

Developing a Safety Plan:

Please note that every person's circumstance is different so this safety plan is comprised of tips and general information on how to keep yourself and your family safe. Please choose what works best for you.

I. Non-Emergency Preparation and Planning:

- A. Make an extra set of car keys and hide them in an easy place to reach ()
- B. Prepare clothing and medication needs for yourself and your children
 - Keep them in a secure location or store them at a **trusted** friend/family member's house()
- C. Prepare for financial needs (place in accessible location): ()
 - 1. Extra cash ()
 - 2. Open an individual checking account ()
 - 3. Other valuables (i.e. jewelry, coins, etc.) ()
- D. Prepare for children's needs (where children are involved): ()
 - 1. Take something meaningful for each child (blanket, pillow, etc.) ()
 - 2. Use the word emergency instead of "violence" or "anger" ()
 - 3. Identify a safe place for children to go and plan with them ()
- E. Prepare for possible legal action. Keep all documents in a safe place: ()
 - 1. **Financial documents:**
 - a. Pay stubs: yours (if you are working) and your partner's ()
 - b. Household bills: this includes mortgage payments, utilities, etc. ()
 - c. Stocks, bonds, and any other joint financial holdings ()
 - 2. **Identification:**
 - a. Driver's license, birth certificates, social security card, visa/other immigration papers) ()
 - 3. **Copies** of restraining orders, evidence of past abuse ()
 - 4. **Copies of records:**
 - a. Medical and doctor records, police reports, evidence of physical abuse such as photographs. ()
- F. Identify a safe place you could stay in case of emergency (even temporarily)
 - 1. Family/friend's home ()
 - 2. JBWS' Emergency Safe House ()
 - 3. Hotel ()
- G. Be mindful of your technology use and the person causing harm's access to your cell phone and online accounts ()
 - 1. Keep GPS/location-based apps turned off on cell phone ()
 - 2. Change passwords on accounts or create new usernames for online accounts ()
 - 3. If you suspect phone calls/texts/emails are monitored, use a safer device such as a public computer, pre-paid phone, or new email address ()

II. Emergency Safety Plan (when living with the person causing harm):

- A. Plan an escape route from home **BEFORE** it is needed ()
- B. Make a habit of backing the car into the driveway or parking spot and keeping the car fueled ()
- C. Make a list of situations in which violence may occur or escalate ()
 - 1. Identify ways to de-escalate the person causing harm ()
 - a. This may require "placating" the person causing harm in order to stay safe and/or leave.
- D. Carefully explore the layout of your house and access to telephones ()
 - 1. Always keep cell phone charged and accessible ()
 - 2. Keep the number of JBWS in a safe place ()
- E. Develop and rehearse a plan for leaving the home if violence occurs ()
- F. If violence occurs away from home, develop a plan for escaping ()
- G. Notify **trusted** neighbors to be on alert to suspicious noises and to call the police ()
- H. Develop a code word with children when you want them to call for help ()
- I. Teach children how to use the phone to contact the police ()
- J. Know safe places in the home you can go to leave a dangerous situation ()
 - 1. **AVOID: Kitchens, bathrooms, garage, or any other room containing possible weapons. Remove possible weapons, such as knives, from easy access**
- K. Don't run to where the children are, as your partner may hurt them as well ()
- I. Try not to wear scarves or long jewelry that could be used to strangle you or otherwise hurt you ()

III. When a Violent Incident Occurs:

- A. Leave the home immediately ()
- B. If leaving is not possible, move ASAP to a room of low risk
 - a. **TRY TO AVOID:** high risk rooms (See Section II, J.)
- C. You may need to use "placating" or de-escalation tools to maintain safety ()
- D. Call or text 911 for the police ()
 - 1. If you are texting 911, keep your cell phone on silent so the person causing harm is not alerted that police have been contacted
 - 2. Text your exact location to the police and provide a brief description of the situation. If you do not know the address of your location, provide street names of the nearest intersection or a description of the closest landmark
- E. Have children alert police, neighbors, or "emergency contact" ()
- F. If able to leave by car, then **LOCK CAR DOORS IMMEDIATELY** ()

IV. Safety Plan with a Restraining Order:

- A.** Keep a copy of the restraining order on or near you at all times ()
- B.** Give copies of restraining orders to local police departments, children's schools, trusted family and friends ()
- C.** Inform as many neighbors, relatives, friends, and your co-workers as soon as possible that the restraining order is in effect ()
- D.** If the person causing harm violates the restraining order, **CONTACT THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY** ()
- E. Document ALL Violations:** including via technology and contact your attorney/advocate
- F.** If the person causing harm is charged with a crime, **STAY IN CONTACT WITH THE POLICE AND/OR VICTIM WITNESS COORDINATOR TO BE ADVISED IF THE PERSON CAUSING HARM IS BEING RELEASED FROM JAIL** ()
- G.** When the final restraining order is in effect, **CHANGE ALL LOCKS TO YOUR RESIDENCE** ()

V. Once You Leave:

- A.** Consider renting a post office box or using the address of a friend for your mail ()
- B.** Be careful to whom you give your new address and phone number ()
- C.** Change routines wherever possible and have car checked for tracking device ()
 - 1. Change work hours, routes you travel to work, children's schools or any other place you frequent
 - a. (AA meetings, the gym, friends/family's homes, etc.)
- D.** Tell people at work to have phone calls screened, walk in and out of work with someone else whenever possible ()
- E.** Alert school authorities of the situation ()
 - 1. Tell people who take care of your children which people are allowed to pick up your children
- F.** Continue backing into driveway and parking spaces ()
 - 1. Park in well-lit areas
 - 2. Install motion sensored lights on property and additional security
- G.** Limit use of social media apps (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter): ()
 - 1. Refrain from posting photos ()
 - a. Even without a location tagged, coordinates can be embedded in the image
 - 2. Limit updates that could provide information about your location ()
 - 3. Ask others to refrain from including you in their posts ()
 - 4. Set social media privacy settings to strictest setting ()
 - 5. Consider blocking the person causing harm from your social media accounts ()

V. Contined - Once You Leave:

- H. Periodically check your apps and online accounts ()
1. Monitor new apps on your phone-delete any you have not downloaded yourself as it may be used by the person causing harm to track your location
 2. Keep GPS turned off on phone to avoid your frequent locations being tracked ()
 3. Change usernames and passwords frequently ()
 - a. Computers, tablets, and cell phones can be synced allowing access to messages, email accounts, social media apps, etc.

Contact JBWS' 24-Hour Helpline with Any Questions You May Have:

JBWS' 24-Hour Helpline: 1.877.782.2873

Text Helpline Number: 973.314.4192

Hablamos Español Interpreters Available

Other Important Numbers:

Legal Advocacy Services: (973) 267-7520, EXT. 259

Legal Advocacy Services En Espanol: (973) 267-7520, EXT. 260

Morris Family Justice Center: (973) 829-4050

**Victim/Witness Assistance Unit Morris County
Prosecutor's Office:** (973) 285-6200

Morris County Courthouse Main Reception:
(862)-397-5700 EXT. 7520