

INITIAL PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN

Safety during an Explosive Incident

- If you feel an argument may be about to occur, try to move to a place that has one or more exits. Try to avoid being in a bathroom, kitchen or room that may contain weapons.
- Practice exiting your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator, or stairs to use.
- Pack a bag and leave it at a friend's or relative's house with copies of your identity documents. *Refer to checklist.*
- Identify one or more neighbors you can talk to about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.
- Develop an age-appropriate safety plan with your children.
- Devise a code word to use with your children, family, friends, and neighbors when you need someone to call the police.
- Decide and plan where you will go if you ever must leave home.
- Trust your instincts and your judgment. In some dangerous situations, you may choose to give the abuser what he/she wants to calm him/her down. Only you can decide the best way to protect yourself and your children in each situation.

Safety with Technology

- Create a new email account.
- Your abuser may be monitoring activity on your computer. If possible, use a safe computer, which may be located at:
 - A public library
 - A community center
 - An internet cafe
- Change passwords and Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) frequently.
- Your abuser could use your old cell phone bill to see who you've been calling or use the Global Positioning System (GPS) in your cell phone to track your location. To avoid these risks, use a donated or prepaid cell phone to make plans.

Safety When Preparing To Leave

- Leaving an abusive relationship can be a dangerous process, so it's important to take steps to insure your safety.
- It's best not to tell the person abusing you that you are planning to leave. Make your plans in secret and leave when she/he isn't home.
- Open a checking or savings account in your own name.
- Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents and extra clothes and medicine in a safe place or with someone you trust.
- Get your own post office box.
- Identify a safe place where you can go and, if possible, someone who can loan you money.
- Always keep the shelter phone number, a calling card, or change for emergency phone calls with you.
- If you have pets, make arrangements for them to be cared for in a safe place.
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Safety with a Protective Order

- If you or your children have been threatened or assaulted, you can request a protective order from the District/County Attorney's Office or at your local courthouse.
- Keep a copy of your protective order with you. Also keep a copy in your car, home, work and your children's school.
- Call the police if your abuser violates the protective order.
- Inform family members, friends, and neighbors that you have a protective order against your abuser.

Safety in Your Own Residence

- If you stay in your home, lock windows and change the locks on doors as soon as possible.
- Develop a safety plan with your children for times when you are not with them.
- Inform your children's school, day care, etc., about who has permission to pick up your children.

- Inform 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 let the abuser know where you live. Never call the abuser from your home because he/she may find out where you live.
- Request an unlisted/unpublished number from the telephone company.
- Notify your utility company of security needs and restrict access to the account by using a password.

Safety on the Job and in Public

- Inform someone at work of your situation. Include the security officers at work and provide them with a copy of your protective order and a picture of your abuser.
- Have someone screen your telephone calls at work.
- Have someone escort you to and from your car, bus or train.
- Use a variety of routes to come and go from home.
- You can buy an air horn at your local hardware store or order online. If you are in public and the abusive person approaches you, sound the horn to startle him/her and draw attention to yourself.

Emergency Numbers

Police Emergency:	911
Non-emergency:	210-207-7273
Family Violence Prevention Services Hotline:	(210) 733-8810, 24 Hours a Day, 365 Days
National Domestic Violence Hotline	1-800-799-SAFE (7233) OR 1-800-787-3224 (TTY)
Texas Advocacy Project: Family Violence Legal Line:	1-800-374-HOPE (4673)