



## ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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### Creating Your Personal Safety Plan

#### If you are still in the relationship:

- Think of a safe place to go if an argument occurs – avoid rooms with no exits, such as bathrooms, or rooms with weapons, such as the kitchen.
- Make a list of safe people to contact and memorize all important phone numbers.
- Keep an emergency bag packed with a change of clothes, blanket, and cash in a safe but hidden spot so your abuser cannot find them, should you have to flee.
- Establish a “code word” or “sign” so that family, friends, or co-workers know when to call for help.
- Think about what you will say to your partner if he/she becomes violent.

Remember, you have the right to live without fear and violence!

#### If you have left the relationship:

- Change your phone number and/or screen incoming calls.
- Save and document all contact, messages, injuries, and other incidents.
- Change the locks, if your abuser has a key, and install a home security system.
- Avoid staying alone.
- Do not tell others where you live, especially the batterer.
- Plan how to get away if confronted by the abuser at home or in a public setting.
- If you have to meet your former partner, do it in a public space.
- Vary your routine.
- Notify school and work contacts.
- If necessary, go to your local courthouse and file a Protection from Abuse or Protection from Stalking Order. Call the local police if they violate the Orders.

If you leave the relationship, or are thinking of leaving, you should take important papers and documents with you to enable you to apply for benefits and/or take legal action. Better yet, gather those papers together and put them in a safe place so that if you have to flee, you have got them somewhere safe. It may be a good idea to keep them with a trusted friend or relative. Putting them in your purse or the trunk of your car is not necessarily the best plan.

Important papers you should take include Social Security cards and birth certificates for you and your children, your marriage license, leases or deeds in your name or both yours and your partner’s names, your checkbook, your debit/credit cards, bank statements, insurance policies, proof of income for you and your spouse, tax documentation, and any documents of past incidents of abuse (photos, police reports, medical records, etc.).