



DEVELOPING A SAFETY PLAN

C.A.R.A. Inc. - Coalition Against Rape & Abuse

Preparation and emergency planning

I. Non-Emergency Preparation and Planning

- A. Make an extra set of car keys and hide them in an easy place to reach ☐
- B. Prepare clothing needs - clothes for self and children. Store in a suitcase in home and hide in a secure location. Or, store them at a trusted friend's home. Try to avoid using next-door neighbors, close family members, and mutual friends. ☐
- C. Prepare for financial needs (place in accessible location):
 - 1. Extra Cash ☐
 - 2. Check and Savings Books ☐
 - 3. Other Valuables (i.e. jewelry, coins, etc.) ☐
- D. Prepare for children's needs (where children are involved):
 - 1. Take something meaningful for each child (blanket, pillow, etc.) ☐
 - 2. Discuss what is happening if you must leave the home. ☐
 - 3. Identify a safe place for children to go and plan with them. ☐
- E. Prepare for possible legal action. Keep all documents in a safe place:
 - 1. Financial documents
 - a. Pay stubs: yours (if you are working) and spouse's ☐
 - b. Household bills (including mortgage payments, utilities, etc.) ☐
 - c. Stocks, bonds, and any other joint financial holdings ☐
 - 2. Identification (driver's license, birth certificates, social security card) ☐
 - 3. Copies of restraining orders, evidence of past abuse ☐
 - 4. Copies of medical and doctor's records, police reports, evidence of physical abuse such as photographs ☐
 - 5. Names of any witness(es) to present or past incidents ☐
 - 6. Keep handy a record of critical phone numbers ☐

24-Hour Crisis Hotline: (609) 522-6489

Toll Free: 1-877-294-2272 | www.cara-cmc.org

Immediate danger? Call 911.



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Emergency response and restraining-order safety

II. Emergency Safety Plan (when living with the abuser)

- A. Plan an escape route from home before it is needed. ☐
- B. Make a habit of backing the car into the driveway and keeping it fueled. ☐
- C. Make a list of situations in which violence may occur or escalate. ☐
- D. Carefully explore the layout of your house and access to telephones. ☐
- E. Develop and rehearse a place for leaving the home if violence occurs. ☐
- F. If violence occurs away from home, develop a plan for escaping the abuser. ☐
- G. Notify trusted neighbors to be on alert to suspicious noises and to call the police. ☐
- H. Develop a code word with children when you want them to call for help. ☐
- I. Teach children how to use the phone to contact the police. ☐
- J. Know safe places you can go to leave a dangerous situation. ☐

AVOID KITCHENS, BATHROOMS, GARAGE OR ANY OTHER ROOM CONTAINING POSSIBLE WEAPONS. REMOVE POSSIBLE WEAPONS, SUCH AS KNIVES, FROM EASY ACCESS

- K. Don't run to where the children are, as your partner may hurt them as well. ☐
- L. Try not to wear scarves or long jewelry that could be used to strangle you or otherwise hurt you. ☐
- M. Keep the number of the local battered women's agency in a safe place. ☐

III. When a Violent Incident Occurs

- A. Leave the home immediately. ☐
- B. If leaving is not possible, move ASAP to a room of low risk. TRY TO AVOID THOSE ROOMS OF HIGH RISK (SEE II., J.) ☐
- C. Call 911 for the police. ☐
- D. Have children scream to alert neighbors. ☐
- E. If able to leave by car, LOCK CAR DOORS IMMEDIATELY. ☐

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Restraining-order planning and safety after leaving

IV. Safety Plan with a Restraining Order

- A. Keep a copy of the restraining order on or near you at all times. ☐
- B. Give copies of restraining orders to local police departments, children's schools, trusted family and friends. ☐
- C. Inform as many neighbors, relatives, friends, and your co-workers as soon as possible that the restraining order is in effect. ☐
- D. If the abuser violates the restraining order, CONTACT THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY. ☐
- E. CONTACT YOUR ATTORNEY/ADVOCATE AND ADVISE THE COURT. ☐
- F. If your abuser is charged with a crime, STAY IN CONTACT WITH THE POLICE AND/OR VICTIM WITNESS COORDINATOR TO BE ADVISED IF ABUSER IS BEING RELEASED FROM JAIL! ☐
- G. When the final restraining order is in effect, CHANGE ALL LOCKS TO YOUR RESIDENCE! ☐

V. Once you Leave

- A. Consider renting a post office box or using the address of a friend for your mail. ☐
- B. Be careful to whom you give your new address and phone number. ☐
- C. Change routines wherever possible:
 - 1. Work hours. ☐
 - 2. Routes you travel to work, children's schools or any other place you frequent. ☐
- D. Change place of worship. ☐
- E. Alert school authorities of situation. ☐
- F. Consider changing your children's schools ☐
- G. Reschedule appointments of which the offender is aware. ☐
- H. Use different stores and go to different social spots. ☐
- I. Tell people at work to have phone calls screened. ☐
- J. Tell people who take care of your children which people are allowed to pick up your children. Provide them with a copy of the restraining order. ☐
- K. Request caller ID. Ask that your phone be blocked so that your new number does not show up on anyone else's display. ☐

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