

**Creating a safety plan is one of the most important steps you can take if you're experiencing domestic violence. It can help you prepare for emergencies, protect yourself and your children, and take control of your situation. The process may feel overwhelming, but having a clear, actionable checklist can make all the difference in ensuring your safety and peace of mind. By following this checklist, you'll be empowered to think through vital details like safe exits, emergency contacts, and even financial independence. It's not just about surviving — it's about planning for a safer, more secure future. Take the first step today to protect yourself and regain control of your life.**

### **1. Immediate Safety in the Home:**

- Identify the safest exits from each room.
- Keep car keys and a fully charged phone easily accessible.
- Secure important documents (ID, birth certificates, etc.) in a safe place.
- Identify a safe room without weapons where you can lock the door and call for help.
- Establish a code word or signal with trusted friends or family that indicates you're in danger.
- Avoid high-risk areas (kitchen, bathroom) during arguments.

### **2. Emergency Preparation:**

- Pack an emergency bag (clothes, documents, medications, money, spare keys, phone).
- Teach children how to call 911 and establish a safe place for them to go.
- Create a list of emergency contacts (friends, family, domestic violence hotline, shelter).
- Practice an escape plan with your children, using multiple routes.

### **3. Legal and Financial Preparation:**

- Obtain a restraining or protective order (keep a copy with you at all times).
- Open a separate bank account and change important account passwords and PINs.
- Contact a legal advocate for advice on child custody, divorce, or legal protection.

### **4. Safety at Work or School:**

- Inform your supervisor, HR, or school personnel about your situation.
- Provide a photo of the abuser to security personnel.
- Change your routine when traveling to work or school (vary routes and times).
- Ask your workplace to screen calls and visitors.

### **5. Digital Safety:**

- Update all device passwords and enable two-factor authentication.
- Limit what you share online about your location, activities, and plans.
- Regularly check for GPS tracking apps or devices on your phone and computer.
- Turn off location-sharing features on your devices.

### **6. Emotional and Psychological Safety:**

- Build a network of supportive people (friends, family, support groups).
- Engage in self-care activities (meditation, exercise, journaling).
- Consider seeking therapy or counseling to process trauma and regain self-worth.

### **7. Long-Term Safety Planning:**

- Research local shelters or housing programs for emergency and permanent housing.
- Plan for job training, financial assistance, or legal aid for long-term independence.

### **8. Contact Information:**

- Save the National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (24/7).
- Contact Word of Truth Ministries for shelter and community support.
- Save contact information for local shelters.