

# Domestic Violence during Public Health Emergencies: STAYING SAFE WHEN STAY-AT-HOME RESTRICTIONS ARE IN PLACE

Domestic violence organizations are prepared to support women during public health emergencies, and women experiencing violence are encouraged to connect with these organizations whenever needed.

However, when families are sheltering at home together and service agencies can't support women face-to-face, women experiencing violence may need to consider additional safety strategies. The below recommendations are based on more than 100 interviews with service providers and women with lived experience of intimate partner violence, as well as searches of the research literature.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED <i>Very helpful for promoting safety</i>			RECOMMENDED <i>Somewhat helpful for promoting safety</i>	NOT RECOMMENDED <i>May make violence worse</i>
<p><b>PLAN FOR SAFETY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Duplicate or put aside important papers</li> <li>✓ Keep your phone &amp; keys close by</li> <li>✓ Create a safety plan with children</li> <li>✓ Pack an emergency kit</li> <li>✓ Keep important numbers handy</li> <li>✓ Create mental list of potential safe havens</li> <li>✓ Use distancing techniques in the home</li> <li>✓ Keep a record of incidents of abuse</li> <li>✓ Consider strategies for keeping pets safe</li> <li>✓ Work out an escape plan</li> </ul>	<p><b>CONNECT WITH OTHERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Talk to a doctor or nurse about the violence</li> <li>✓ Alert a neighbour to the situation</li> <li>✓ Talk to friends and/or family members</li> <li>✓ Reach out to others who have experienced violence (in person or online)</li> <li>✓ Access online, virtual or app-based counseling</li> <li>✓ Have someone call to check in on you regularly</li> <li>✓ Seek out legal advice</li> </ul>	<p><b>INCREASE SAFETY ONLINE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Delete text, web-browser, and other online records more frequently</li> <li>✓ Change passwords to phone, email, accounts, etc. more often</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Receive cash or electronic payments from friends or relatives</li> <li>- Remove or hide knives, utensils, and/ or tools to avoid partner's easy access</li> <li>- Manage the environment to minimize known triggers and reduce risk</li> <li>- Do things that you know will promote calm in the home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Try to “keep the peace” in tense situations</li> <li>⊗ Switch to texting or emailing instead of phone calls</li> <li>⊗ File for a restraining order</li> <li>⊗ Hide alcohol or other substances that may make the abuse worse</li> <li>⊗ Use anyone else in the house to defuse a potentially violent situation</li> <li>⊗ Delay plans to end the relationship</li> </ul>

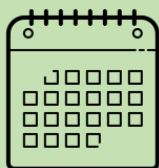
# Domestic Violence during Public Health Emergencies: STAYING SAFE WHEN STAY-AT-HOME RESTRICTIONS ARE IN PLACE

Domestic violence organizations are prepared to support women during public health emergencies. Women experiencing violence are encouraged to connect with these organizations whenever needed.

However, women experiencing violence may also need other ways to promote safety during COVID-19 related restrictions. We interviewed more than 100 service providers and women with lived experience of domestic violence about 33 possible safety strategies that were gleaned from interviews and a systematic review of literature.

Below are those rated most often as “highly recommended”

## Plan for Safety



- Duplicate or put aside important papers
- Keep your phone & keys close by
- Create a safety plan with children
- Pack an emergency kit
- Keep important numbers handy
- Create a mental list of potential safe havens
- Use distancing techniques in the home
- Keep a record of incidents of abuse
- Consider strategies for keeping pets safe
- Work out an escape plan

## Increase Safety Online



- Delete text, web-browser, and other online records more frequently
- Change passwords to phone, email, accounts, etc. more often

## Connect with Others



- Talk to a doctor or nurse about the violence
- Alert a neighbour to the situation
- Talk to friends and/or family members
- Reach out to others who have experienced violence (in person or online)
- Access online, virtual, or app-based counselling
- Have someone call to check in on you regularly
- Seek out legal advice