

Your Safety Plan

If you are planning to leave an abusive relationship it is important to plan ahead as this can make leaving easier, and safer. A person who uses violence and abuse may become more controlling, abusive and dangerous when they believe the person subjected to violence is planning to leave, as this threatens their sense of power and control.

If you have made the decision to leave the relationship, we encourage you to make a safety plan. You can do this by yourself or by contacting our crisis workers 24/7 on **6280 0900** to discuss further.

Before you leave:

- Decide how you will leave - by foot, car or will you call a friend
- Decide where you will go – friend or family, hotel, neighbour or Police
- What will you take – consider packing an overnight bag and leave it in your car, or give it to your friend
- Pack your important documents – such as your birth certificate and passport or email copies to your family or friend
- Purchase a mobile phone and make sure you mobile phone is charged and has credit – if you do need to call the Police, you don't have to speak, saying nothing will put them into action
- Consider varying your route to work or family and changing your regular activities such as going to the gym
- Have you discussed what you are doing with a trusted friend, family member or work colleague and do you need to create a safe word - **Do not write down your safe word**
- Do you have access to money – consider giving some to your family or friend to mind. Are you able to open a new bank account and select the statements be emailed to a secure email address
- Decide where you will stay – friend or family, hotel or refuge and how long are you able to stay there
- If you are staying at home, do you need to change the locks on windows and doors or should you have deadbolts installed
- Should you install sensor lights, window bars, additional locks, electronic alarm and a chain on your front door
- Ensure you have working fire alarms installed and a fire extinguisher
- Put wood dowel in windows to stop them being slid open
- Place padlocks and chains on gates

- Place sliding bolts on man holes so it can't be accessed by the roof
- Get an answering machine and voicemail and screen your calls. This also allows you to record abusive messages.
- Teach your children how to use the telephone and call Police and a safe word
- Talk to all people who care for your children about who has permission to collect the children
- Do you need to make arrangements for your pet
- Ensure the webcam on your computer is turned off, even better, use tape to cover the lens when you aren't using it
- Set up a secure email address that you can give to Police, lawyers, community services etc to use – but maintain the email address the person using violence is aware of
- Change all your passwords and login details using strong passwords that are not words or your birthdate, and try to have a different password for different accounts
- Ensure your mobile phone is set to auto lock after a short period of time and a pin code is required to unlock it
- Turn off the "Location" function on your phone
- Turn off your Bluetooth off and set your phone to "hidden"
- Program emergency numbers into your phone, using code names if necessary
- Ensure you have engaged all the privacy settings on social media and on each device
- Don't allow other people to tag you in photos or locations
- Consider using a non-identifying profile and cover photo, such as a flower or landscape on your social media accounts
- Consider using a different City as your location and not including your place of work or education history