

Safety Planning – Recently Separated

Sometimes abusive partners will continue abusive and controlling behaviours even after you separate. There are many things an individual can do to increase your safety in your own residence. It may be impossible to do everything at once, but safety measures can be added step by step.

In my Home

- I will change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.
- I will talk to _____ about having a security system installed for my safety.
- I can purchase smoke detectors and fire extinguishers for each floor in my house/apartment.
- I will make sure my street number is clearly marked on my home for emergency response by police.
- I will install and use a door viewing device. (peep hole)
- If my door lock systems are keyless, I will change the code on door and garage and ensure my abuser no longer has garage door opener.
- I will introduce myself to my neighbours and will ask them to call the police if they hear fighting.
- I can inform _____ and _____ that my partner no longer lives with us and they should contact the police if he/she is observed near my residence.
- I will make sure all windows are covered and that all entrances are well lit. I can ensure my name is not on my mailbox or in an apartment directory. I can install an outside motion lighting system.
- I will teach my children to let me know when someone is at the door before answering the door.
- Consider moving my furniture around differently as my abuser may not anticipate and cause him/her to bump into it and give me warning that they are in the house.
- Put kitchen utensils and knife block in the cupboards so they are not accessible.
- If I live in an apartment, check the floor clearly when getting off the elevator. Look in mirrors and be aware of doorways in hallways. Speak to security requesting safety in my building.
- Purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from upper floors.
- I can have an unlisted phone number and only give my new number to those people I trust. I will not leave my name on my answering machine and can use the electronic voice message to increase my anonymity. I can have safety features installed on my phone such as call block, caller ID, voice mail, etc.
- I will apply for a parenting order.
- I will apply for custody of my children. Filing for custody order has a fee of \$50.00.

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- I will teach my children how to use the phone to make collect calls to me and to _____ or _____ in the event my partner takes the children.
- I will teach my children our new address and get them to practice the address and landmarks.
- I will teach my children a code word that grants them permission to leave with a person other than myself only when that person uses that code word in direct communication with my children. I will change the code word with my children frequently.
- I will give my code word to the person(s) I instruct to collect my children in an emergency.
- I will ensure that the school, day care, and police have a copy of all court orders, including restraining orders, custody and access orders, as well as a picture of the abuser.

I will tell people who take care of my children which people have permission to pick up my children and that my partner is not permitted to do so. The people I will inform about pick-up permission include:

School/Teacher:

Day Care Staff:

Baby Sitter:

Coach/Instructor:

Others:

Safety on the Job and in the Public

- I will inform my boss (if safe to do so) _____ and _____ at work of my situation.
- I can ask _____ to help screen my telephone calls at work. I can also make use of telephone voice messaging to screen my calls.
- When leaving work I will call _____ and let them know I am leaving. I will leave with _____. Once I get to my car I will check the back seat. I will park my car in well-lit areas and will back into parking spots for easy escape.
- I will vary my usual routines and use different grocery stores, mall and banks to conduct my business.
- Carry your keys in your hands or get a remote or keyless entry car door opener.
- Scan the parking lot.
- Carry a purse-sized flashlight
- If I leave work after dark or work late, I will move my car closer to the entrance during my break.

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- I will walk around my car, look under the hood, check if anything has been tampered with, and check the brakes. I will remember to keep my car seats forward so I will know if someone is hiding in the car.
- If I have underground parking, I will consider parking across the street.
- Keep a sign in my car saying “call police”.
- Change the patterns of when I arrive and leave work and the routes I take home; if I am walking take a route that is populated.
- If I see my abuser on the street, I will get to a public place as quickly as possible, e.g. a store.
- When using public transit, get off at a stop different than your abuser may expect or wait to exit until you see that other people are also exiting. If in danger, you may notify the driver to call 911.
- Make four consecutive turns to see if you are really being followed.

If I am being followed I will:

If I agree to see my abuser, I can go to a public place so that we will not be in an isolated place:

Safety with a Court Order

- I understand that I will have to report to the Police when my partner breaches any conditions of the court order. I understand that my partner may be charged if I contact him/her. I will call the police if my partner attempts to contact me.
- I will get a copy of my partner’s court order from the court office and keep it with me at all times. If I change purses or wallet, that’s the first thing to put in it. I will carry a copy of the order with me at all times.
- If I relocate to another city/town, or if I work in a city/town other than where I reside, I will notify the Police Services in that city/town of my new address and work location and of my partner’s violent behaviour and the details of his or her court order.
- For further safety, if I often visit other cities/towns/countries, I will notify the Police Service in that jurisdiction I am visiting, of my partner’s violent behaviour and the details of his/her court order.

