

Safety Plan

Information from



THE
CENTER
FOR
WOMEN
AND
FAMILIES

What Is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence refers to adults, married or unmarried, victimized by their partners. The abuse takes many forms and includes:

- Hitting, punching, kicking, or biting
- Choking, burning, or stabbing
- Hair-pulling or slapping
- Shoving or throwing objects
- Forced sexual relations
- Verbal insults, put-downs and threats

If you are a battered person, you are not alone. You have a right not to be beaten, threatened, or assaulted.

Help is available.

If violence occurs, plan for your safety in advance.

Safety During An Explosive Incident

Choose one or more neighbors you can trust, tell them about the violence, and ask that they call the police immediately if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.

Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevators or stairwell would be best and where an extra set of keys is hidden.

If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room or area where you have access to an exit. Try to stay away from the kitchen, bedroom or anywhere else weapons might be available.

Use your own instincts and judgment. If the situation is dangerous, consider giving the abuser what he wants to calm him down. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.

Choose a code word to use with your children, family, friends and neighbors so they will know when to call the police for you. Teach your children how to call 911 and review safety measures with them as often as possible.

Decide and plan where you will go if you have to leave home, even if you do not think you will need to.

Safety When Preparing To Leave

Keep the 911, shelter or hotline phone number, and some change or a calling card on you at all times for emergency phone calls. When you do not know what to do, call 911.

Determine who would be able to let you stay with them or lend you some money.

Get your own post office box. You can privately receive checks and letters to begin your independence.

Open a savings account and/or credit card in your own name. Think of other ways in which you can establish or increase your independence.

Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents, extra medicines and clothes with someone you trust or in a safe place so you can leave quickly.

REMEMBER - leaving your batterer is the most dangerous time. Review your safety plan as often as possible to ensure the safest way to leave.

Safety In Your Home

Change the locks on your doors as quickly as possible. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure your windows. Smoke alarms must be in working order.

Inform your neighbors and your landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should immediately call the police if they see him or her near your home.

Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.

Notify your children's school or day care about who has permission to have contact with or who is allowed to pick up your children.

Safety On The Job And In Public

Decide whom at work you will inform of your situation. If possible, provide him or her with a picture of your abuser.

Arrange to have an answering machine, caller ID, or a trusted employee/friend or relative screen your calls, if possible.

Devise a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort you to your car, bus or train and wait with you until you are safely on your way. Use a variety of routes to go home if possible. Think about what you would do if something happened while going home in your car, on the bus, or other forms of transportation. Try to travel a route or at a time when you would not encounter your abuser.



Locations

For more information about services offered at The Center, please call any of our locations or visit our website.

KENTUCKY

Kentucky Campus
Open 24 Hours
P.O. Box 2048
Louisville, KY
(502) 581-7222 Domestic Violence Crisis Line
(502) 581-7242 TDD

West Louisville Campus
(502) 775-6408

Bullitt County Services
(502) 538-0212

Shelby County Area Services
(502) 633-7800

INDIANA

Southern Indiana Campus
Open 24 Hours
New Albany, IN
(812) 944-6743 Crisis Line

Corydon Office
(812) 734-0280

Marengo Office
(812) 365-2338

Scottsburg Office
(812) 752-7996



(877) 803-7577

Toll Free Crisis Line • 24 Hours

www.thecenteronline.org

The Center for Women and Families is committed to creating an environment in which diversity is valued and assures no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, handicap, disability, veteran status, familial status, or political opinion.

Our programs are funded in part by the following: Kentucky Domestic Violence Association, Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs, Kentucky Housing Corporation, Metro Louisville, Metro United Way, United Way of Scott County, Inc., U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and many more federal, regional and local sources. Please review our most recent annual report at www.thecenteronline.org for a complete list of our funders.

What is an Emergency Protective Order (EPO)?

An Emergency Protective Order is an order issued by the court to provide protection from future acts of violence.

To file an Emergency Protective Order (EPO) you must:

- be a family member, ex-spouse or member of an unmarried couple who is currently living together, formerly living together or who has a child in common;
- be 18 or have a guardian with you;
- present the abuser's current home or work address; and if possible,
- have the abuser's birth date and/or social security number.

You can petition for an EPO 24 hours a day, seven days a week. PLEASE CALL THE CENTER'S CRISIS LINE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT WHERE AND WHEN TO GO IN THE COUNTY YOU LIVE IN.

In the petition, describe the most recent act(s) of abuse and/or threatening behavior. Be certain to note if any weapons or dangerous instruments have ever been used.

You may be granted any or all of the following orders:

- to stop the abuser from any further acts of violence;
- not to sell or destroy any of the family's property;

- if you and the abuser live in the same place, for the abuser to leave home;
- to restrain the abuser from any contact or communication with the victim; and
- temporary child custody.

To determine if a summons or EPO has been served, you may call your county's Sheriff's Office.

You must be present at the court hearing. Be certain you know the time, date, and place.

Keep a copy of the order with you at all times.

During a full hearing you should be prepared to:

Describe abuse and threats. Provide photos, medical and police records, if available. Identify safety needs for you and your children.

Safety With Protective Order

Keep your protective order on you at all times. When you change your purse, your protective order should be the first thing that goes into it. Give a copy of the order to a trusted neighbor or family member.

Immediately call the police if your partner breaks the protective order.

Inform family, friends, neighbors and your physician or health care provider that you have a protective order in effect.

Think of alternate ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.



Violations Of An Order

If a violation of an EPO or Domestic Violence Order occurs, immediately inform law enforcement and the circuit clerk. Violation of a protective order may be a Class A misdemeanor or contempt of court and the abuser can be arrested.

Other Options

You may be able to file a criminal complaint against the abuser for abusive or threatening behavior. The circuit clerk can tell you how and where to file the criminal complaint. The county attorney can advise you as to your legal rights in a criminal action.

The Center for Women and Families, a non-profit program, offers 24-hour assistance, 7 days a week to anyone experiencing domestic violence. Our services are provided at no cost to you.

- 24-hour crisis line provides immediate help.
- Temporary lodging in a safe, secure facility for abused persons and their dependent children.
- Skilled crisis and supportive counseling.
- Legal and hospital advocacy.
- Information for and about referrals for financial aid, employment, housing, medical assistance, and mental health services.
- Support groups.

Community education and training programs on domestic violence and dating violence are available to interested groups and professionals.

Victim Advocates provide information and support to victims of domestic violence by:

- Informing victims about the criminal justice system
- Accompanying victims to any court hearings that you may have to attend.
- Providing counseling and emotional support to victims.