

Safety if Living in a Home Where Violence May Occur

- Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will need to).
- Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which door, window, elevator, or stairwell would be best.
- Have a packed bag ready and keep it at a relative's or friend's home in order to leave quickly. Use the checklist in this brochure to decide what you need to take with you.
- Identify one or more neighbors whom you can tell about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear a disturbance.
- Devise a code word or signal to use with your children, family, friends, and neighbors when you need the police.
- If you believe that an incident of physical abuse is going to occur, leave if possible. If you can't leave, move to a room where you have access to an exit and/or a phone. Stay away from any room without an exit or a room with items that could be used as weapons, such as a kitchen or garage.
- Use your own judgment. If the situation is very dangerous, do whatever is necessary to be safe. This may mean giving the abuser what he/she wants to calm him/her down.
- If necessary, call "911" or the local police.

Safety When Preparing to Leave

- Open a savings account and/or credit card in your own name.
- Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents, and clothes with someone you trust so you can leave quickly.
- Think of someone you could stay with or who could lend you some money if needed.
- Keep the phone number of a 24-hour crisis hotline in a safe place. Contact the local domestic violence/sexual assault program about getting a 911 cell phone for emergencies.
- Review your safety plan often and think about the safest way to leave the abuser

Safety if Living Alone

- Change the locks on your doors and buy new locks / safety devices for windows.
- Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- Tell your children's school or child care who has permission to pick them up.
- Notify your neighbors and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see him/her near your residence.
- Do not place outgoing mail in an outside mailbox where your abuser could get to it. If you have a locked mailbox, change the locks.

Important Numbers

Nebraska's coalition of domestic violence and sexual assault programs provide access to safety and shelter across the state. To find the program nearest you, visit www.nebraskacoalition.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

National Sexual Assault Hotline

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

Other important numbers:

Police: 911 or _____

Sheriff: _____

Clerk District Court: _____

County Attorney: _____

Victim-Witness Unit: _____

Probation Dept.: _____

My Attorney: _____

My Veterinarian: _____

Other: _____



Personal Safety Plan

A checklist for
living free from
intimate partner
violence



NEBRASKA COALITION
TO END SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

402-476-6256

www.nebraskacoalition.org

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Safety with a Protection Order

- Keep your protection order with you at all times. Give copies to a trusted friend, school, family member, or clergy person. Keep a copy in the glove compartment of your car or somewhere safe.
- Call the police if the abuser shows up, calls, texts, or otherwise contacts you, or if the abuser has someone else contact you.
- Inform family, friends, neighbors, work, school, and/or service agencies about the protection order.
- If you think that you no longer need the protection order or that it has decreased your safety, ask the court to remove it. You may want to talk with an advocate before doing so.

Safety in Public or at Work

- Tell your co-worker(s), boss, and/or office or building security about your situation. Provide a picture of the abuser if possible. Devise a code word to use to communicate that you need assistance.
- Arrange to have an answering machine, caller ID, or co-workers screen your calls.
- Devise a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort you to your car or bus and wait with you until you are safely on your way. Vary your routes home.
- Change and vary your routine. Go to different grocery stores, businesses, and banks.

Safety while Using Technology

- Create a new email account with a name that is different from your actual name. Do not create or check this new account from your home computer - it may be monitored.

- Do not delete old accounts; this could increase safety risks.
- If your abuser sends threatening emails or texts, save and print them out. They can be used for documentation and possibly proof of stalking and/or harassment.
- It is impossible to clear where you have been on a computer. In fact, trying to clear the history could actually warn your abuser of your plans. Try to use a computer at a library, community center, or other public place.
- Protect your email and voice mail passwords and PIN numbers. Change them often.
- Be careful when using cell phones. The bill could reveal who you have called. Also, call your service provider or check your settings to find out if the GPS is set to "all." If so, be aware that your abuser could use it to find you at any time. Change the setting to emergency only.
- Do not share your social security number or other private information unless it is absolutely necessary to do so.

Safety after an Assault

- Decide if you need to go to the hospital or medical provider for treatment or for a sexual assault exam if you have been raped. You may also want to be checked for sexually transmitted infections or pregnancy.
- Consider whether or not you want to report what happened. Know that hospitals and medical providers have to contact the police if they think a crime has occurred.
- Contact the local domestic violence/sexual assault program and ask if an advocate can accompany you to the medical provider and/or law enforcement agency.

Safety for Your Pets

If you are staying at home...

- Keep emergency necessities for your pet if your abuser withholds money from you.
- Keep the phone number of the nearest 24-hour emergency veterinary clinic. Local humane societies may also be able to help.
- Establish ownership of your pet through documentation (e.g., obtain a pet license, put vet records in your name and keep a copy of these records).

If you are planning to leave...

- Obtain the name of a safe emergency shelter for your pet.
- Pack a bag for your pet that includes the pet's food, medicine, proof of ownership, medical records, leash, toys, and bedding.

If you have left...

- Keep the pet indoors as much as possible and don't leave it outside alone.
- Pick safe routes and times to walk your pet and if possible, don't walk your pet alone.
- Explain to your veterinarian or kennel the importance of confidentiality regarding the location of you and your pet. Change veterinarians and/or kennels if needed.

**Find the Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Agency nearest you:
Nebraskacoalition.org**

CHECKLIST: Important Things To Take When You Leave

Identification

- Drivers license or other identification
- Birth certificates
- Social Security cards
- Work Permits/VISA
- Passports

Financial

- Money and/or credit and debit cards
- Bank books & checkbooks
- Public assistance documentation
- Tax returns from previous 3 years
- Pay stubs for both you and your abuser
- Loan information

Other Important Papers

- Your protection order
- Lease, rental agreement, or house deed
- Car title, registration, and insurance papers
- Health and life insurance papers
- Medical and vaccination records for you and your children
- Divorce and custody papers

Other items

- House and car keys
- Medications, glasses, hearing aids
- Contact information for family and friends
- Phone cards or emergency cell phone
- Family photographs
- Children's toys
- Change of clothes for you and your children
- Items for your pets