

Safety Planning During COVID-19

Safety plans are valuable tools if you are in an abusive relationship. You may have to adjust your tools to stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Safety in Close Quarters: *Families will likely find themselves spending most or all of their time in close quarters. There are steps that you can take to try and avoid escalating situations within the home.*

- Create scheduled time where you and your partner are in different rooms of your home.
- If possible, go on walks or exercise outside separately from your partner.
- Keep to a schedule for children's meals, wake-up, learning, and bedtime.
- Keep a phone charged and available.
- Stay with friends or family for an extended period of time.
- If you are not living with your partner:
 - You may be easier to find and/or track now that you are in your home at all times.
 - Make sure to lock all doors, contact building management to change locks if needed.
 - Notify a trusted neighbor or building security to call 911 if your partner is seen in the building.

Safety During Escalating Moments: *If an escalating situation is unavoidable, you may find yourself with limited ability to leave your home, seek help from neighbors, or stay with friends or family for an extended period of time.*

- If possible call 911 for emergency services.
- Have a code word or phrase established with a trusted friend or family member who can alert police to respond to an emergency when you are unable to call 911.
- Avoid the kitchen, bathroom, or any room where a weapon is kept.
- Try and create physical space between yourself and your partner by going into another room until things de-escalate.
- If possible, go for a walk or exercise outside to give things time to de-escalate.
- Attempt to keep children safe and in a different room with the door closed.
- Teach children not to intervene or get involved in the middle of a fight.

Internet Safety: *Many people may find themselves working from home or out of work completely. This may require more vigilance and increased safety protocols to keep sensitive information private on your computer and phone.*

- Lock your computer while not in use or when you step away.
- Log out of emails, social media, messaging, online banking etc.
- Click “no” when web-browsers ask to “save passwords”.
- Clear search histories, change passwords.

How to Seek Support: *Many programs will be operating remotely or offering limited services. Call Safelink's 24-7 Hotline at (877) 785 2020 or visit https://janedoe.org/find_help/ to find statewide access to support and services.*

- If you are seeking services from a program already and it is safe to do so, reach out via phone or email for advice and support.
- Know your local police department's non-emergency number to reach out with questions or concerns. *Text 911 is also available in Cambridge*
- Dial 2-1-1 in the state of Massachusetts for information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic

Protection Orders: *Emergency 209A Restraining Orders and 258E Harassment Prevention Orders are still available through your local police department.*

- **All active protective orders due to expire on or after March 18th, 2020 until April 6, 2020 will remain in effect until rescheduled and heard by the court. You will be notified by your local court via phone of the new hearing date.**
- If possible, call or go to local police department to file for a emergency 209A Restraining Order or 258E Harassment Prevention Order. Keep any orders issued on you at all times.