

## Safety Plan for Preparation to Leave

Call **CWES** 234-SAFE(7233), Sheriff King Home 266-0707 or Awo Taan 531-1972 (24-Hour crisis line) and let them know you are ready to leave.

**Do you have a car or other transportation?** Yes / No

**Do you have or can you gather the following information?**

### Information for you and your children

- Identification for you and your children (birth certificates, passports, immunization records)
- School records for your children
- Money
- Bank cards, bankbook, credit cards, financial documents
- Passports and immigration papers (where applicable)
- Medications, copies of prescriptions
- Lease/rental agreement, house deed
- Address book
- Personal and children's own special items/toys etc. (photographs, keepsakes)
- Extra diapers, formula, necessary items for infant care

### Information for your pet

- **Vaccination and medical records**
- **A collar and identification tags**
- **A license that proves you own the animal**
- **Dog leashes**
- **Cat carriers**
- **Medication, if any**
- **An information sheet on feeding schedules, medical conditions, likes and dislikes, and any possible behaviour problems to give to a temporary caretaker**
- **Bowls, bedding, toys, grooming supplies, a favorite blanket, etc.**

**Note: Remove old tags and use tags that identify the household your pet is going to. Use a cat carrier to transport your cat. Unconfined cats can easily get scared and escape. If you don't have a carrier for your cat, a pillowcase can work in an emergency.**

### Personalized Safety Plan: When planning to leave

1. I will choose the code word \_\_\_\_\_ and tell \_\_\_\_\_ (my children, a neighbour or friend, family members) so they will know to call police if I use that word.
2. I will arrange emergency transportation with \_\_\_\_\_.  
I will keep my car parked \_\_\_\_\_ in a way that will be easiest to leave quickly.
3. I will lock up any weapons (guns, knives, baseball bat etc.) or store them where it will be harder to get these weapons. I will put \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I will plan an escape route with my children **and pets** as follows. I will tell them it is a disaster plan so they will not alert my partner that we might leave.  
My plan is \_\_\_\_\_ continue on the back of this page.

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5. I will tell \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (friend, neighbour, family) about the violence in my home and ask them to call the police if they hear my code word or notice that anything unusual is happening.
6. I will go to the following safe place \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ if I have to leave my home (friend, neighbour, relative, motel, shelter).
7. **If I am unable to take my pet with me to my safe place I will arrange to have my pet taken to \_\_\_\_\_ (if my plan is to have my pet go to Pet Safekeeping at the Calgary Humane Society I will be prepared by having \_\_\_\_\_ agency make the referral for my pet.)**
8. I will open my own bank account at \_\_\_\_\_ and leave my records with \_\_\_\_\_. (friend, family) or hidden in \_\_\_\_\_.
9. I will set aside money in \_\_\_\_\_ (empty lipstick tube or other unpredictable place, at a friend's house).
10. I will put copies of important papers, birth certificates, social insurance number, health care numbers in \_\_\_\_\_ (a safety deposit box, at a friend's house, the trunk of my car).
11. I will be aware of my children's ability to keep information confidential and will be careful to not share or have them overhear information that I do not want other people to know. This would include information such as \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (plans to leave, location of extra keys, important papers, name and location of a friend who has agreed to help).
12. I will hide an extra car key in \_\_\_\_\_ where I can easily get it in a hurry. I will also keep my purse \_\_\_\_\_ where I can quickly grab it.
13. I will have extra key(s) cut by this date \_\_\_\_\_ (example of keys – house, car, mailbox, safety deposit box, garage).

I will have important papers photocopied by this date \_\_\_\_\_ (examples include birth certificates, immigration papers, passports, health care cards, social insurance number, lease or house deed, prescriptions, pet's medical history, licence information).

I will have safety plan prepared and practiced by this date \_\_\_\_\_.

I will have a bank account opened by this date \_\_\_\_\_.

I will have talked to friends and/or family and/or neighbour by this date \_\_\_\_\_.

I will have essential papers or photocopies, some clothes, special toys and keepsakes (photographs), medication, pet's essentials packed and stored at \_\_\_\_\_ by this date \_\_\_\_\_.

14. I will review my safety plan every \_\_\_\_\_ (week, month).

## **Section 2: Safety Planning for In the Home**

**If you are choosing to stay in the home, consider the following ideas to increase your safety**

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- Become consciously aware of partner’s cues/triggers so you can seek safety before an incident occurs
- If an argument occurs, move to areas of your home where there is lower risk (avoid kitchen, bathroom, garage, rooms without access to outside doors)
- Consider compliance with abusive person to calm him/her down until you can get to safety
- Share what is going on with neighbours and request they call the police if unusual circumstances occur
- Choose a code word with children/family/friends that means call the police
- Arrange emergency transportation with friend or support person
- If possible, lock up potential weapons or make them less accessible
- Keep a telephone in a room that locks from the inside
- Discuss safety for/with your children
- Plan an escape route, teach it to your children and practice (can frame as a general disaster plan)
- Consider options for safe places to go, preferably where partner not likely to look (friend, neighbour, relative, motel, shelter)
- Keep a record of violent incidents, visits with doctor/hospital, including photographs of injuries, have physicians document visits
- Keep the names and location of certain support people confidential so children cannot tell partner. Plan what you will do if your children find out and tell partner of your intention to leave
- Set aside some money, bus tickets, open your own bank account
- Begin acquiring job skills such as typing or other upgrading
- Have several plausible reasons for leaving house day or night
- Have essential items stored in a bag that is easy to grab or keep items in a safe place outside the home (personal/children’s papers or photocopies, some medication or a copy of a prescription, extra keys, **pet’s medical history, licence information, extra leashes or cat carrier, bowls, food, medication, toys**)
- Keep purse, keys easy to access if leaving quickly. Have spare car key hidden somewhere accessible
- Memorize shelter/emergency phone numbers or keep numbers in a safe, easily accessible place
- If you call a shelter, immediately dial another number afterward to avoid any possibility of the call being redialled
- Be aware that telling an abusive person of your intention to leave may increase risk for yourself, your children, **your pets** and others
- Park car in a way that facilitates quick exit
- Review safety plan regularly (weekly, monthly)

**Personalized Safety Plan: When in the Home**

1. I know that it is becoming unsafe when my partner is/does/says the following (drinking, using drugs, picking a fight, criticizing me, angry)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. I know that I am unsafe when I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
 (I.e. isolated, knots in stomach, increased anxiety, like I am “walking on eggshells”).
3. When I expect that we are going to have an argument, I will move to a space that is lowest in risk such as (living room if there is an outside exit). In my home, the \_\_\_\_\_ or the \_\_\_\_\_ would be safer places. I could also go into the \_\_\_\_\_

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- \_\_\_\_\_ where there is a phone and I can lock the door.
- If my situation becomes dangerous, I will \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Follow my plan to leave, call out a code word to my children, use an agreed upon signal to alert a neighbour who will call the police).
  - If I call a shelter for support, I will dial \_\_\_\_\_ immediately afterward so that my call cannot be traced by redialling.
  - I will have extra key(s) cut by this date \_\_\_\_\_.  
(example of keys – house, car, mailbox, safety deposit box, garage)

I will have important papers photocopied by this date \_\_\_\_\_.  
(examples include birth certificates, immigration papers, passports, health care cards, social insurance number, lease or house deed, prescriptions, pet's medical history, licence information)

I will have safety plan prepared and practiced by this date \_\_\_\_\_.

I will have a bank account opened by this date \_\_\_\_\_.

I will have talked to friends and/or family and/or neighbour by this date \_\_\_\_\_.

I will have essential papers or photocopies, some clothes, special toys and keepsakes (photographs), medication, pet's essentials packed and stored at \_\_\_\_\_ by this date \_\_\_\_\_.

- I will review my safety plan every \_\_\_\_\_ (week, month).

### **Section 3:**

#### **Safety with a Restraining Order or No-Contact Order**

- Keep a copy of Restraining Order or No-Contact Order with a support person
- Call police any time when an order is breached
- Inform friends and acquaintances that Order is in place and that they should contact the police if abuser contacts them to find you or talk to you
- Make no attempts to contact abuser
- Carry a copy of the Order at all times

### **Section 4:**

#### **Safety and My Emotional Health**

- Identify important steps to take when feeling down and ready to return to a potentially abusive situation
- Identify and maintain clear boundaries for interacting with partner when necessary (and legal to do so)
- Identify and maintain clear boundaries when feeling others are trying to control or abuse you
- Identify those things, ideas, events, interactions that help you to feel stronger
- Identify support persons available to talk when support is needed
- Journal about events, feelings

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- Use positive self talk (I deserve to be treated with dignity and respect)

## Section 5:

### Safety Planning: Other things to Consider

- When feeling unsafe, trust your instincts and judgements. You are more the expert on what to expect. Use what you know.
- Get in the habit of being familiar with and paying attention to your surroundings. Check buildings before you enter and after you leave. Know where exits are and where a phone is.
- If you have children, tell them that violence is never right even when it is someone they love being violent. Explain to them that it is neither your fault nor is it their (the children's) **or the pet's fault that the abuse is happening**. Develop a safety plan with each of your children.
- Participate in activities in your community to decrease isolation and meet new people.
- Take a self defence course to build your confidence
- Create an escape package and keep it in a safe place. An empty lipstick tube is an unpredictable place to conceal phone numbers and money
- If you need an answering machine, check second hand stores.
- If you need to serve your partner with legal papers, ask someone else you trust to do it or look under "process servers" in the yellow pages book provided by your phone company.
- Develop a habit of not wearing scarves or long necklaces that could be used to choke you.
- Replacing wooden doors with steel doors
- Install security systems including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system etc.
- Purchase rope ladders to escape from second floor windows.
- Install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers for each floor in my house/apartment
- Install an outside lighting system that lights up when a person is coming close to your home
- Inform your boss, the security supervisor at work about your situation
- Ask for help to screen your calls at work
- Refrain from using drugs or alcohol that will reduce your awareness and your ability to protect yourself
- Understand that drugs and alcohol are not the cause of abuse
- Attend workshops and/or support groups that deal with family violence and provide you with support and an opportunity to strengthen your relationships with other people
- Visit a physician when injured and ask that your visit be documented. Keep a record of all injuries. Photograph injuries or have physician photograph injuries and keep photos in your file.
- **Visit a veterinarian when your animal is injured and ask the injuries be documented. Have the veterinarian photograph the injuries and keep them on file.**
- Keep a record of incidents of violence between your partner and another persons
- Note any times when your partner is abusive toward animals
- In situations of high risk, consider living in another town, province, country

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