

SAFETY PLAN FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

(PROVIDED BY OHIO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NETWORK)

www.odvn.org

Not all of the points on this safety plan will apply to your situation. Choose the suggestions that make sense for you.

GENERAL SAFETY PLAN

- Identify a variety of ways to get out of your home safely and **practice using your escape route**.
- **Pack a bag** with medications, important documents, money, keys, etc. and hide it. Consider changing the hiding spot if your abuser searches the house.
- **Arrange a signal with neighbors** to let them know when you need help. (turning on a porch light during the day, pulling down a particular window shade).
- **Devise a code word** to use with your children, grandchildren, friends or others to indicate that you need the police.
- Decide and **plan for where you will go** if you have to leave (even if you don't think you will need to).

SAFETY IN EXPLOSIVE INCIDENTS

- Try to go to a room or area with access to an exit. Avoid rooms with no outside doors and those containing potential weapons (kitchen, bathroom, garage)
- **Try to stay in a room with a phone** to call 911, a friend or neighbor.
- **Inform law enforcement** if weapons are in the home.
- **Visualize your escape route** and be prepared to use it if a safe opportunity arises.
- **Use your code word or special signal** to tell your children or neighbors to call 911.
- **Use your instinct and judgment** to safely assess what to do next.

SAFETY WHEN LEAVING

- **Open a savings account in your own name at a different bank. Consider direct deposit of your paycheck or benefit check. Begin to increase your independence.**
- Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents and extra clothes with **someone you trust**.
- **Have your abuser's social security number and license plate number** with you to provide to the police.
- **Bring medications**, prescriptions, hearing aids, glasses, etc.

- **Determine** who would let you stay with them or lend you money.
- **Keep the domestic violence program number with you** and have some change at all times for emergency phone calls.
- If you are 60 years or older, **contact Adult Protective Services** to learn about eligibility for public and private benefits and services.
- **Review your safety plan** regularly to plan the safest way to leave.

SAFETY IN YOUR OWN HOME

(if your abuser does not live with you)

- **Change the locks** on your doors as soon as possible. Buy additional locks and safely devices to secure your windows. Consider increasing your outside lighting.
- If you have children or other dependents living with you, **discuss a safety plan** for when you are not with them. Inform their school, day care, etc. about who has permission to pick them up.
- **Inform neighbors and your landlord** that your abuser no longer lives with you and they should call the police if they see your abuser near your home.

SAFETY & PROTECTION ORDERS

- **Keep your protection order with you at all times.** If it is lost or destroyed, you can get another copy from the County Clerk of Courts.
- **Call the police** if your abuser violates the protection order.
- **If your protection order is out of state**, register it with your local police department.
- **Give copies** to anyone with whom your children may stay (schools, day care, etc.).

SAFETY IN PUBLIC

(At school, work or social, recreational & volunteer activities.)

- **Decide who to inform of your situation** (school, office or building security) and provide a picture of your abuser. Consider having your phone calls screened.
- **Devise a safety plan** for when you are out in public. Have someone escort you to your car, bus or taxi. Use a variety of routes to go home and consider what you would do if something happened on your way home.

SAFETY & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

- If you are considering returning to a potentially abusive situation, **discuss an alternate plan** with someone you trust.
- **If you have to communicate with your abuser**, do so in the safest way – by phone, mail in the company of another person, etc.
- **Decide who you can talk to freely** and who can provide the support you need. Consider calling a domestic violence hotline or attending a support group.

IF YOU ARE A TEEN

(in an abusive situation)

- Decide which friend, teacher, relative or police officer you can tell.
- Contact a local domestic violence program to learn about making a safety plan.

WHAT TO TAKE IF YOU LEAVE

- Driver's license or other form of ID.
- Your birth certificate and those of your family members.
- Money, bank books, checkbooks, credit cards, ATM cards, mortgage payment book.
- Social security card, work permit, green card, passport, insurance papers, medical records.
- Your abuser's social security number and license plate number.
- Divorce and custody papers.
- Copies of your protection order.
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed.
- Keys to house, car office.
- Medications, glasses, hearing aids, etc. for you and your children or dependents.
- Personal items like address book, pictures, etc.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

- For information about domestic violence support services, nearby shelters, and your legal options, call Ohio Domestic Violence Network's 24 hour information line toll free at **1-800-934-9840**
- Or, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1-800-799-SAFE (7233)**

**REMEMBER, IN AN EMERGENCY
CALL 911**