

## PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN

*IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT! YOU ARE NOT ALONE! SOMEONE CARES!*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
Case Report # \_\_\_\_\_ Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

*The following steps represent my plan for increasing my safety and preparing in advance for the possibility for 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, battered persons may use a variety of 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 purse and car keys ready and put them (place) \_\_\_\_\_ in order to leave quickly.
- 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 a code for my children or my friends so they can call for help.
- F. If I have to leave home, I will go \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Decide this even if you don't think there will be a next time.)
- G. I can also teach some of these strategies to some/all 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, kitchen, near weapons or in rooms without access to an outside door.)
- I. I will use my judgement 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**

*Battered victims frequently leave the residence they share with the battering partner. Leaving must be done with a careful plan in order to increase safety. Batterers often strike back when they believe that a victim is leaving a relationship.*

I can use some or all the following strategies:

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

- Checkbook, ATM (Automatic Tellers Machine) card
- Credit cards
- Keys - house, car, office
- Driver's license and registration
- Medication

### **OTHER**

- Welfare identification, work permits, green card
- Passport(s), divorce papers
- Medical records – for all family members
- Lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage payment book
- Bank books, insurance papers
- Small salable objects
- Address book
- Pictures, jewelry
- Children's favorite toys and/or blankets
- Items of special sentimental value

### **TELEPHONE NUMBERS I NEED TO KNOW:**

Durham County Sheriff's Office	<b>EMERGENCY 911</b> or 560-0900
Durham County Domestic Violence Coordinator	560-0974
Durham County District Attorney's Office	808-3010
(Call this number to speak to a District Attorney or the Victim Assistance Coordinator)	
Police Department (same jurisdiction as school)	_____
Police Department (same jurisdiction as work)	_____
State Registry of Domestic Violence Protection Orders	_____
Work Number	_____
Supervisor's Home Number	_____
Minister	_____
Other	_____

*I will keep this document in a safe place and out of reach of my potential attacker. I could also leave a copy with \_\_\_\_\_.*

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF YOU NEED HELP IN FILLING OUT THIS PLAN YOU MAY ASK A DEPUTY, THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COORDINATOR, THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S VICTIM WITNESS OFFICE PERSONNEL, OR A CLOSE AND TRUSTED FRIEND.**

E. To safeguard my children, I might \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**STEP 7: Safety and my emotional health**

*The experience of being battered and verbally degraded by partners is usually exhausting and emotionally draining. The process of building a new life for myself takes much courage and incredible energy.*

To conserve my emotional energy and resources and to avoid hard emotional times, I can do some of the following:

- A. If I feel down and ready to return to a potentially abusive situation I can \_\_\_\_\_.
- B. When I have to communicate with my partner in person or by telephone, I can \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. I can try to use “I can ...” statements with myself and to be assertive with others.
- D. I can tell myself “\_\_\_\_\_” whenever I feel others are trying to control or abuse me.
- E. I can read \_\_\_\_\_ to help me feel stronger.
- F. I can call \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as other resources to be of support to me.
- G. Other things I can do to help me feel stronger are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- H. I can attend workshops and support groups at the domestic violence program or \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_ to gain support and strengthen my relationship with other people.

**STEP 8: Items to take when leaving**

*When victims leave their partners, it is important to take certain items with them. Beyond this, victims sometimes give an extra copy of papers and an extra set of clothing to a friend just in case they have to leave quickly.*

*Money: Even if I have never worked, I can legally take 1/2 of the funds in the checking and savings accounts as North Carolina is a community property state. If I don't take any money from the accounts, he can legally take all money and/or close the account and I may not get my share until the court rules on it, if ever.*

*The following items are the most important to take if you have to leave. These items should be placed in one location, so if we have to leave in a hurry, I can grab them quickly.*

**IMPORTANT: WHEN I LEAVE, I SHOULD HAVE:**

- Identification for myself
- Children's birth certificate
- My birth certificate
- Social Security cards
- School and vaccination records
- Money

- 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 seek shelter by calling Durham Crisis Response Center at 403-6562.**

- F. I can keep change for phone calls on me at all times. I understand that if I use my telephone credit card, the telephone bill will tell my batterer those numbers I called after I left. To keep my telephone communications confidential, I must either use coins or I might get a friend to permit me to use their telephone credit card for a limited time when I first leave.
- G. I will check with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money.
- H. I can leave extra clothes with \_\_\_\_\_.
- I. I will sit down and review my safety plan every \_\_\_\_\_ in order to plan the safest way to leave the residence.
- J. \_\_\_\_\_ (Domestic violence 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.

**STEP 3: Safety in my own residence.**

*There are many things that a victim can do to increase their 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 and windows as soon as possible.
- B. I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
- 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 and to \_\_\_\_\_ (friend/minister/other) in the event my partner takes the children.
- H. I will tell people who take care of my children when people have permission to pick up my children and that my partner is not permitted to do so. The people I will inform about pickup permission include:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (School)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Daycare staff)

- \_\_\_\_\_ (Babysitter)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Sunday school teacher)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Teacher/s)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (And)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Others)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Neighbors)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Pastor), and
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Friend)

**STEP 4: Safety with a Protective Order**

*Many battered victims obey protection orders, but one can never be sure whether a violent partner will obey a protection order, or when they will choose to violate a protection order. I recognize I may need to ask the police and the court to enforce my protection order.*

The following steps are some steps I can take to help the enforcement of my protection order:

- A. I will keep my protection order \_\_\_\_\_ (location). **Always keep it on or near your person. If you change purses, that's the first thing that should go in.**
- B. I will give my protection order to law enforcement agencies in the communities where I usually visit family or friends, and in the community where I live.
- C. There is a computerized state registry of domestic violence protection orders that all police departments can check to confirm a protection order. I can check to make sure my order is in registry by calling my local law enforcement agency. The telephone number is \_\_\_\_\_.
- D. For further safety, if I often visit other counties in North Carolina, I might file my protection order with the court in those counties. I will register my protection with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ that I have a protection order in effect.
- E. I can call the local domestic violence program if I am not sure about B, C, or D above or if I have some problem with my protection order.
- F. I will inform my employer, my minister, my closest friend and \_\_\_\_\_ that I have a protection order in effect.
- G. If my partner destroys my protection order, I can get another copy from the Durham County Clerk of Court, 201 E. Main St, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 564-7050.
- H. If my partner violates the protection order, I can call the police and report a violation, contact my attorney, call my advocate and/or advise the court of the violation.
- I. If the police do not help, I can contact my advocate or attorney and will file a complaint with the Agency where obtained.
- J. I can also file a criminal complaint with the local police, in the jurisdiction where the violation occurred, or with the district attorney. I can charge my battering partner with a violation of the Protection Order and all the crimes he commits in violating the order. I can call a domestic advocate to help me with this.

- K. The law enforcement agency covering my jurisdiction is \_\_\_\_\_.
- L. My victim advocate/coordinator's name and phone number is \_\_\_\_\_.

**STEP 5: Safety on the job and in public**

*Each battered victim must decide if and when he/she will tell others his/her partner has battered him/her and he/she may be in 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 than those used when residing with my battering partner.
- G. I can use a different bank and take care of my banking at hours different from those I used when residing with my battering partner.
- H. I can provide my boss and security supervisor a copy of my protective order.
- I. I can also \_\_\_\_\_.

**STEP 6: Safety and drug or alcohol use.**

*Most people in this culture use alcohol. Many use mood-altering drugs. Much of this use is legal and some is not. The legal outcome of using illegal drugs can be very hard on a battered victim, may hurt his/her relationship with his/her children and put he/she at a disadvantage in other legal actions with their battering partner. Therefore, victims should carefully consider the potential cost of the use of illegal drugs. But beyond this, the use of any alcohol or other drug can reduce a victim's awareness and ability to act quickly to protect their self from the battering partner. Furthermore, the use of alcohol or other drugs by the batterer may give him/her an excuse to use violence. Therefore, in the context of drug or alcohol use, a victim needs to make specific safety plans.*

If drug or alcohol use has occurred in my relationship with the battering partner, I can enhance my safety by some or all of the following:

- A. If I am going to use, I can do so in a safe place and with people who understand the risk of violence and are committed to my safety.
- B. I can also \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. If my partner is using, I can \_\_\_\_\_.
- D. I might also \_\_\_\_\_.