**My Safety Plan**

The following steps represent my plan for increasing my safety and preparing for the possibility of further violence. Although I do not have control over my partner’s violence, I do have a choice about how to respond to him/her and how to best get myself, and my children to safety.

**Step 1: Safety during a violent incident**

Victims cannot always avoid violent incidents. In order to increase safety, abuse victims may use a variety of strategies. I can use some or all of the following strategies:

A. If I decide to leave, I will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (Practice how to get out safely. What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells or fire escapes would you use?)

B. I can keep my money and car keys ready and put them \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(location).

C. I can tell \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_about the violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my house.

D. I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police and the fire department.

E. I will use \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_as my code for my children or my friends so they can call for help.

F. If I have to leave my home, I will go\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (Decide this even if you don’t think there will be a next time). If I cannot go to the location above, then I can go to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

G. I can also teach some of these strategies to some/all of my children.

H. When I expect we are going to have an argument, I will try to move to a space that is lowest risk, such as\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, and kitchen, near weapons or in rooms without access to an outside door.)

I. I will use my judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, I can give my partner what he/she wants to calm him/her down. I have to protect myself until I/we are out of danger.

**Step 2 : Safety when preparing to leave.**

Abuse victims frequently leave the residence they share with the abusive partner. Leaving must be done with a careful plan in order to increase safety. Abusers often strike back when they believe their victim is leaving the relationship. I can use some or all of the following safety strategies:

A. I will leave money and an extra set of keys with\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , so that I can leave quickly.

B. I will keep copies of important documents or keys at\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

C. I will open a savings account by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, to increase my independence.

D. Other things I can do to increase my independence include:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

E. I can call the domestic violence hot line number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

F. I will make a list of important phone numbers I might need and keep it on or near me at all times.

G. I can keep change for phone calls on me at all times. I understand that if I use my telephone credit card, the following month the telephone bill will tell my partner those numbers that I called after I left. To keep my telephone communications confidential, I must either use coins or I might ask a friend to permit me to use their telephone card for a limited time when I first leave. I could also purchase prepaid calling cards.

H. I will check with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to see if they would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money.

I. I can leave extra clothes with\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

J. I will sit down and review my safety plan every \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_in order to plan the safest way to leave the residence. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(DV Advocate or friend) has agreed to help me review this plan.

K. I will rehearse my escape plan and, as appropriate, practice it with my children.

**When I leave, I should have:**  Identification for myself  Children’s Birth

Certificates  My Birth Certificate  Social Security Cards  School & vaccination

record  Money  Checkbook, ATM card  Credit Cards  Keys –

house/car/office  Driver’s License & Registration  Medication

 Passports/Divorce papers  Bank books, Insurance papers  Small saleable

objects  Address Book  Pictures, jewelry  Children’s favorite toys, and/or

blankets  Welfare identification, work permits, Green Card  Medical Records –

for all family members  Lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage

payment book  Items of special sentimental value

**Step 3:** **Safety planning in my own residence**.

There are many things that a victim can do to increase her/his safety in their own residence. It may be impossible to do everything at once, but safety measures can be added step by step. Safety measures, I can use, include:

A. I can change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.

B. I can replace wooden doors and windows as soon as possible.

C. I can install security systems including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system, etc.

D. I can purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.

E. I can install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers for each floor in my house/apartment.

F. I can install an outside lighting system that lights up when a person is coming close to my house.

G. I will teach my children how to use the telephone to make a collect call to me or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(friend or minister or DV Advocate)

H. 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.

**The people I will inform include**: School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Babysitter:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Day care staff:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sunday School teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Others:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I. I can inform\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(neighbors), \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Pastor), \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(friends), that my partner no longer resides with me, and they should call the police if he/she is observed near my residence.

**Step 4:** Safety with a Restraining Order

Abusers may or may not obey restraining orders. I recognize that I may need to ask the police and the court to enforce my restraining order.

Some steps that I can take to help the enforcement of my restraining order:

A. I will call the police if my abuser tries to make contact with me.

B. I will keep my restraining order\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(location). ALWAYS KEEP IT ON OR NEAR YOUR PERSON.

C. I will give my protection order to police departments in the communities where I usually visit family or friends, and in the community where I live.

D. There should be a county registry of restraining orders that all police departments can call to confirm it. I can check to make sure that my order is in the registry. The telephone number for the county registry of restraining orders is #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

E. If I often visit other counties, I might file my protection order with the court in those counties. I will register in the following counties:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

F. I can call the local domestic violence program if I am not sure about C, D or E above, or if I have some problem with my protection order.

G. I will inform my employer, my minister, my closest friend and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_that I have a protection order in effect.

H. If my partner destroys my restraining order, I can get another copy from the Courthouse, by going to the Circuit Court Clerk’s office.

I. If my partner violates the restraining order, I can call the police and report a violation, contact my attorney, call my DV Advocate, and/or advise the court of the violation.

J. If the police do not help, I can contact my Advocate or Attorney and will file a complaint with the chief of the police department.

K. I can also file a private criminal complaint with the district justice in the jurisdiction where the violation occurred or with the district attorney. I can charge my abusive partner with a violation of the restraining order and all the crimes that he/she commits in violating the order. I can call the DV Advocate to help me with this.

**Step 5. Safety on the job and in public**.

Each abuse victim must decide if and when he/she will tell others that their partner has abused them and that he/she may be at continued risk. Friends, family and co-workers can help to protect victims. Each victim should consider carefully which people to invite to help secure his/her safety.

I might do any or all of the following:

A. I can inform my boss, the security supervisor and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_at work of my situation.

B. I can ask \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to help screen my telephone calls at work.

C. When leaving work, I can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

D. When driving home, if problems occur, I can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

E. If I use public transit, I can\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

F. I will go to different grocery stores and shopping malls to conduct my business and shop at hours that are different that those of my abusive partner.

G. I can use a different bank and take care of my banking at hours different from my abuser.

H. I can also \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.