



Planning for Your Safety

A guide for those experiencing domestic violence and/or stalking

Managing an abusive relationship is difficult. The abuser may continue to abuse or stalk you even after the relationship has ended. Whether you are in an abusive relationship or dealing with an volatile ex-partner, planning for your safety is important. Your needs may change—that is okay. More information is available by calling our 24/7 Support Line at 916.920.2952 or at www.weaveinc.org.

Important Information to Keep in Mind When Escaping Domestic Violence

- Leaving an abuser can be the most dangerous time in the relationship.
- If you take your child(ren) with you, contact the District Attorney's Child Abduction Unit and/or a private attorney regarding custody rights and to alert law enforcement that your children are in your custody and safe.
- Temporary custody of children may be granted through a Domestic Violence Restraining Order. For assistance with this process, please contact WEAVE's 24-Hour Support & Information Line—916.920.2952.

During an Abusive Incident at Home

- Call 9-1-1 if you are able.
- Avoid rooms with weapons (i.e. the kitchen, rooms with guns).
- Try to stay in rooms/places with escape routes.
- Establish a safe place to escape to (i.e. a neighbor's house).

Safety After the Abusive Incident

- Call 911 if you are still in danger.
- Keep a list of dates/times of all police responses your home. Request copies of police reports.
- Seek any necessary medical attention. Keep copies of any medical reports.*
- Photograph injuries or property damage. Email them to a secure email the abuser does not have access to.
- Contact WEAVE's 24-Hour Support & Information Line for support and resources—916.920.2952.

Safety When Preparing to Leave

- Do NOT tell your partner you are planning to leave. Loss of control of the relationship may escalate violence.
- Plan to leave when your abuser is away from home.
- Determine where you can stay—a safe place—including friends, family, or WEAVE's safe shelters. Call WEAVE Support Line for more information—916.920.2952.
- Consider applying for a Domestic Violence Restraining Order—WEAVE's Support Line can assist you with additional information including WEAVE Legal.
- Hide a spare car key in an accessible place. Keep gas in your car at all times.

Safety After Leaving

- If your home is unsafe, review other housing options such as safe shelter through WEAVE or a family member's home.
- Consider applying for a Domestic Violence Restraining Order. Report every violation of the restraining order to law enforcement.
- Keep a journal of any contacts or threats from the abuser. Teach children not to open any door without your permission.
- Consider changing locks to doors and windows. Keep doors and windows locked at all times in your car and at home.*
- You may wish to install an alarm system.*
- Use a 3rd party for custody exchanges or do them at a public location such as the police station.



24-Hour Support & Information Line: 916.920.2952

Business Line: 916.448.2321

www.weaveinc.org



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Safety and Children

- Teach your children how to call 911 and give your address.
- Teach your children to not interfere in the abuse.
- Establish escape routes with your children and identify safe adults they call or go to in emergencies.
- Teach your children to avoid dangerous rooms (i.e. the kitchen, bathroom) during abusive incidents.
- If safe/appropriate, create safety protocol with your children’s school or daycare.
- If you have a restraining order, provide a copy to your children’s school/daycare.
- Create a safety word with your children so either of you can convey danger.

Safety at Work

- *You have employment rights as a victim of domestic violence or stalking.* Inform your supervisor or Human Resources that you are experiencing domestic violence and/or stalking. Ask for safety accommodations, if available.
- Provide Human Resources with a copy of your restraining order and a description/picture of your abuser.
- Document/save e-mails and voicemail messages from your abuser.

Safety and Technology

- Create a “safe” email account that only you know about. Email copies of documents, police reports, etc. to the account. Send emails of police visits, assaults, stalking, etc. to create a digital log. If your abuser has access to your phone, avoid linking the account.
- Change passwords on email, bank, and social media accounts frequently. If your partner requires access, keep a list of key accounts to change immediately if you leave. Set up alerts to be notified if others try to access your accounts.
- Turn off location setting for apps that have geo-tagging features that may show your location.
- Be aware of devices with location settings (i.e. Find My Phone, car GPS) that your abuser may be able to access.
- Manage your social media privacy settings to manage who has access to your information and who can contact you.

Additional Tips & Resources

If you are considering leaving or think you may need to flee quickly, begin assembling key documents you may need, including:

Originals:

- Birth certificate(s)
- ATM/Credit Cards & Checkbook
- Social Security Card(s)
- Insurance Card(s)
- Legal paperwork (DVRO, custody, immigration, etc.)
- Car title/registration
- Marriage Certificate

Copies:

- Bank Account Numbers/Statements
- Log-ins and passwords
- Tax Returns
- Immunization Records
- Lease/rental agreements
- Emergency contacts—phone numbers & email

Other Items:

- Spare home and car keys
- Cell Phone
- Prescriptions
- Cash
- Emergency clothing
- Diaper bag

*You may qualify for Victim Witness Compensation to pay for the cost of moving, changing locks, counseling, etc. Call the Support & Information Line (916.920.2952) to learn more.



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