

# Safety Planning for Women



Multicultural Women's  
Health Services

# Safety Tips:

## Making a safety plan

### At Home

- Always make sure you **know where your house keys are located** (keep them close to you during the night along with your handbag and charged mobile phone).
- **Inform your trusted neighbours and ask them to call police if they see the abusive person** or hear a disturbance. Show them a photo. Or ask them to tell you if they notice strange activity around the house.
- **Prepare and keep a bag of important items in a safe place or with a trusted person**, such as money, keys, bank cards, documents, clothes, toiletries, medication. Keep important documents on a USB.
- Decide where you will go if you have to leave (refuge, friends, police). **Have an exit plan.**
- If assault is unavoidable move to a room with easy access to an exit and **away from dangerous rooms with weapons** such as shed, kitchen, bathroom.
- Identify which door or window offers **quickest way out. Practice your route.** You may need to clear tools/ toys / furniture/ wheelie bins from pathways or the sides of the house. If your exit point door is locked, have keys hanging nearby (but not visible from outside).
- **Tell trusted friends and family what is going on** and devise a code word to use with your children, family or friends when you need to call the police.
- If possible do not park on the street, and be careful moving between your car and house. **Reverse your car in, and ensure you cant be blocked in.**
- **Keep a record or diary** of any breaches or strange events.
- See if someone can stay with you a while when you leave the relationship or at other times of high risk.
- **Keep a list of important telephone numbers** you might need in an emergency. Program them into your phone.
- Wear shoes in the house to allow for a quick escape.
- **Use your instincts and judgement**, you know the abusive person better than anyone else.

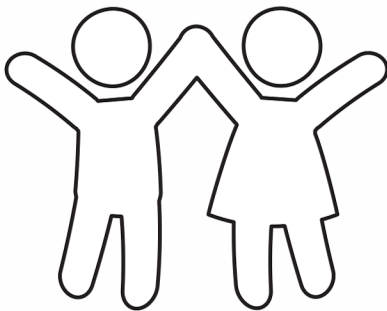
### Out and About

- **Change regular appointments and routines** that the abusive person knows about (such as where you go shopping, how you get to school/work, different public transport times, leave at different hours).
- **Keep the car locked and park in well lit public areas or a secured garage.** Avoid underground car parks. Keep a torch in your car.
- **Be aware of anybody following you** and have a plan in case you are followed. **Drive straight to the police station if you are concerned.** Know where your closest police stations are and which are 24 hours. Plan what you would do if you are followed on public transport.
- **If you have a FVRO (family violence restraining order), keep it with you** at all times.
- **Carry a charged mobile phone with credit.**
- If you see the abusive person, get into a public or a busy place as soon as possible.
- If you still need to see the abusive person, **have a support person with you.**



## If you have children

- **Talk with your children about how to keep safe in an emergency.** Children should only need to worry about their own safety (like having a hiding place or a neighbour's house they can go to, unless they are older and can handle more responsibility).
- **Practice emergency escape routes.**
- **Decide ahead of time or a code word to signal they should leave the house.** Decide on a safe place they can go if they feel unsafe.
- **Make sure your children know their full names, address, how to phone the police.** Tell them **not to hang up afterwards.** This helps the services to monitor what is happening and to find you if necessary.
- **Make sure your children know which other adults they can talk to** if they feel scared or upset.
- **Teach your children it is not their responsibility to stop the abusive person** when they are angry or violent.
- **Give copies of court orders to children's day-care or school and a photo of the abusive person** and tell them who has authority to pick up your children.
- **Arrange handover of children to the other parent in a public place and take along a support person.**
- **Don't ask children to keep secrets about future plans. Keep plans to yourself until you are ready to put them in place.**
- **Teach your children to let you know when someone is at the door, before answering it.**
- **If you have older family members, make sure everyone in the home talks about suspicious calls or occurrences.**



## At work

- **If you feel comfortable tell your employer, reception, or building security** (they may be able to keep you safer. Provide a **photo of the abusive person** so they know who to look out for and a **copy of the FVRO**).
- **Talk to a manager you trust about your options** such as: 'family violence leave', flexible work hours, changing your roster or working at another site.
- **Let your workplace know they should not give out your contact details.**
- **Inform people of your expected time of return** so others can raise awareness if you don't return.
- **Vary your route to and from work,** and arrange for someone to escort you to your transport if you feel at risk.

## Records

- **Contact government agencies** such as MyHealth, MyGov, Medicare, Child Support and Centrelink and **request your private details will not be accessible by the abuser** particularly if the abuser is your child's father and is able to access some information about the child. Do the same with banks, schools, childcare, and sporting clubs etc. your child attends.
- **If an organization calls you do not give them any personal details.** Ask for a number to call them back and verify who they say they are.
- **Change your electoral enrolment to silent elector.**
- **Have mail sent to another address or PO Box.** When asked by businesses, doctors and other organizations for your address have a PO box or safer address to give them. **Don't give out your real mail address.**
- **Contact agencies (such as doctors and hospitals that may have your abuser listed as next of kin.**

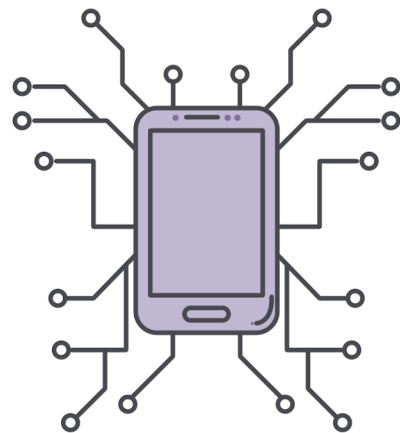
# Technology

## Phone

- Be careful using a phone the abuser had had access to, or was part of a share plan. Think about getting a new phone.
- Avoid placing the new phone near old compromised devices. **Be careful when transferring data** (files, pictures, videos) from an infected phone to a new phone. Don't switch sims but re-enter all data on any new device.
- **Put a passcode on your mobile. Change it regularly** . Set your phone to lock.
- **Change your mobile number and have it set on private.**
- **Switch off phone functions** that someone can use to track you; such as **mobile data, wireless internet, location tracking, GPS and Bluetooth** . **Or use flight mode.**
- Turn of for **delete Find My i-phone.**
- Ensure the abusive person **does not have the password** to your i Tunes account or other google accounts.
- **Say no when an app requests your location.** Check the security an privacy setting on the apps. Consider logging out of apps when you are not using them.
- **Disable geo tagging settings on your cameras,** to prevent where and when information being attached to photos.
- If the abusive person can access your mobile phone bills they may be able to see who you have called/texted and the location. **Get a new account in your name only.**
- **Clear your recent call lists so they do not appear in your phone.**
- Consider using a spare phone if family court allows the abuser to have phone contact with the child.
- Ensure you do not have family sharing or the windows equivalent enabled.
- Ensure you have antivirus protection and it is not out off date.
- Do software updates. It increases security.
- **Download the Daisy App** on Apple or Android devices, which is an app that provides you with information about family and domestic violence services.

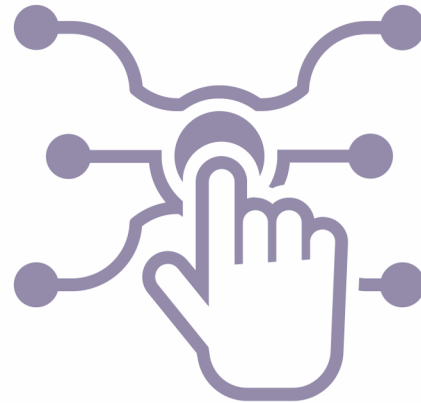
## Social Networking

- **Change passwords, block the abuser,** and make sure you **sign out.**
- Think about what you post and **tell family and friends not to post information about you.** Things like the back ground in photos, school uniforms may reveal your location.
- Make sure **children understand how to keep safe online.**
- **Google yourself, see what private information can be found online.** Search your name in quotation marks "your full name"
- If it's a **time of high risk** it may be safer for the **whole family to stop using social networking** a while until the crises passes.
- **Be selective with future contacts.** Do I know the persons true identity? Does this person have a relationship with the person stalking or abusing me? Am I already 'friends' with this person? In some cases abusers create fake profiles pretending to be a friend of yours.
- **Check privacy and security setting regularly.** Disable public searches, check location settings, disallow friends ability to tag in photos, untick 'info accessible through friends'.
- **Check your active settings if you are worried** someone else might be logged into your accounts.
- Create a new profile with **non identifying information and photo.**
- **Be careful with online dating profiles.**



## Spyware, Key Logging

- Spyware can be installed by having physical access to your computer, or remote access. It could be through a computer game, an email greeting card or an attachment. The spyware is then installed onto your computer. It may not be detected by antispyware. **Do not open known emails or attachments as these may contain spyware.**
- Spyware can tell abusers every call you make, every email or message you send and every place you take your device. **Some signs are; the battery of you device is dying faster then usual. Unknown programs are operating in the background of your desktop. Your speeds are slower.** Your abuser knows a lot about what you are doing, where you are, who are talking to online.
- **Disable any unknown apps** on your phone.
- It is almost impossible to delete or uninstall spyware . **Safest way is to buy a new one. Or reset your phone**



## Emails and Passwords

- **Create a new email on a safe device. Do not check these accounts from a device the abusive person could access.** Do not feature your name in your email.
- **Change passwords and users names.**
- **Use passwords on all devices.** Keep them secret and change them often provide security questions and answers that no one knows. Do not use birthdates, children's or pets names, use words, numbers and symbols.
- **Consider setting up login approvals or two step authentication on your accounts** if its available.
- **Use different screen names and user names for different platforms.**



## Other Devices

- GPS tracking devices are now easily available and are hard to spot in your car, handbag, child's toys and belongings. They mostly look the size of a postage stamp. Ask police or trusted mechanic to check.
- **Be alert if your abuser had access to your cars in built navigation system or stand alone GPS.**
- Did your abuser set up your **CCTV**?
- Is your **car connected to the internet via an in car entertainment system?**
- Do you have a **baby monitor**?
- Do you have a **physical activity tracker like fit bit?**
- Check your **child's devices as well as yours,** especially if they were given to your child as a gift
- Ensure your **public transport travel cards are not linked to the abusers credit or debit card.**

## Computer

- Use a **safe computer at public library, school, friends,** so the abusive person cannot access your browsing history or install spyware.
- Keep **anti-virus software up to date.**
- If your computer has a webcam **use tape to cover the camera when you are not using it** (and smart TV camera).
- **Delete your browsing using regularly,** or use private browsing.

## What to do if a FVRO is breached—How to collect evidence

- If you are **not in immediate risk** or do not need a fast response **contact your local police stations and make an appointment.**
- **Note the name of the officer and the time and date.**
- Your matter will be formally recorded and the police will refer you to someone who can help.
- Each situation is different. You may need to contact the police immediately or soon after the incident.
- Or you may feel comfortable enough to **keep detailed notes of a breach** and make an appointment to see the police later.
- Contact your local **police for advice** if you have **queries about collecting evidence to prove a breach** especially if evidence may be lost or destroyed if police don't attend soon.
- **Do not gather evidence like taking photographs or videos if it puts you or your family at risk.** It is always better to prevent harm than collect evidence.

## Photographic & other Phones

- **Photograph or video the abuser** during any breach if its safe to do so.
- **Date stamp any photographic evidence.** You will need to prove when any photograph was taken. It may be inadmissible in court. You should be able to do this via **phone's camera settings**
- If you are assaulted and do not want to call the police have a friend or family member **photograph any injuries and note the time and date.**
- **See a doctor to treat and record any injuries/ note the details of the doctor** especially at hospitals.
- Place items the person breaching the order has touched in a secure place protected from the weather.
- In case of sexual assault avoid showering and washing clothing if possible.

## Phones

- **Keep all SMS messages. Take screen shots.** Police can download them or photograph the screen for evidence.
- **Do not delete any messages left of voice mail.**
- Keep copies of the other party's mobile phone bills if they come to your property.
- **Have a witness listen to phone calls.**
- **Write down any verbal threats as accurately as you can.** Record the time and date and how it made you feel.
- **Phone conversations can only be recoded if you are involved in the conversation.** Note it is illegal to attach a recording evidence to the handset of the phone. You can hold a recorder

## Written Notes

- **Keep a diary of individual breaches of the FVRO** whether you report it to police or not. Note any suspicious activity at home or work, for example prowlers, cars, or incoming calls from unknown mobile phone numbers or hang-ups.
- **Keep threatening notes and letters and handle them as little as possible.** Put them in a plastic sleeve or envelope touching the outer edges only

## Emails and Messages

- **Keep emails and take screen shots of conversations in online messaging services** like WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger. Photograph the screen and print the photos if you cant keep them on your phone



## **Collecting Evidence Diary**

Date of incident \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

What happened

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Include clear short facts about what happened as they you are telling the police or a magistrate. Write down the exact words, actions and behaviours used.

Were there children Present? Yes No  
(this includes anywhere in the home)

Did they directly see or hear the incident? Yes No

Did they see or hear effects of the incident? Yes No

What did they see or hear

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Children do not necessary need to directly see or hear an incident to be affected. They may also see or hear the effects of an incident such as:

- Comforting or helping the person affected
- Cleaning up after the incident
- Being present when the police attend

Were there witnesses?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact \_\_\_\_\_

What did they witness?

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Did you report this to police Yes No

Name and registered numbers \_\_\_\_\_

Location of police station \_\_\_\_\_

What actions were taken? \_\_\_\_\_

Police action could include;

- Talking you or other people involved
- Taking a statement
- Referring you to a service
- Issuing a police order
- Applying to court for a VRO
- Arresting or charging the offender

Did you attend any medical appointments as a result of the incident?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Type of appointments \_\_\_\_\_

Date attended \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Include supporting evidence (photos, letters, documents, reports, emails, texts,**

## Moving forward, caring for yourself

Survivors of family and domestic violence describe the experience as exhausting and emotionally draining. The process of building a new life can take much courage, time and incredible energy. It is quite normal to feel overwhelmed sometimes by the decision to leave the relationship. Some days you might even think it would be easier to return to your abuser. The abusive person may: Tell you that he has changed and he wants you back, Recognise that he does have a problem, attend a men's behaviour change group. Research shows that it is very difficult for many men to stop their violent behaviour. Attending a men's behaviour change group is not a guarantee of change or that women and children will be safe. In order to stay positive, try doing the following things.

- Express your feelings. Talk or write about them in a journal.
- Use your journal as evidence of what you have endured and how you have grown as a result of what you have been through.
- Recognise that bad feelings pass. If you are feeling sad, cry.
- Exercise regularly to help relieve anger, stress and depression. e.g.
  - - Walk the dog
  - - go for a swim, ride your bicycle with the kids or go to the gym.
- Write positive statements on post-it stickers and place them around the house.
- Play music with positive messages.
- Learn relaxation techniques. For example, have a warm bath or practise breathing techniques.
- Think about the people that you admire and list their qualities, then think about yourself and the similar qualities that you have or are developing.
- Set simple, short-term goals for yourself. Achieving these will give you the confidence to set larger, longer-term goals.
- Build a community of support and spend time with people who make you feel good (for example with your family violence support worker, counsellor, support group, family and friends).
- Be kind to yourself and make time to do things that you enjoy.
- Acknowledge your achievements, large and small. Celebrate each step you take on the path to personal safety and empowerment.

If I feel down and ready to return to a potentially abusive situation, I can

I can read \_\_\_\_\_ to help me feel stronger I can call \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to be of support to me.

Other things I can do to help me feel stronger are \_\_\_\_\_





# SAFETY PLANNING FOR PETS:

If you are staying:

- **Keep emergency provisions for your pet** to prepare for the case in which your abuser withholds money.
- Keep the phone number of the **nearest 24 hour emergency veterinary clinic**
- **Establish ownership of your pet by creating a paper trail** (e.g. obtain a license, have veterinarian records put in your name)

If you are leaving:

- **Obtain safe emergency shelter for pet**, somewhere that won't be disclosed to your abuser (e.g.. veterinarian, friend, family, a safe haven for pets program)
- **Pack a bag for your pet** that includes:
  1. food
  2. medicine
  3. documents of ownership (receipts from adoption or purchase of pet, license to establish ownership, receipts for animal purchases)
  4. health documents (veterinary or vaccination records)
  5. leash
  6. ID and rabies tag, if a dog or cat (these will also help establish ownership)
  7. carrier
  8. toys
  9. bedding

(If you must leave without your pet, **remember to leave enough food, fresh bedding, litter, etc. for your pet.**)

- If you have left:
  - Keep pets indoors (if possible)
  - Don't let the pet outside alone
  - Pick a safe route and time to walk your pet
  - Don't exercise/walk pet alone
  - Change your veterinarian

## Services that are helping me



Agency Name	Name of Contact	Contact Number	Email Address

# Useful Numbers

Police—Crisis 000 (emergency)  
To report and incident 131 444 (non-emergency)

1800RESPECT  
1800 737 732

Confidential information, counselling and support service  
for sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.

Entrypoint Perth  
1800 595 206  
Homeless Services & Accommodation

Crisis Care  
Tel: (08) 9223 1111  
Free call 1800 199 008  
Referral to safe accommodation

Women's DV Helpline  
Tel: (08) 9223 1188  
Free call 1800 007 339  
Support and counselling for women experiencing DV.  
State-wide 24 hour service.

Lifeline  
Call: 13 11 14  
24/7 Crisis Support



# My Safety Plan

## Preparing

If I have to leave I will go \_\_\_\_\_

I can have an emergency bag packed and leave it in a safe place

\_\_\_\_\_

I can put my purse and car keys ready and put them \_\_\_\_\_ to leave quickly

I can keep doors and window locked

I can keep my mobile close with credit, and charged

I will put emergency numbers into my phone or somewhere I can access them

\_\_\_\_\_

I will turn the location settings off on my phone

I will plan and practice how to get out safely (what doors windows, stairwells I will use)

\_\_\_\_\_

If its safe I will write everything down

The code word I will use with a safe person is \_\_\_\_\_ ; the action I would like them to take is \_\_\_\_\_

I can inform neighbour family or friends that my partner no longer resides with me and they should call the police if they see him/hear suspicious noise

I can make sure car has petrol and backed into driveway

## During

If I am being assaulted I can run outside. I will head for where there are people. If he follows, I can avoid places where I might be trapped. Scream for help. Tell anyone who is listening to call the police

I will use my judgement and intuition is the situation is very serious. I can give my partner what they want to calm them down, I have to protect myself and children until we are out of danger

When I expect it is going to get dangerous I can move to a space that is lowest risk

\_\_\_\_\_

Keep in a safe place

## Safety Plan for children

I will teach my children how to make a call to police, and practice what they should say

I will teach my children not to disclose where we are living or any large landmarks

My children's safe people are (teach them how to contact them)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I will discuss my safety plan with my children if they are old enough and practice escape plan

I will provide the school/day care a copy of the FVRO and court documents

I will give the school/daycare a picture the abuser, I will make a safety plan with the school/daycare in case the abusive person turns up

Checklist for Important Items

- Money
- clothes
- Transport (taxi numbers, uber app, fuel voucher)
- Safe mobile phone or change for public phone
- Spare set of house/car/other keys
- Important documents or certified copies
- ID, license, bank account details/ cards, birth certificates, Medicare card, passports, immigration documents, health care card, Centrelink information, intervention orders/family court papers
- Medication/prescriptions

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Client signature:

Date:

Caseworker signature:

Date:

I will sit down and review my safety plan with \_\_\_\_\_  
every \_\_\_\_\_ to keep in up to date in order to plan the safest way to leave