



## **DANE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE SAFETY SUGGESTIONS**

The following recommendations are suggestions only and may not apply to your circumstances.

### **PERSONAL SAFETY:**

- If your abuser resides elsewhere, never agree to meet your abuser alone
- Arrange for child exchanges in a public place
- Maintain a charged cell phone (911 can be called even if there are no minutes or active service)
- Consider obtaining a restraining order/injunction
- Report violations of the restraining order/injunction to the police
- Seek medical care if you are injured. Take photos of any bruising, swelling, etc
- If you return home and you suspect your abuser may be inside, **DO NOT GO IN**, call 911
- Never open the door if you cannot see who is there
- Plan a code word with a friend to make a 911 call for you if you cannot safely call for help yourself
- Hide a bag, or store it with a trusted friend, containing clothes, cash, medications, keys and personal items if you need to leave quickly

### **HOUSEHOLD SAFETY:**

- Account for all of your keys
- Change the door locks and secure your windows, patio doors
- Remove weapons from the home, separate ammunition from the weapons
- Keep doors and windows locked, garage doors shut
- Keep outdoor lighting on at night, consider installing motion/flood lighting
- Keep windows and shades closed at night
- Get a peephole installed (ask landlord to install)
- Contact landlord to change locks, or repair security doors
- Change codes to your garage doors, pin pads, and remotes
- Notify landlord or neighbors of persons not wanted on the property
- Plan an escape route out of your home
- Consider having an alarm system or security camera installed

### **SAFETY AT WORK:**

- Tell employers or co-workers not to give out your phone or address, or work schedule details
- Give a photo of your abuser to security and friends at work
- Walk with others to lunch, to and from your parking area, or the bus stop
- Talk to your supervisor about your safety concerns
- Notify your payroll department to change, or set up direct deposit (monitor your accounts)
- Park your car in different locations or carpool with a co-worker

## **CHILD SAFETY:**

- Teach your child how to call 911 and give your address and phone number for help
- Teach them where to go for help outside the house
- Plan an escape route out of the house with your children
- Notify your child's school or daycare of your safety concerns, provide a photo of your abuser
- Remember: Your child is affected by exposure to violence in your home!

## **COMPUTER/PHONE/MAIL:**

- Save all voicemails, text messages, emails from suspect for documentation
- It is legal in Wisconsin to tape record your own phone conversations with another party
- Change all passwords/PIN codes to bank accounts, ATM cards, online accounts, etc
- Change all voicemail codes
- Consider getting a PO box if your personal mailbox or online accounts are not secure
- If you suspect there is spyware installed on your computer, have it inspected
- Monitor your children's phone and computer use for contact with the abuser

## **FINANCIAL SAFETY:**

- Gather important documents (social security cards, birth certificates, custody paperwork, leases/deeds, insurance documents, etc.) Place items in a safe location
- Switch all bills or other correspondence to online versus regular mail (change passwords)
- Obtain a credit report and account for all of your bank cards and accounts
- Remove your name from any shared accounts, or try to close them

## **VEHICLE SAFETY:**

- Keep a charged cell phone in your vehicle
- Lock your doors as soon as you get in your car
- If you need glasses to drive, keep an extra pair in your vehicle
- Keep distance between the vehicle in front of you to avoid being blocked in
- Park in lighted areas
- If you think you are being followed, drive to a lighted public place
- When pulling in your garage, wait until your garage door is secure before exiting
- Be aware of your surroundings in parking garages, lots
- Change your regular travel habits, take different routes at different times

## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES:**

Domestic Abuse Intervention Services, Crisis Line--608-251-4445

Domestic Abuse Intervention Services Legal Advocate, Housing-- 608-251-1237

Rape Crisis--608-251-7273

Dane County Communications Center Non Emergency--608-255-2345

Dane County District Attorney's Office Domestic Violence Unit--608-266-9003

Dane County Human Services--608-242-6200

Salvation Army--Women's Shelter--608-256-2321 Men's Shelter --608-244-3979