

Safety Plan for Survivors of Domestic Violence

- Please always keep your cell phone charged and with you
- Please do not hesitate to call 911 when you are in immediate crisis or danger
- Pack an emergency bag full of belongings that will last you 3 days. The point of this bag is to leave at a friend or neighbor's house that you can take with you whenever you are in danger and want to flee your house or your partner. This bag should contain:
 - **Cash** (checkbooks, cards) , **legal documents** (birth certificate, social security card, passports, housing lease, car registration and title), **medicine & medical documents**, **several changes of clothes**, **documents concerning your children** (birth certificate, social security card, school records), **clothes for your children**, **other important documents** (insurance papers, divorce papers, restraining orders)
- Leave an extra set of car and house keys outside
- Keep a list of your emergency phone numbers
- In case of a fight, please avoid the kitchen area where there are sharp instruments. Also avoid bathrooms where there are curtains and blunt objects and counters, and avoid closets and small spaces, where the abuser can trap you. Instead, go to rooms with locks, doors, windows, or phones
- If you have children, teach them to call 911 for help when you or they are in danger
- If you can, please keep the arguments away from your children. The reason why we say this is because victim advocates aren't mandated reporters of child abuse here at CCS, but law enforcers, therapists, social workers, and other professionals are
- Get medical attention immediately if injuries occur. At first, you may not realize that you have injuries, as bruises can take a couple days to show. If you are pregnant, it is imperative that you seek attention immediately. Request that pictures be taken of the bruises or injuries for documentation. It is helpful to keep pictures and copies of police reports. You may not want to leave at this time, but you should keep it for later on if you change your mind and would like to file for a Domestic Violence Restraining order for your safety. Medical personnel are mandated reporters of domestic violence. If you go to the hospital and explain how you received your injuries, the medical staff will report the incident to the police
- Establish a code between you and your loved one that you both can use to communicate with when they are in danger. For example, you can text someone the number 5, which you can use as a code for you to call 911 on their behalf because they are in danger and cannot make a phone call. Or, you can use the **Circle of 6** phone app, in which at any time, you can easily alert six people that you are in an unsafe situation, and to call you or pick you up
- If you choose to leave, you must have a plan of action. You should begin separating yourself from the abuser by getting a separate bank account, obtaining a Restraining Order, and packing an emergency bag full of important belongings in case you need to leave quickly. Again, this bag should include your: driver's license, passports, birth certificates, social security cards, green cards, immigration papers, immunization records, medical documents and medications, marriage or divorce papers, insurance documents, restraining order, car registration and title, rental agreement or mortgage papers, checkbook, legal and medical documents regarding your children, school records, cash, credit, or ATM cards, spare clothes for you and your children, car keys, personal items, toys for children, sentimental items, jewelry, address book and phone book.

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- Save some cash with a friend or relative for if you ever plan to run away. The reason why we say this is because the instance that you leave, the perpetrator can trace your location through your credit card, so you would need to avoid using your credit card. Or have a bank account in your name only
- Having an escape route will prepare you for the moment you leave. You must know where you are going (to a shelter or to a friend for family member's home) and how you will get there. Look into getting traveler's aid if you need to flee your city, as there may be programs close to you that offer traveler's aid to victims of violence, such as **www.travelersaidsandiego.org**. If the abuser leaves the house, you should change the locks, get a new private phone number, and inform neighbors to call the police if abuser comes to the house
- After you have left the home, there are again more things you must consider to keep yourself and your children safe. You should change your regular travel habits or carpool with someone from work. If you have a restraining order, you must always keep your restraining order on hand, and keep a cell phone to call 911 in emergencies. Travel in groups, go to lunch with coworkers, or ask them to walk you to your car. The children's school must be made aware of the situation, or they may release the children to the abuser. Inform them not to give your address to anyone if you have left the home. Look into a confidential mailbox. Relying on a strong support system is very beneficial at this time. The most dangerous time for victims is when they decide to leave. Your safety is the number one priority
- Lastly, add the National Domestic Violence Hotline number to your list of emergency phone numbers. You can call this hotline whenever they wish to speak to an advocate for support, assistance, information, or resources. The number is **1 (800) 799-7233 (800-799-SAFE)**. Please note that this hotline, and the sexual assault hotline, is also included in the Circle of 6 phone app.