**Safety Planning (In-depth version)**

Creating a personal safety plan can help you think of ways to increase your safety within a relationship or plan the safest way to leave. There may be a time when you and your children need to leave your home quickly, and it can be useful to make preparations to do so safely and allow you to bring essentials with you. You can use the tips and information below to help with your own safety planning.

**Remember: Your safety comes first.** If you do need to leave but have not made any of these preparations - you CAN still leave.

**Staying safe while preparing to leave an abusive relationship**

Safe time to leave

* Think about when it would be most safe to leave depending on your situation. You should consider your partners routine and try to leave at a time when your partner is not around. This will reduce the risk to your immediate safety.

Where will you go

* Try to think of safe places you might go. Remember to take into consideration the different times/days of the week. For example, at night, and public space opening hours.
* Identify safe locations that are close to places you regularly visit, such as a neighbour’s house or a local shop. Also, consider safe locations that may be outside of your usual areas, providing you with various options in case you need to leave unexpectedly.
* Reassure you children - identify safe places for them to go in an emergency.

Who will I tell

* Call Police Scotland **999** in an emergency or **111** for non-emergency.
* You may want to inform a trusted friend or family member. Ensure they understand not to share your safety plan or safe location with anyone else.
* Set a code word that you can use to alert family or friends if you need help, so that they know to contact the police.
* Teach your children how to contact trusted friends/family and to call the police on 999 in an emergency; tell them what they would need to say (e.g. their full name, address and telephone number).

**Remember:** If you don’t feel comfortable telling anyone else, you can always inform our AMIS helpline about your safety plan.

My Emergency Bag

Where possible, you can pack an emergency bag of cloths, toiletries, copies of important documents and medication. Be cautious and only remove a few items at a time so your partner does not notice. Keep this in a place where your partner could not easily find it. If you can, we advise that you keep an emergency bag in a safe place outside of the home. For example, this could be at work or with a trusted friend/family member.

What will I take

If you have time, there are a few things listed below that you can try to take with you which will help keep you safe and ease this process. If you are planning ahead of the day you plan to leave, It is important to make sure you conceal these items somewhere safe where your abuser will not find them. Your safety and your children’s safety must come first so only take things if you have time to do so.

* Take any legal and financial papers for you and your children, such as:
  + Marriage and Birth certificate
  + Passport
  + National insurance card
  + Immigration documents/National ID card
  + Driving licence
  + Benefit paperwork
  + Credit/Debit cards
  + Rent or mortgage papers
  + Any documentation relating to the abuse such as police reports or court orders

**Note:** The hardcopy documents will be most useful, but if that is impossible or may put your safety at risk, try to make copies, or take photographs and send them as attachments to a safe email address that you can access from anywhere.

**Remember:** you can forward copies of any important documentation or evidence to our AMIS support email ([support@amis.org.uk](mailto:support@amis.org.uk)). We can securely and confidentially store these on your file within our database.

* Take all of your children with you if you can.
* Keys to any property you occupy, your place of work and your vehicle(s).
* A fully charged telephone and charger – you could buy a cheap mobile phone to store important contact details.
* Cash – even a small amount for a taxi or bus fare.
* Clothing and toiletries for you (and your children) for at least several days (remember school uniforms if your children might need them)
* Any medicine you might need
* Any personal possessions which have sentimental value – like photographs or jewellery.

**Remember:** if you leave and later discover you have forgotten something, you may be able to arrange for the protection of a police escort to return home to collect it.

**Staying safe after leaving an abusive relationship**

If you have left your home, but have either moved to a different area OR are staying in the same area, these measures can help increase your safety:

* Try to alter your routines and avoid places that you used regularly when you were together.
* If your regular appointments are known to your abuser (an exercise class or GP appointment) consider changing your routes, mode of transportation, or attending with someone else.
* Consider carrying a personal alarm when you are out of the house.
* Share your daily schedule and whereabouts with a trusted individual and maintain regular contact for your safety.
* Inform your children's school or childcare provider about the situation, provide authorized pick-up information - make sure they do not allow anyone else to collect them. Request that they keep your contact/location details confidential (provide copies of any court orders, if you have them).
* If you feel able, confide in your employer or colleagues. They can be better equipped to assist in an emergency and implement additional security measures to protect and support you.
* If you have a court order, make sure that your local police station has a copy, and that the police know that they need to respond quickly in an emergency.
* If your abuser has had access to your phone or car, they could have installed a tracking device. If you are in any doubt, change your phone number to ensure you cannot be tracked.
* Ensure all location tracking and activity status are disabled across all your online accounts and devices (e.g. Find my iPhone, social media).
* Digital photos often contain location/time data, so be cautious when sharing them, especially if sending pictures of your children to the abuser.
* Exercise caution when posting on social media to avoid disclosing your location through the image background or location tagging.
* Ensure your phone number is untraceable when contacting your abuser or anyone connected to them. You can do this by enabling 'no caller ID' on your mobile phone or by dialling 141 before making the call. Consider using an answering machine to screen calls.
* Change passwords for your email, online banking and social media accounts which your abuser may know about.
* Talk to your children, friends, and family about the importance of keeping your address, location, and contact details confidential. Ask your friends and family not to post or tag you in pictures on social media.
* Avoid using shared credit or debit cards, as well as joint bank accounts. Change your card PIN, if you suspect that your abuser may know it. You can reach out to your bank and inform them of your situation to prevent your abuser from attempting to access your bank accounts.
* Talk to the police or your solicitor if you are involved in any court proceedings to ensure that your address does not appear on any court documents.

If you have left your abuser but are still staying in your home, there are a few additional steps you can take to increase your safety:

* Change locks on all doors and put locks on windows. Make sure to lock your home at all times.
* If you have contacted the police, ask them for advice about making your home more secure.
* Identify escape routes from each room in your home and consider practicing escaping during emergencies.
* If possible, install cameras both outside and inside your home. Ensure that your camera stores data for an extended period of time in case you need evidence for the police or court.
* Install an outside light (back and front) that comes on automatically when someone approaches.
* Inform neighbours that your abuser no longer lives with you and ask them not to provide your (ex)partner with any information about your location, routines, and contact details. Also, ask them to inform you or call the police if they see your abuser around your home or in the surrounding area.

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| I can contact Police Scotland in an **emergency** | **999** (free from any phone) |
| If **not** an emergency I can contact Police | **101** |
| I can contact **AMIS helpline** OR **email support** | T: **03300 949 395** (weekdays 9am – 4pm)  E: **support@amis.org.uk** |

**We support you. We believe you. You are worthy of love and support**