

# WHAT IS A SAFETY PLAN?



## Creating a Domestic Violence Safety Plan

When dealing with domestic violence, having a safety plan can be crucial for protecting yourself and your loved ones. A safety plan is a personalized, practical plan that includes ways to remain safe while in a relationship, planning to leave, or after you leave. This guide will help you consider the necessary documents and resources you should have ready.

### Essential Documents to Prepare

Having important documents readily available can make a significant difference if you need to leave quickly. Here's a list of what you should prepare:

- **Your State Driver's License or ID:** This provides proof of identity and address, which can be essential when seeking assistance or relocating.
- **Your Tribal Card:** If applicable, this can be crucial for receiving specific tribal benefits or services.
- **Your Birth Certificate:** This is another form of identity verification that might be needed for various legal or administrative processes.
- **Your Social Security Card:** Important for employment, housing applications, and accessing certain services.

### Financial Resources

In addition to documents, having access to financial resources can provide greater independence and flexibility:

- **Money:** Having cash on hand is important, as it can be used in situations where credit cards are not accepted or to maintain privacy.
- **Gift Cards:** These can be used as an alternative to cash, especially at stores or online platforms.
- **Prepaid Cards:** Prepaid cards can offer a convenient and less traceable way to handle expenses, ensuring your financial activities remain private.

## Additional Safety Considerations

Beyond documents and finances, consider these additional elements for your safety plan:

- **Emergency Contacts:** Compile a list of trusted friends, family members, or support services you can reach out to for assistance.
- **Safe Place:** Identify a safe place to go, such as a friend's house, a shelter, or another secure location.
- **Packing a Bag:** Prepare a bag with essentials such as clothes, medications, and personal items that can be quickly accessed if you need to leave suddenly.
- **Communicating Your Plan:** Share your plan with someone you trust, so they are aware of your situation and can offer support or act if needed.

## Legal and Community Resources

- **Restraining Orders:** Understand the process of obtaining a restraining order and keep any necessary documentation handy.
- **Local Shelters:** Know the locations of local shelters and hotlines that can provide immediate support.
- **Counseling and Support Groups:** Reach out to organizations that offer counseling and support for individuals experiencing domestic violence.

Having a well-thought-out safety plan can empower you to take control of your situation and ensure your safety. Always remember that you are not alone, and there are resources and people ready to help you.