



Family Violence Safety Planning

Safety Planning

Home Safety Plan

- **Secure Your Essentials.** Keep your house keys, mobile phone (fully charged), and bag within easy reach when you go to bed.
- **Inform Trusted Neighbours.** Share a photo of your ex-partner and ask neighbours to contact the police if they notice anything concerning.
- **Prepare an Emergency Bag.** Pack a bag with essentials, including money, keys, bank cards, important documents, clothing, toiletries, and medication. Store it in a safe place or with someone that you trust.
- **Plan Your Escape Route.** Identify where you will go if you need to leave your house in a hurry. This might be a refuge, a friend or family member's home, or a 24-hour police station. Practice your exit plan regularly.
- **Choose Safe Rooms.** In case of an assault, move to a room with easy access to an exit. Try to avoid going into areas such as the kitchen or bathroom, where objects could be used as weapons.
- **Identify Quick Exit Points.** Determine which door or window provides the quickest escape route. Practice your exit plan and ensure pathways are clear of obstacles.
- **Keep a Record.** Keep a diary of any incidents or unusual things that occur.
- **Arrange for Support.** Have someone stay with you during high-risk times, such as after the relationship ends.
- **Emergency Contacts.** Save significant phone numbers in your mobile device for quick access during emergencies.
- **Wear Appropriate Footwear.** Keep shoes on indoors to facilitate a quick escape if necessary.
- **Trust Your Instincts.** Your intuition is valuable. If something feels wrong, take action to protect yourself.

Safety Tips When Out and About

- **Alter Your Routine.** Change regular appointments and routines, such as shopping locations, school or work routes, and public transportation schedules.
- **Secure Your Vehicle.** Always lock your car and park in well-lit, public areas or secure garages. Avoid underground parking. Keep a flashlight in your vehicle.
- **Be Vigilant.** Stay alert for anyone following you. If you feel unsafe, drive directly to the nearest police station. Familiarise yourself with the locations of 24-hour police stations.
- **Carry Legal Documents.** If you have a Family Violence Restraining Order (FVRO), keep it with you.
- **Keep Your Phone charged.** Always carry a fully charged mobile phone with credit.
- **Seek Safe Spaces.** If you encounter the abusive person, move quickly to a public or crowded place.
- **Bring a Support Person.** When meeting the abusive person, if necessary, have a trusted friend or family member accompany you.
- **Court Appearances.** If you are attending court, please get in touch with the court directly to discuss safety measures and support options.

Safety Tips for Children

- **Teach Emergency Procedures.** Educate your children on how to stay safe in the event of an emergency. Ensure they know where to hide or which neighbour's house they can go to for help. Practice emergency escape routes regularly.
- **Recognise Warning Signs.** Help your children identify signs of danger and encourage them to trust their instincts.
- **Establish a Code Word.** Agree on a code word with your children that signals they should leave the house immediately.
- **Teach Personal Information.** Ensure your children know their full names, address and how to contact emergency services. Advise them not to hang up after calling, as this helps authorities monitor the situation and locate you if needed.
- **Identify Trusted Adults.** Ensure your children know which adults they can approach if they feel scared or upset.
- **Clarify Responsibilities.** Teach your children that it is not their responsibility to stop the abusive person when they are angry or violent.

- **Share Court Orders.** Provide copies of court orders to your children's daycare or school, along with a photo of the abusive person. Inform them about who has the authority to pick up your children.
- **Arrange Safe Handover.** Organise the handover of children to the other parent in a public place and consider taking along a support person.
- **Maintain Confidentiality.** Avoid asking children to keep secrets about plans. Keep plans to yourself until you are ready to implement them.
- **Screen Visitors.** Teach your children to tell you when someone is at the door before answering it.
- **Communicate with Older Family Members.** If you have older family members, ensure everyone in the home discusses suspicious calls or occurrences.
- **Provide Communication Tools.** If appropriate, consider giving your children their own mobile phone so they can discreetly call for help if needed.

Workplace Safety Tips

- **Inform Your Employer.** If you feel comfortable, inform your employer, reception, or building security about the situation. Provide a photo of the abusive person and a copy of the Family Violence Restraining Order (FVRO) to help them recognise the person and prevent them from attending your work.
- **Discuss Workplace Options.** Discuss with your manager options such as family violence leave, flexible work hours, changing your roster, or working at an alternative location.
- **Protect Your Contact Information.** Let your workplace know that they should not disclose your contact details.
- **Block Unwanted Calls.** You could ask your workplace to block calls from the abusive person.
- **Share Your Whereabouts.** Always let colleagues know where you are going and your expected time of return so others can raise awareness if you don't return.
- **Vary Your Routine.** Vary your route to and from work and arrange for someone to escort you to your car if you feel at risk.

Keeping Records Safety Tips

- **Secure Personal Information.** Contact government agencies such as MyHealth, MyGov, Medicare, Child Support, and Centrelink to request that your private details are not accessible by the abusive person. This is important if the abusive person is your child's other parent and can access some information about the child. Do the same with banks, schools, childcare, and sporting clubs your child attends.
- **Verify Caller Identity.** If an organisation calls you, do not give them any personal details. Ask for a phone number to call them back and verify their identity.
- **Opt for Silent Elector Status.** Change your electoral enrolment to silent elector.
- **Use Alternative Addresses.** Have mail sent to an alternative address or PO Box. When asked by businesses, doctors, and other organisations for your address, provide a PO Box or safer address. Don't share your actual address.
- **Update Emergency Contacts.** Contact agencies (such as doctors and hospitals) that may have the abusive person listed as your next of kin and update their records.

Phone Safety Tips

- **Replace Compromised Devices.** If the abusive person had access to your phone or as part of a shared plan, consider purchasing a new device.
- **Avoid Data Transfer Risks.** Be cautious when transferring data from an old phone to a new one. It's safer to re-enter information manually rather than using SIM cards or data transfer tools.
- **Secure Your Device.** Set a strong passcode on your phone and change it regularly. Enable automatic locking features to prevent unauthorised access.
- **Protect Your Number.** Change your mobile number and set it to private to prevent unwanted contact.
- **Disable Tracking Features.** Turn off location services, GPS, Bluetooth, and Wi-Fi when not in use. Consider using flight mode to prevent tracking.
- **Manage Apple Services.** Disable "Find My iPhone" and ensure the abusive person does not have access to your Apple ID.
- **Limit App Permissions.** Deny location access to apps and review their security and privacy settings. Log out of apps when you're not using them.
- **Disable Geo-Tagging.** Disable geo-tagging on your camera to prevent location information from being attached to your photos.

- Monitor Phone Bills. If your abuser can access your phone bills, they may track your calls and locations. Consider setting up a new account in your name only.
- Clear Call Logs. Regularly clear your recent call history to maintain privacy.
- Use a Spare Phone. If the Family Court has ordered the abusive person to have phone contact with your child, consider using a separate device for this communication.
- Disable Family Sharing. Ensure family sharing features are turned off to prevent unauthorised access to your accounts.
- Install Antivirus Protection. Use reputable antivirus software to protect your device from malware and spyware.
- Update Software Regularly. Keep your phone's software up to date to enhance security and fix vulnerabilities.

Social Media Safety Tips

- Change Account Credentials. Update passwords and block the abuser on all social media platforms. Always sign out after use.
- Be Cautious with Posts. Avoid sharing information that reveals your location or personal details. Remind friends and family to be mindful of what they post about you.
- Educate Children on Online Safety. Teach your children how to stay safe online and monitor their online activities.
- Monitor Your Digital Footprint. Search your name online to see what personal information is publicly available.
- Limit Social Media Use During High-Risk Times. If you're in a high-risk situation, consider deactivating social media accounts to reduce exposure.
- Scrutinise New Connections. Be selective when accepting new contacts. Verify their identity and relationship to the abuser. Be aware that abusers may create fake profiles to monitor you.
- Adjust Privacy Settings. Regularly review and update privacy settings. Disable public searches, restrict location sharing, and prevent others from tagging you in photos.
- Check for Unauthorised Access. Review active sessions and log out of any devices you don't recognise to prevent unauthorised access.
- Create a New Profile. If necessary, establish a new social media profile with non-identifying information and a neutral photo.

- Exercise Caution with Online Dating. Be cautious when using online dating platforms. Abusers may use these sites to track or manipulate you.

Protecting Your Devices from Spyware and Keyloggers

- Recognise the Signs of Spyware. Spyware can be installed through physical access to your device or via remote methods, such as malicious links or attachments. It operates covertly, monitoring your calls, messages, and location. Indicators of spyware include:
 - Rapid battery drain.
 - Unexplained device overheating.
 - Increased data usage.
 - Unfamiliar apps or programs running.
 - Slower device performance.
 - Unexpected behaviours like screen lighting up or sounds when idle.
- Secure Your Devices:
 - Change passwords. Update passwords for all accounts and devices to ensure they are strong and unique.
 - Enable Two-Factor Authentication. Add an extra layer of security to your accounts.
 - Install Antivirus Software. Use reputable antivirus programs to detect and remove spyware.
 - Update software regularly. Keep your operating system and apps up to date to protect against vulnerabilities.
- Remove Spyware:
 - For Android devices: Uninstall unfamiliar apps by going to Settings > Apps.
 - Restart your device in safe mode to turn off third-party apps.
 - Perform a factory reset if necessary, but back up your data first.
 - For iPhones: Avoid jailbreaking your device, as it increases susceptibility to spyware.
 - Use Apple's built-in security features and consider installing trusted antivirus apps.
- Practice Safe Usage Habits. Be cautious with links and attachments; avoid clicking on suspicious links or opening unknown attachments.
- Monitor App Permissions. Regularly review and adjust app permissions to limit access to sensitive information.
- Secure Your Device Physically. Do not leave your device unattended in public places.
- Seek Professional Help. If you suspect your device is compromised and are unable to remove the spyware, consult a professional technician for assistance.

Securing your Email and Online Accounts

- **Create a New, Secure Email Account.** Use a safe device to set up a new email address that doesn't include your real name. Avoid accessing this account from devices your abuser can access. Consider using secure email providers like ProtonMail or Tutanota, which offer end-to-end encryption.
- **Strengthen Your Passwords.** Use unique, strong passwords for each account, combining uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols. Avoid using easily guessable information such as birthdates or pet names, to protect your privacy. Change your passwords regularly and use unique passwords for each platform. Enable two-factor authentication (2FA) where possible for an added layer of security.
- **Utilise Password Managers.** Consider using a reputable password manager to store and generate complex passwords securely.
- **Be Cautious with Security Questions.** Choose security questions and answers that are not easily known or guessable. Avoid using information that your abuser might know.
- **Monitor Account Activity.** Regularly review your account activity for any unauthorised access. Set up alerts for login attempts or changes to your account settings.
- **Secure Your Devices.** Install antivirus software and keep your devices updated to protect against malware and spyware. Use a screen lock or password on your devices to prevent unauthorised access.
- **Educate Yourself on Phishing Scams.** Be cautious of unsolicited emails or messages requesting personal information. Verify the sender's email address and avoid clicking on suspicious links.

Computer Safety Tips

- **Use Secure Public Computers.** Access the internet from trusted public computers, such as those at libraries or community centres, to prevent unauthorised access to your browsing history and personal data.
- **Keep Antivirus Software Updated.** Regularly update your antivirus software to protect against the latest threats and ensure your computer remains secure.
- **Protect Your Webcam.** Cover your computer's webcam with tape or a physical cover when not in use to prevent unauthorised access.
- **Clear Browsing Data Regularly.** Regularly delete your browsing history, cookies, and cache to maintain your online privacy. Alternatively, use private browsing modes to prevent data from being stored.

- Practice Safe Browsing Habits. Avoid clicking on suspicious links or downloading unknown attachments to protect your computer from malware and spyware.
- Use Strong Passwords. Employ strong, unique passwords for all accounts and devices to enhance security.
- Enable Two-Factor Authentication. Activate two-factor authentication on your accounts to add an extra layer of protection.
- Be Cautious with USB Devices. Avoid connecting unknown USB drives to your computer, as they may contain malware.
- Regularly Update Software. Ensure your operating system and applications are up to date.
- Backup Important Data. Regularly back up important files to an external drive or cloud storage to prevent data loss.

Identifying Hidden Tracking Devices

- Be Aware of Small GPS Trackers. GPS tracking devices are often compact, even the size of a postage stamp, and can be discreetly placed in various items such as your car, handbag, or children's belongings.
- Inspect Common Hiding Spots. Regularly check areas where trackers might be concealed, including:
 - Under the car, especially beneath bumpers and wheel wells.
 - Inside personal items like handbags, children's toys, or clothing.
 - In electronic devices or accessories.
- Utilise Detection Tools. Consider using specialised equipment, such as RF (radio frequency) detectors or GPS signal scanners, to identify unusual signals that may indicate the presence of a tracking device.
- Consult Professionals. If you suspect you're being tracked, seek assistance from law enforcement or a trusted mechanic to conduct a thorough inspection. It is against the law for someone to track you without your consent.
- Monitor Connected Devices. Be vigilant about devices that can transmit your location or monitor your activities, such as:
 - In-car navigation systems.
 - Smart home devices, such as baby monitors or security cameras.
 - Wearable fitness trackers
 - Internet-connected cars or devices.
- Check for Unauthorised Access. Ensure that your devices and accounts are not linked to someone else's credit or debit card without your consent.

- Educate Children. Teach your children about the importance of privacy and the potential risks associated with sharing personal information or allowing others to access their devices.

Your safety and well-being are paramount. regularly review and update your safety plan to ensure it remains effective and tailored to your current situation.

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