



# Creating a Domestic Violence Safety Plan

The following lists are things to keep in mind in order to keep you and your family safe. Some of these items may or may not pertain to your family.

## **If You Need to Get to Safety Quickly**

- If you don't have a car, think of a safe place close to your home where a friend could pick you up. Also, know the routes to the subway, bus stop, or train station nearest to your home.
- You may want to plan a code word or phrase to use on the telephone with a friend if you need to get help when the abuser is near you. Tell your friend that when you say that code word, it means you're in trouble and you need them to call 911 for you (ex: you can ask them to bring you a pizza)
- If you feel comfortable, tell your neighbors or security/front desk about the violence and ask if they will call the police if suspicious noises are coming from your home. Provide a photo of the abuser.
- If you are in immediate danger, you should always contact 911. This is free from all phones.
- Decide where to go if you have to leave at night. Think of public places that are open 24 hours a day. Know the route to police stations, hospitals, fire stations, and 24-hour convenience stores in your area.
- If you have a car, make a habit of backing the car into the driveway or parking spot and keeping it fueled.
- If you leave by car, make sure you lock the car doors immediately.
- Can you leave extra money, clothes, copies of important documents, etc. with someone you trust?
- Consider making a plan for each room in your home/apartment building. What can you do to get out of the basement or upper floors of your home?
- If you can't get out of the home, know the safest rooms. Identify safe areas of the house where there are no weapons and where there are always ways to escape.
- Know which doors lock in your home.
- Think of all the ways to get out of the building safely. Is there a fire escape that could get you safely to the ground? Is there a stairwell you could use?
- Keep your essential belongings (identification/credit cards) and keys in a place that is safe and accessible to you, in case you have to leave quickly.
- Make a safety plan for work. Give the security guard or receptionist a copy of the FRO (if you have one) and picture of the abuser. Change work hours, if possible.
- Alert school authorities and your children's friends/caretakers.
- Reschedule appointments if the abuser is aware of them.
- Make sure your children know how to contact 911 in an emergency. Instruct your children on where to go in an emergency.
- Practice how to get out safely with your children (to minimize impact on the children, it can be a general safety drill).
- Know where you can get help!

If you need legal assistance, visit [LSNJLAW hotline.org](https://www.LSNJLAW hotline.org) or call

**1-888-LSNJ-LAW**

**1-888-576-5529**

## **Steps You Can Take to Make Your Home Safer**

- Change the locks on doors and windows.
- Install and keep smoke detectors up-to-date.
- Install video security cameras or a security system to monitor outside the home and to alert you if windows or doors are tampered with.
- Have a charged cell phone on you at all times; keep a charger in your car or a portable charger with you.
- Keep emergency numbers on speed/auto dial.
- Obtain P.O. Box.

## **Important Documents and Other Items**

Keep important documents together in a safe place and know where they are located at all times. These documents and other necessities may include:

- Temporary or Final Restraining Order
- Keys
- Identification (driver's license, passport, social security card, health insurance card)
- Credit and/or debit card
- Money/cab fare
- Immigration documents
- Cell phone
- Car registration
- Your partner's social security number
- Medical records
- Insurance policies
- Important legal documents
- Police reports
- Any journal or record of violence
- Birth certificates
- Medications
- Clothing
- Eye glasses/Contacts
- Lease
- Items for baby/children: diapers, formula, school and immunization records, snacks, etc.
- If safe, forward pictures or documentation of any past injuries/abuse to a trusted friend or family member in case you need access to them in the future and you lose or damage the phone they are in.

## **Additional Tips**

- Be careful who you give your address/phone number to.
- Change your daily routine/schedule. Don't take the same route every time.
- Use different stores for food shopping, laundromats, etc.
- Do not frequent the same social spots.
- Share your location with a family member or friend so they know where you are if you need help.
- Put a fingerprint lock/password on your cell phone; if the abuser knows your password, change it.
- If possible, have your own cell phone plan.
- Do not share your account information (i.e. Netflix, Spotify) with others, and if you have, change the passwords immediately.
- Be aware if your house appliances have tracking/monitoring abilities through the internet.
- Watch for notifications on your phone that there is a tracking device (i.e. Air Tags) in your vicinity that were not there before.
- Make social media accounts private to limit unwanted access by others.
- Clear your search/browser history on your devices if you are looking up DV resources.