



Checklist:
**What you need to take
with you when you leave**

- Driver's license or other photo ID
- Social security card
- Green card
- Passport
- Birth certificates (all family members)
- Medical records (all family members)
- Medications (all family members)
- Copy of protection order
- Insurance papers
- Benefits or other assistance information
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- Bank statements
- Check book or other money
- Other financial information
- School records
- Work permits
- Divorce papers
- Cell phone
- House and car keys
- Address book
- Pictures
- Small toys or items for children
- Other _____

For More Information

Address:

Department of Social Services
700 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501

Email: VictimsServices@state.sd.us

Web: www.dss.sd.gov

SD Domestic Abuse Hotline:

1-800-430-SAFE

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

1-800-799-SAFE

1-800-787-3224 (hearing impaired)

Web: www.thehotline.org

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Domestic Violence Program

A guide to developing a safety plan
for victims of domestic violence.

DSS 
Strong Families - South Dakota's Foundation and Our Future

Safety During an Explosive incident

- ✓ If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room or area that has access to an exit and not in the bathroom, kitchen or anywhere near dangerous items.
- ✓ Practice getting out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator or stairwell are best.
- ✓ Have a packed bag ready. Keep it hidden in your home or leave the bag with a friend or family member or even at work, if possible.
- ✓ Identify a neighbor you can tell about the violence and ask that they call police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.
- ✓ Decide on a code word to use with your children, family, friends and neighbors when you need the police.
- ✓ Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will need to).
- ✓ If an abusive incident seems imminent, trust your own judgment. Sometimes it is best to leave; sometimes it is best to pacify the abuser.

Safety When Preparing to Leave

Leaving your batterer is the most dangerous time.

- ✓ Open a savings account in your own name to establish or increase your independence.
- ✓ Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents and extra clothes with someone you trust so you can leave quickly.
- ✓ Determine who would let you stay with them or lend you some money.
- ✓ Keep the shelter phone number on hand as well as some change or a calling card for emergency phone calls.
- ✓ Review your safety plan as often as possible in order to plan the safest way to leave your batterer.

Safety for Teens in a Violent Relationship

- ✓ Decide which friend, teacher, relative or police officer you can tell.
- ✓ Talk to your local domestic violence agency to find out about help they may be able to offer. In case of an emergency, always call 911 first.

Safety in Your Own Home

- ✓ Change the locks on your doors. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure your windows.
- ✓ Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- ✓ Tell your child's school and/or day care provider about who has permission to pick up your child.
- ✓ Tell neighbors and a landlord your partner no longer lives with you and they should call police if they see that person near your home.
- ✓ Never call the abuser from your home. If your abuser has caller I.D., locating your residence can easily be done.
- ✓ Some domestic violence shelters may be able to provide you with a cell phone specifically used to call 911 in case of emergencies.

Safety with a Protective Order

- ✓ Keep your protective order on you at all times. When changing your purse, this should be the first thing that goes in it.
- ✓ Call the police if your partner breaks the protective order.
- ✓ Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.
- ✓ Tell your family, friends and neighbors that you have a protective order in place.

Safety on the Job and in Public

- ✓ Decide who to tell at work about your situation. This should include staff security in your office building. If possible, provide a photograph of your batterer.
- ✓ If possible, arrange to have someone screen your phone calls.
- ✓ Prepare a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone walk you to your vehicle or other mode of transportation. Use a variety of routes to go home.

Safety and Emotional Health

- ✓ If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust.
- ✓ Determine the safest method of communication if you have to communicate with your partner.
- ✓ Have positive thoughts about yourself and be assertive with others about your needs.
- ✓ Attend a victims' support group to gain support from others and learn more about yourself and the relationship.
- ✓ Contact a counselor for more support or advice about your particular situation.
- ✓ Contact your local domestic violence victims' services program to receive additional information about a safety plan and planning ahead for certain situations.

Contact a domestic violence shelter near you for more information and to see what type of assistance is available to you in your situation.

www.dss.sd.gov/victimservices/domesticabuse/shelters.asp