Domestic Violence: Safety Checklist

I have made my home as safe as possible by:

- changing locks and adding dead bolts
- hiding sharp objects and weapons
- making telephones easy to get to

I have planned and practiced how my children and I can get away quickly by:

- deciding where we will go in an emergency
- showing the children what to do if the abuser breaks in, or comes to their school and/or day care
- teaching the children to call the police and safe relatives

In a notebook I write down dates and times when:

- the abuser talks to me or my children
- the abuser hurts or threatens me or my children
- the abuser tries to call me or my children. I will keep the answering machine tapes if the abuser's voice is on them. I will take pictures of the caller ID displays on my phone that show the abuser called.

I have packed an emergency bag and hidden it. My emergency bag includes:

- money and change for phone calls
- clothing for me and my children
- personal care products like diapers and medicine
- copies of court papers such as my order of protection, divorce papers and child custody papers
- important papers such as birth certificates, medical records, bank records, insurance, etc.
- extra car keys and house keys
- telephone numbers and addresses for shelters, counselors, safe friends and relatives
- my notebook about contacts by the abuser

I have hidden these things in a safe place:

- my emergency bag
- pictures of cuts, bruises or other ways my children and I have been hurt by the abuser
- pictures of anything of mine the abuser broke or damaged
- answering machine tapes of calls and threatening messages
- pictures of the caller ID display on my phone that show the abuser called me
I told these people about the abuser:
• my children
• their school and/or day care
• my neighbors
• people I work with
• my relatives
• my friends

I showed them pictures of the abuser and his car. They will call police if I say certain words. They will call police if they see the abuser or his car.

I will call the police if the abuser:
• contacts me
• follows me
• threatens me
• calls me
• has someone else follow me

I will:
• practice my escape plan with my children often
• pay attention to who is around me
• be prepared and alert when walking to and from my car and home
• stay calm no matter what happens
• find police stations and safe places so I know where to go if someone follows me
• keep plenty of gas in my car
• always put my keys and purse in the same place so I know right where they are if I have to leave quickly
• think about who will help me in a crisis
• protect myself and my children until we are out of danger. Then I will get help.

When I feel down and ready to go back to the abuser I will call _______ for support.

For my children I will:
• tell their school/day care who is allowed to pick them up
• copy my custody papers and my order of protection. I will leave a copy with someone in charge at school and/or day care.
• practice our escape plan
• teach them to stay cool in a time of danger
• teach them how to call police
• keep my hiding places secret so they can’t accidentally tell the abuser

I know that:
• The safety of myself and my children comes before anything else.
• The abuse is not my fault. I do NOT deserve to be abused.
• With the help of community agencies, friends and family, I can stop the abuse.

Get help or information from:
National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
1-800-787-3224 TTY
They speak more than 140 languages.

State Wide Crisis Line
1-800-356-6767

See the next page to find the Legal Aid/Legal Services office closest to you.

This brochure was written by West Tennessee Legal Services. It does not take the place of legal advice. Each case is different and needs individual attention.
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Tennessee Legal Aid/
Legal Services Offices

Legal Aid Society
of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberlands
1-800-238-1443
Offices in Clarksville, Columbia, Cookeville, Gallatin, Murfreesboro, Nashville, Oak Ridge, and Tullahoma

West Tennessee Legal Services
Jackson Office 1-800-372-8346
Dyersburg Office (731) 285-8181
Huntingdon Office (731) 986-8975
Selmer Office (731) 645-7961

Memphis Area Legal Services
Memphis Office 1-888-207-6386
Covington Office (901) 476-1808

Legal Aid of East Tennessee
Knoxville Office (865) 637-0484
Johnson City Office 1-800-321-5561
Kingsport Office 1-800-821-1309
Chattanooga Office 1-800-572-7457
Cleveland Office 1-800-445-3219