

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN

## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE

*Remember, you do not deserve to be hit or threatened. You are not alone.*

## DURING AN EXPLOSIVE INCIDENT

- If there is an argument, try to be in a place that has an exit and not in a bathroom, kitchen, or room that may contain weapons.
- Practice getting out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator, or stairwell to use.
- Pack a bag and have it ready at a friend's or relative's house.
- Identify one or more neighbors you can tell about the violence and ask them if they can call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.
- Devise a code word to use with your children, family, friends and neighbors when you need the police.
- Decide and plan where you will go if you ever have to leave home.
- Use your instincts and judgment. In a dangerous situation, placate the abuser if possible, to keep him or her calm.

**REMEMBER: You Do Not Deserve to be Hit or Threatened**

## WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE

- Open a checking account or savings account in your own name.
- Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents, and extra clothes and medicines in a safe place or with someone you trust.
- Get your own post office box.
- Find a safe place where you and your children can go or a person who can lend you money.
- Always keep the shelter phone number and some change or calling card on you for emergency phone calls.
- If you have pets, make arrangements for them to be cared for in a safe place.

**REMEMBER: Leaving Your Batterer is the Most Dangerous Time**

## WITH A PROTECTIVE ORDER

- If you or your children have been threatened or assaulted, you can request a Protective Order from your local District or County Attorney.
- Always keep your Protective Order with you.
- Call the police if your partner violates the Protective Order.
- Inform family members, friends, and neighbors that you have a Protective Order in effect.
- Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police do not respond immediately.



## IN YOUR OWN RESIDENCE

- If you stay in your home, lock your windows and change locks on your doors.
- Develop a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- Inform your child's school, day care, etc., about who has permission to pick up your child.
- Inform your neighbors and the landlord that your partner no longer lives with you, and that they should call the police if they see him/her near your home.
- Never call the abuser from your home; he/she may find out where you live. Never tell the abuser where you live.
- Request an unlisted/unpublished number from the telephone company.

## ON THE JOB AND IN PUBLIC

- Decide who at work you will inform of your situation. Include the office building security (if possible, provide them with a picture of your batterer).
- When at work, if possible, have someone screen your telephone calls.
- Have someone escort you to and from your car, bus, or train.
- If at all possible, use a variety of routes to come and go from home.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO TAKE

### IDENTIFICATION

- Driver's License
- Birth Certificate
- Children's Birth Certificates
- Social Security Cards

### FINANCIAL

- Money and/or credit cards (in your name)
- Checking and/or savings account books

## LEGAL PAPERS

- Protective Order
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- Car registration and insurance papers
- Health and life insurance papers
- Medical records for you and children
- School records
- Work permits/Green Card/Visa
- Passport
- Divorce and custody papers
- Marriage license

## OTHER

- Medications
- House and car keys
- Valuable jewelry
- Address book
- Pictures and sentimental items
- Change of clothes for you and your children

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

**Police/Sheriff: 911**

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:**  
800-799-7233 or TDD 800-787-3224

**Texas Women's Advocacy Project - Family Violence Hotline:** 800-777-3247

**Texas Department of Human Services Abuse Hotline:**  
800-252-5400

**Texas Legal Services Center:**  
888-343-4414

### CRIME VICTIMS' COMPENSATION

**Post Office Box 12198**  
**Austin, Texas 78711-2198**  
**1-800-983-9933 (state-wide)**  
**1-512-936-1200 (in Austin)**  
**1-512-936-1800 (FAX)**