-3224 (TTY)

* *Services available 24/7 in English and Spanish*
* *For more information or live chat, go to* [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)

**National Human Trafficking Resource Center**

1-888-373-7888 Text 233733 (text “HELP” or “INFO”) TTY 711

* *Services available 24/7 in English, Spanish and 22 additional languages*
* *Live chat and more information is available at* <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

* *Services available 24/7 in English and Spanish*
* *For more information or live chat, go to* <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

**National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline**

1-866-331-9474 (866) 331-8453 (TTY) Text loveis to 22522

* *Services available 24/7 in English and Spanish*
* *Live chat and other information available at* [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)

**Personal Protection Order Office**

313 W. Kalamazoo, Lansing, MI 48933 (517) 483-6545 [www.eveninc.org](http://www.eveninc.org)

* *The PPO Office is a program of EVE, providing technical assistance for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and/or stalking to obtain and enforce a Personal Protection Order*

**Prevention and Training Services (PATS)**

252 S. Waverly Rd, Lansing, MI 48917 (517) 323-8149 [www.patslansing.com](http://www.patslansing.com)

* *Domestic Abuse Intervention Program for men who have been abusive in their intimate partner relationships; substance abuse programs; and an economic crime program*

**Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)**

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

* *Services available 24/7 in English and Spanish*
* *Live chat available and more information available at* [*www.rainn.org*](http://www.rainn.org)

**SafeCenter**

Clinton and Shiawassee Counties (877) 952-7283 [www.thesafecenter.org](http://www.thesafecenter.org)

* *24 hour hotline for crisis intervention and referrals****,*** *counseling, support group, advocacy and/or shelter for survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault*

**SIREN**

Eaton County (800)-899-9777*or* (517) 543-4915 [www.sireneatonshelter.org](http://www.sireneatonshelter.org)

* *24 hour hotline for crisis intervention and referrals, counseling, support group, advocacy and/or shelter for survivors of domestic violence*

**Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline** (*Services available 24/7)*

1-866-VOICEDV or 1-866-864-2338; Text: 877-861-0222; TTY: 517-898-5533; Chat: [www.mcedsv.org/hotline-domestic-violence/hotline-chat](http://www.mcedsv.org/hotline-domestic-violence/hotline-chat)

**Statewide Sexual Assault Hotline** (*Services available 24/7)*

1-855-VOICES4 or 1-855-864-2374; Text: 866-238-1454; TTY: 517-381-8470; Chat: [www.mcedsv.org/hotline/hotline-chat](http://www.mcedsv.org/hotline/hotline-chat)

**Women’s Center of Greater Lansing**

1710-1712 E. Michigan, Lansing, MI(517) 372-9163 [www.womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org](http://www.womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org)

* *Counseling and support group for survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault*
* *Offers numerous other programs related to employment, health, and emotional well-being.*

This safety plan was compiled by The Capital Area Response Effort and Michigan State University Safe Place using the following sources:

www.markwynn.com

<http://www.ncdsv.org/images/DVSafetyPlanforStalking.pdf>

<http://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center/help-for-victims/stalking-safety-planning>

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