



Safety Planning Post Separation

While Living Alone

Safety planning must continue after the relationship ends—in fact most domestic violence incidents, including murder, happen AFTER the relationship ends! So take some time to celebrate your freedom—just keep in mind that the price of freedom from any kind of oppression is vigilance and attention to safety.

Safety Check

Think of your home as your castle and fortress, you want to shore up all potential points of access/vulnerability.

Upgrade your security system

Change the locks on doors and windows as soon as possible. Consider installing a monitored security service, outside lighting and cameras with motion detectors such as the Ring Doorbell. Consider having the cameras look out into the street in case a car or a person goes by your house consistently.

Parking

If your partner ever had access to your garage, change the code on your garage door opener. Do you have a carport or garage, or do you park outside on the street? When you are entering the garage make sure that no one has slipped inside behind you. You can pull into the garage, turn your car off while the door remains locked. Watch and make sure that the garage door closes before exiting your car. If you have a sliding door or gate, make sure it closes before turning any corner in the garage. Where do you park relative to the entrance to your home or work?

If you go away for an extended period.

Consider setting indoor lights, television, and radio on a timer for times where you are leaving the home so that it appears that someone is still in the house.

Emergency equipment

Do you have a functioning smoke detector, carbon monoxide detector and fire extinguisher?

Have a versatile safety plan

Safety plan for as many scenarios as you can imagine. Think through what you would do in each scenario. Consider writing down what you would do. Even though you live alone, safety plan for

explosive incidents and prepare your home as though your partner is trying to get inside, and consider what you would do if they got inside. *(See Safety Planning Section, While Living With your Partner)*

If your partner comes to your door

If your abuser shows up at your front door and demands to be let in, you don't have to respond. If you feel threatened, consider calling 9-1-1. You don't have to let them in and it could be very dangerous, if you do. If they are claiming they need medical help, why did they come to you and not to a hospital? Consider telling them that the ambulance is on its way and stay inside with the door locked.

Talk to your neighbors and landlord

You can let them know your abuser no longer lives with you and ask if they would consider calling the police if they see your ex near your home while you are away. For example, if you are on vacation and your ex knows you are away for an extended period, he may choose that time to plant a GPS device on your car, install a hidden camera or a device to intercept your Wi-Fi.

Restraining Orders

If you have a Restraining Order against your ex, consider sharing a copy of the restraining order and a photo of your ex with your children's school, your employer, or security at your apartment if applicable. You can also keep a copy of the restraining order in your purse and in the glovebox of your car.

Protect your address

In California, the Safe at Home program is administered by the Secretary of State's office and can help to keep your address confidential. They offer a free post office box and mail forwarding service.[iii] Similar programs exist in most states, you can call the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233) and ask them about services in your area.

For more information on the Safe at Home Program:

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/registries/safe-home/about-safeathome>

USPS Informed Delivery

Register yourself for USPS Informed Delivery. Once one person is registered another person should not be able to sign up. If your abuser signs up as you they will be able to see scans of the mail you are receiving.