

How to protect myself at home?

- Learn places where you can get help.
- Keep a phone in a room you can lock from the inside. Get a cellular phone that you keep with you at all times.
- Plan an escape route out of your home to a safe place. Teach it to your children.
- Set up a plan with your neighbors to signal them when you need them to call the police.
- Pack a bag with important things. Keep it ready in case you have to leave quickly. Put it in a safe place or give it to someone you trust. Make sure the bag has cash, keys, court papers, passports, birth certificates, medical records, medicines.
- Take a good self defense course.

If your abuser has moved out:

- Change the locks on doors and windows.
- Ask neighbors to call police if they see the abuser at your house.
- Get an unlisted phone number.

What if I am threatened or attacked in my home?

- Stay away from the kitchen, where the abuser can find weapons like knives.
- Stay away from small spaces such as bathrooms, closets.
- Call 911.
- Get to a room with a door or window. Lock the abuser out if you can.
- Run to a neighbor or to a public place.

How to help my children be safe?

- Teach them to not get in the middle of a fight, even if they want to help.
- Teach them how to get to safety, call emergency numbers, & give your address & phone number to police.
- Give the school/daycare a copy of your protection order. Tell them not to release your children to anyone without talking to you first. Use a password so they know it's you on the phone. Give them a photo of your abuser.
- Make sure the children know who to tell at school if they see the abuser.
- Make sure the school will not give out your address or phone number.

Other ways to protect myself?

- Change your regular travel habits.
- Get rides with people.
- Bank and shop at different places.
- Cancel bank accounts or credit cards you shared with the abuser and open new ones.
- Keep a cell phone. Program it to speed-dial emergency numbers.
- Keep your order of protection with you always. It is valid in all states.

How to protect myself at work?

- Keep your order of protection with you.
- Give a picture of your abuser to coworkers and security guards.
- Tell your supervisors about your abuser. Ask them to help you.
- Don't go to lunch alone.
- Ask a security guard or co-worker to walk you to your car or bus.
- If your abuser contacts you at work, save the voice mail or email and tell your supervisor.

How to protect myself at court?

- Sit far away from the abuser.
- Bring a friend or relative with you.
- Ask the judge to keep the abuser there for several minutes when court is over & leave quickly.
- If you think the abuser is following you when you leave, call the police immediately.

Where can I get help?

- If you are in danger now, call 911.
- To find a domestic violence program or shelter near you, contact the Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence at (406) 443-7794 or 1-888-404-7794, or visit their Website at www.mcadsv.com
- Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
- Call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-4673
- Call the USA National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)

How do I get more help?

Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) provides free civil legal help to low-income people. Contact us to see if you qualify:

- Apply anytime online at mtlsa.org;
- Call our Helpline at 1-800-666-6899 (Helpline hours are limited).

What help can I find at MLSA?

- Legal advice and representation;
- Referrals to volunteer attorneys and other providers;
- Self-help clinics and materials.

www.MontanaLawHelp.org

Need legal information or forms? Visit www.MontanaLawHelp.org.

Can't find what you want? Use LiveHelp. Click on the LiveHelp picture and get help finding the information you need.

www.MTLSA.org

Find copies of all our brochures online. They are all available for free download!

This pamphlet is meant to give basic legal information, not legal advice about your problem. The law changes often and each case is different. We recommend you talk to an attorney about your legal problem.

Montana Legal Services Association

Safety Planning for Victims of Domestic Violence



Providing, protecting, and enhancing access to justice.

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