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Personalized Safety Plan

This form is a guide to help me develop a plan that will prepare me to be safe in the case of a violent event. Although I do not have control over my partner's violence, I do have a choice about how to respond and how to best get myself and/or my children to safety.

Name: _____

Date Form Completed: _____

Review Dates: _____

Step 1: Safety during a violent incident:

I realize that I cannot always avoid violent incidents. However, to increase my safety, I may use a variety of the following strategies:

- I will practice how to get out safely by determining which doors, windows, elevators, stairwells, fire escapes, etc. will be most assessable.
- I will keep my purse and car keys easily available in order to leave quickly. When at home, I will keep them: (place) _____.
- I can tell (who) _____ about the violence and request that they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.
- I can teach my children how to use the telephone and how to contact the police and the fire department.
- My code word will be “_____”; and I will tell my family and my friends that if they hear me use that word, they should call the police for help.
- If I have to leave my home, I will go (where) _____.
- When I expect we are going to have an argument, I will try to move to a low risk space, such as _____. I know bathrooms, garages, kitchens or any place near weapons are dangerous; and it is best to be in a room with an outside door.
- If the situation is very serious, I will use my judgement and intuition and may give my partner what he/she wants to calm him/her down until I can protect myself or until I can get out of danger.
- I will also teach some of these strategies to my children, if applicable.

Step 2: Safety when preparing to leave:

I realize victims frequently leave the residences they share with their battering partner, when their safety is at risk. Leaving must be done with a careful plan in order to increase safety. Batterers often strike back when they believe that a victim is leaving the relationship. Therefore, I may use some or all of the following safety strategies:

- In case I need to leave without my purse, etc., I will leave money, an extra set of keys, important documents, and extra clothing with (who or where) _____.
- I will open a savings account in my own name to increase my independence.
- I will keep the local domestic violence program's hotline number in a safe available place. I know I can seek shelter by calling this hotline.
- I will purchase a telephone calling card or will keep change for phone calls on me at all times. I understand that a telephone credit card shows those numbers that I have called on the next month's bill, and my batterer may have access to them.
- I will check with friends and family members to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me money.
- I will rehearse my escape plan and, as appropriate, practice it with my children.
- I will review my safety plan (how often?) _____ with (advocate or friend) _____.

Step 3: Items to take when leaving:

I know when victims leave their battering partners, it is important to take certain items with them. These items might be best to place in one location, so that if I have to leave in a hurry, I can grab them quickly.

- Identification for myself
- My and my children's birth certificates
- My and my children's social security cards
- My children's school and vaccination records
- Money
- Checkbooks, ATM card
- Credit cards
- Keys to house, car, work, etc.
- Driver's license and registration
- Medications
- Welfare identification
- Work permits, identification cards, etc.
- Green card
- Passports
- Divorce papers
- Medical records for all family members
- Lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage payment book
- Bank books

- Insurance papers and cards
- Small sealable objects
- Address book
- Pictures
- Jewelry
- Children's favorite toys and/or blankets
- Items of special sentimental value

Telephone numbers that I need to know:

- Police Department: _____
- Domestic violence services program: _____
- Work: _____
- Clergy: _____
- Other: _____
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (TTY): 1-800-787-3224

Step 4: Safety in my own residence:

Once I am living separate from my batterer, I know there are many things I can do to increase safety in my home. I realize it may be impossible to do everything at once, but I can implement safety measures step by step. Safety measures I can use include:

- I can change the locks on my doors and windows
- I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors
- I can install security systems including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system, etc.
- I can purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows
- I can install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers from each floor in my home
- I can install an outside lighting system that lights up when a person is coming close to my home
- I will teach my children how to use the telephone to make a collect call to me or to a friend/family member, etc. in the event that my partner takes the children
- I will tell people who take care of my children which people have permission to pick up my children and that my partner is not permitted to do so. People who need to be informed are: _____ school; _____ daycare; _____ babysitter; _____ church personnel; _____ other:

Step 5: Safety with a protection order:

I know some batterers do not obey protection orders. I recognize that I may need to ask the police and the courts to enforce my protection order. The following are some steps that I can take to help the enforcement of my protection order:

- I will keep my protection order on or near me or in my purse at all times. When I change purses, I will put my protection order in my new purse.

- I will give a copy of my protection order to law enforcement in the community where I live, where I work, and in those communities where I visit regularly.
- I can check with the county Clerk of Courts office to be sure that my court order is registered. That phone numbers is: _____
- I can call the local domestic violence program to assist me with any problems I may face with the protection order.
- I can inform the following people that I have a protection order: ___ employer; ___ religious leader; ___ friends; ___ family; ___ others: _____
- If my partner destroys my protection order, I can get another copy from the courthouse by going to the Clerk of Courts office, located at (city) _____
- If my partner violates the protection order, I can call the police and report a violation, contact my attorney, call my advocate, and/or advise the court of the violation.
- If the police do not help, I can contact my advocate or attorney and have the right to file a complaint with the chief of the police department.

Step 6: Safety on the job and in public:

I know friends, family, and co-workers can help to protect victims; and I know I should consider carefully which people to invite to help secure safety. I might do any or all of the following:

- I can inform my boss, he security supervisor or other co-workers at work of my situation.
- I can ask the person who answers the phone to help screen my telephone calls at work.
- When leaving work, I can ask someone to walk with m to the car, or other: _____
- If problems occur when I'm driving home, I can: _____
- If I use public transportation, I can: _____
- I can use different grocery stores and shopping malls to conduct my business and shop at hours that are different than those that I used when residing with my battering partner.
- I can use a different bank, medical clinic, etc. and/or go different hours from those I used when residing with my battering partner.
- Other things I can do: _____

Step 7: Stafety and my emotional health:

I realize the process of building a new life for myself takes much courage and incredible energy. To conserve my emotional energy and resources and to avoid hard emotional times, I can do some of the following:

- When I feel down or feel like returning to a potentially abusive relationship, I can: _____
- To feel self-confident when I have to communicate with my partner in person or by telephone, I can: _____
- I can use: "I can" statements with myself to be positive and assertive with others
- Whenever I feel others are trying to control or abuse me, I can tell myself: _____

- Books, poems, phrases I can read to help me feel stronger:

- People I can call as resources to be supportive to me:

- Other things I can do to help me feel stronger:

- I can attend support groups at the domestic violence program to gain support and strengthen my relationships with other people.