

# *Safety Plan*

*A safety plan is intended to aid victims of domestic violence in securing their physical safety and personal well-being. The plan is not a substitute for law enforcement and professional help. If you fear your life is in eminent danger, call 911 immediately.*

## **If You Choose to Stay...**

- ✓ Find a safe place to go during arguments. Avoid rooms with no exits or rooms with weapons (kitchen).
- ✓ Teach your children where to go to be safe and how to call for help.
- ✓ Think about and make a list of safe people to contact.
- ✓ Keep change with you at all times.
- ✓ Memorize all important numbers.
- ✓ Establish a “code word” or “sign” so that family, friends, teachers or co-workers know when to call for help.
- ✓ Document all violent incidences in a journal. Include date, place, time, witnesses, and contact with police. Hide the journal.
- ✓ Back your car into the parking spot so you can leave quickly if necessary.

**Remember, you have the right to live without fear and violence!**

## **If You Choose to Leave...**

- ✓ Gather medication & all important documents: social security cards, birth certificates, ID cards, bank statements, any bills in your name, diplomas, transcripts, marriage license, W-2's etc. (Starting over is easier if you have all your documents, but all documents are replaceable. Consider your safety first when preparing to leave.)
- ✓ Do not tell your children your plans until it is time to leave. Reassure them that they will be safe and protected.
- ✓ Contact a domestic violence shelter if you need a place to stay or you fear for your safety.
- ✓ Backtrack your steps where you reached out for help. Delete caller ID and “cookies” from internet searches.
- ✓ Once you leave, avoid staying completely alone.
- ✓ Don't tell friends and family your new location until your safety is secure. Abusers often manipulate the people you trust to gain information about how to find you.
- ✓ Seek a Protective Order. No criminal charges are necessary to obtain a temporary PO. Temporary PO's can be made permanent upon a hearing approximately 10 days after the initial order.
- ✓ Notify your employer, friends, and family that you have left the abusive relationship and that you want no contact with the abuser.
- ✓ Change to an unlisted number and keep it confidential.
- ✓ Open a P.O. Box to receive mail so that your actual address is not revealed.