

Safety At Home (When the Abuser has Moved Out)

- Change the locks on your doors.
- Buy locks for your windows.
- Talk to a neighbor about the violence, and ask that they call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.

Safety Planning with your Children

- Plan and rehearse an escape route out of your home.
- Teach them a code word, and tell them to call 911 when you use that code word.
- Teach them how to use a public telephone to dial 911.
- Inform your children's school, day care provider, etc. about who has permission to pick your children up.
- If necessary, provide school/day care personnel with a photo of your abuser, with strict instructions not to release your child to that person. Make sure they have a copy of your restraining order if you have one.
- Ask school personnel not to give out your address or phone number.

Don't Leave Until You're Ready

- Identify and practice how to get out of your home safely.
- Prepare a suitcase and leave it with a friend. See our suggested checklist for items to pack.
- Open a post office box so that you can receive mail/checks.
- Determine ahead of time where you might be able to stay temporarily. Keep in mind that you don't want your abuser to find you.
- Keep important phone numbers on you, including numbers of domestic violence shelters.
- Purchase a phone card and keep it in your wallet.
- Try to save money in a separate savings account in your name or give money to hold to a trusted friend.
- Review your safety plan as often as possible.

Safety During an Incident With Your Abuser

- Stay out of rooms that have no exit (closets, bathrooms).
- Avoid rooms that have weapons (kitchens, bedrooms where there may be a gun).
- Select and use a code word that alerts your friends, neighbors and family members to call 911.
- Use your instincts. If the situation is dangerous, consider giving the abuser what he or she wants to calm him or her down.

Items To Take - Checklist

- ◇ Identification & driver's license
- ◇ Car registration, title and insurance
- ◇ Birth certificates for self and children
- ◇ Social Security cards
- ◇ School and medical records
- ◇ Cash, bankbooks, ATM and credit cards
- ◇ Extra keys - house/car/office
- ◇ Changes of clothes
- ◇ Medications
- ◇ Eyeglasses and contacts
- ◇ Food and supplies for pets
- ◇ Pet registration and medical records
- ◇ Cash and food assistance cards
- ◇ Child support orders
- ◇ Passport(s), Green Card, Visa Permits
- ◇ Divorce and custody documents
- ◇ Marriage license
- ◇ Copies of protective orders
- ◇ Agreements - lease/rental/deeds
- ◇ Mortgage payment book
- ◇ Current unpaid bills in my name
- ◇ Health and life insurance documents
- ◇ Jewelry, heirlooms, photos and items of sentimental value
- ◇ Children's toys and blankets
- ◇ Address book/emergency numbers
- ◇ RI Statewide Helpline (1.800.494.8100)
- ◇ Trusted friends and family; school; work
- ◇ Local police; doctor's office; hospital
- ◇ Community agencies; veterinarian

