



SOUTH LAKE MINNETONKA POLICE DEPARTMENT
DOMESTIC ABUSE RESPONSE
PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN

The South Lake Minnetonka Police Department encourages you to be proactive in keeping yourself safe from domestic violence. It's imperative to get help and utilize resources available to you, to formulate a safety plan. If you have questions about your safety plan ideas or would like referrals or resources contact Sojourner's 24-hour Helpline at 952-933-7422.

Sojourner is a domestic assault intervention program that serves many communities including Shorewood, Excelsior, Tonka Bay, and Greenwood. Sojourner partners with local police and members of the community to reduce the number of domestic- assault related incidents, by providing support, resources and safety options to individuals who are trying to end violence in their lives.

Safety during a violent incident

- Keep weapons like guns and knives locked up and as inaccessible as possible.
- Identify safe areas in your residence, where there are no weapons and there are ways to escape. If arguments occur, move to those areas.
- Keep your keys and wallet/purse in an accessible place in case you must leave quickly.
- Teach your children how to dial 911, to get help for you or them. Teach them a code word to signal that they should leave the house or call for help.
- If possible, have a phone accessible at all times, and know if/ where a payphone may be close to your home.
- If necessary, give the abuser what he/she wants to calm him/her down and to protect yourself and your children from harm, until you can get out of immediate danger.

Safety when leaving the abuser

- Store some important belongings with a trusted friend or relative- like clothing, medications, Social Security card, a credit card (if possible), insurance information, birth certificates/citizenship documents, money or other valued possessions.
- Plan with your children and identify a safe location for them to run if another violent incident were to occur. Stress to them that their job is to keep themselves safe and call 911- not to intervene.
- Contact local shelters and find out about other resources available to you *before* you need to use them in a crisis situation.

- Open a savings account and checking account before you leave, to gain further independence from your abuser
- If you do not have a cell phone, get one, even if it's a 911-only phone.

Safety at home after the abuser moves out

- Change the locks and change your phone number
- Advise trusted neighbors of your current situation. Let them know about your court order, and to call 911 if they see the abuser around the property.
- Keep a copy of your court order on you at all times
- If a court order prohibits the abuser from having contact with your children, advise the school and provide them with a copy of the court order.
- Install security features at your residence, such as window bars, extra locks, outdoor motion lights, poles to wedge sliding glass doors and an alarm system. Financial resources may be available to assist you.
- If you move, have your driver's license, vehicle registration, personal checks and other mail addressed to a post office box. Advise the post office not to release your private address.
- Get an unlisted number.
- Teach your kids to keep their phone number and address confidential.
- Place a code word on your bank accounts, utilities, etc., so that only you may access records.
- If possible, alter your routines such as your work schedule, route to pick up and drop off your children, etc.

Safety at your workplace and public

- Inform your employer and building security about your situation.
- Provide a recent photo of the abuser to your employer, and advise them of any court orders and the necessity to call 911 if a violation occurs.
- Request an escort to your vehicle when you are leaving work, or wait until others are walking out so you are not alone.
- Park and walk in well-lit areas. If you walk to work or use public transit, keep to areas with the most foot traffic to increase your chance of receiving help if you were confronted by your abuser.

Orders for Protection/Restraining Orders

- Orders for Protection are free of charge from the court
- Keep a copy of the order with you at all times-file one away at home, and leave one with a trusted family member or friend.
- For restraining orders, ensure your local police department has a copy.
- Call 911 immediately if an order violation occurs. If police have probable cause that a court order violation occurs, they will arrest the violator.
- Plan for ways to keep safe until police arrive. Stay on the phone with the 911 dispatcher and keep them updated. The dispatcher and responding officers will want to know where the violator is, the suspect's description, if they are or have been known to carry weapons, if they are still on scene or are leaving, if they arrived in a car or on foot, etc.