



The Workplace Safety Plan

At work, the victim/survivor and employer may want to discuss the following safety ideas:

- **Contacting the local domestic violence project;**
- Obtaining a protection from abuse order. Make sure that it is current and on hand at all times. Include the workplace on the order. A copy should be provided to the police, the employee's supervisor, Human Resources, the employee's reception area, the Legal Department, and Security;
- Providing a picture of the perpetrator to reception areas and/or security;
- Identifying an emergency contact person should the employer be unable to contact her/him;
- Reviewing the safety of the victim/survivor's parking arrangements.
- Having Security and/or a colleague escort the victim/survivor to her/his car or public transportation;
- Changing and/or having unpredictable rotations of the victim/survivor's work schedule, work site, or work assignment if such a change is possible and would enhance safety at work;
- Having heightened awareness of safety during especially dangerous times, such as when the victim/survivor is leaving the relationship or after a protection from abuse order has been obtained;
- Installing additional security measures for the work site such as surveillance cameras, mirrors at entrances, parking lot alarms, and electronic entry systems;
- Having the victim/survivor's telephone calls screened at work to prevent access by the abuser, changing extension numbers, work cell phone number, and email addresses, and having any identifying contact information removed from the company's electronic and printed documents;
- Reviewing procedures for capturing and storing evidence such as voicemail recordings or video surveillance for use in prosecution when applicable;
- Reviewing the safety of childcare arrangements, whether it is on-site at the company or off-site elsewhere. If an order for protection from abuse is in place, it can usually be extended to the childcare center. The abused employee should consult with the company's legal and security services for guidance if the childcare is on-site; and
- Providing the victim/survivor with a cell phone pre-programmed to dial 911.

The Personal Safety Plan

Domestic violence advocates are available 24-hours a day to provide free and confidential assistance to victims/survivors. In Maine, the Domestic Violence Helpline number is 1-866-83- 4HELP. The victim/survivor may benefit from speaking with a domestic violence advocate about the following personal safety planning ideas.

The advocate may ask some of the following questions when discussing safety with the victim/survivor:

- In what way can I (and others) help you?
- What do you need to be safe?
- What particular concerns do you have about your children's safety?
- What have you tried in the past to protect yourself and your children? (Ex: left for a few days, sought help from family or friends, fought back, got a protection from abuse order) Did any of these strategies help? Will any of them help you now?

If the victim/survivor has had the perpetrator evicted or is living alone, she/he may want to consider:

- Changing locks on doors and windows;
- Installing a better security system – window bars, locks, better lighting, smoke detectors, and fire extinguishers;
- Teaching the children to call the police or family and friends if they are snatched;
- Talking to schools and childcare providers about who has permission to pick up the children and developing other special provisions to protect the children;
- Finding a lawyer knowledgeable about family violence to explore custody, visitation, and divorce provisions that protect the children and the victim;
- In rural areas where only the mailbox will be visible from the street, covering the box with bright colored paper so the police can more easily locate the home;
- Obtaining an order for protection.

If the victim/survivor is leaving the perpetrator, s/he may review the following:

- How and when can you most safely leave? Is transportation available? Is money available? Do you have a place to go?
- Is the place you are fleeing to safe?
- Are you comfortable calling the police in an emergency?
- Who will you tell or not tell about leaving?

- What is in place to prevent the partner from finding you?
- How will travel to and from work and childcare be made safe?
- What community or legal resources will assist with safety? Write down their addresses and phone numbers.
- Do you know the number of the local domestic abuse project?
- What custody and visitation provisions would keep you and the children safer?
- Would a protection from abuse order be a viable option?

If the victim/survivor is staying with the perpetrator, s/he may review the following:

- In an emergency what works best to keep you safe?
- Who can be called in a crisis?
- Can a signal be worked out with the children to call the police or get help if the violence starts again?
- If you need to flee temporarily, where can you go? (Help to think of several options.)
- What are the escape routes from the house?
- Identify dangerous locations in the house and advise the victim/survivor not to be trapped in them.
- If there are weapons in the house, explore ways to have them removed.
- Advise that an extra set of keys be made and to hide some money in case of an emergency.
- Remind the victim/survivor that in the middle of a violent assault, it is always best to trust her judgment about what is best – sometimes it is best to flee, sometimes to placate the assailant – anything that works to protect herself.
- Advise the victim to have the following available in case she/he must flee:

Birth certificates ~ Social security cards ~ Marriage and driver's licenses and car title ~ Bank account number, credit and ATM cards, savings passbooks ~ Lease/rental agreements, house deed, mortgage papers ~ Insurance information and forms ~ School and health records ~ Welfare and immigration documents ~ Medications and prescriptions ~ Divorce papers or other court documents ~ Phone numbers and addresses for family, friends, and community agencies ~ Clothing and comfort items for her/him and the children ~ Keys ~ Copy of protection/abuse order