

Safety Planning

If you are experiencing **Domestic and Family Violence (DFV)**, it's important to have a safety plan. Safety planning helps you identify actions you can take to increase your safety—whether you are staying in the relationship or planning to leave.

Every safety plan is unique, as people have different needs and circumstances. You should consider updating your plan when things change, such as moving house, changes in childcare arrangements, or separating from the person using violence (PUV).

SAFETY PLANNING CHECKLIST

Safety at Home

- Identify a safe place you can go quickly in an emergency. DVNQ (during business hours) or DVConnect (24/7) can help refer you to emergency accommodation.
- Create a **code word or phrase** to alert a trusted person that you need help. This can be used in conversation or via text so they can call 000 on your behalf.
- Pack a **go-bag** with essentials (clothing, medications, documents), and keep it hidden or store it at a safe location.
- Leave **copies of important documents** (e.g. birth certificates, bank cards, passports) with someone you trust.
- Keep a **spare phone**, charged and stored in a safe location where the PUV cannot find it (e.g. your workplace, car, or a neighbour's house).
- Make arrangements for the **safety of pets** if you need to leave suddenly.
- Trust your instincts. Pay attention to early warning signs and remove yourself from risky situations when possible.
- If safe to do so, **keep a record of abuse**, such as by emailing incidents to yourself from a secure account.
- Seek **medical attention** after any physical assault, especially after strangulation or head injury.
- **Talk to children** (in an age-appropriate way) about what to do in an emergency—where to go, who to call, and how to use a phone.
- Keep doors and windows locked to prevent unauthorised entry.
- Plan and practice **exit routes**—know which doors or windows are safest to use, and which room offers the most secure lock.

Preparing to Leave

If you are preparing to leave, consider the following:relationship:

- Plan a safe place to go—such as a friend's house, family member, or refuge.
- Only share your plans with people you **completely trust**.
- Arrange **transport in advance**, such as a friend to pick you up or pre-booking a taxi.
- Make a list of essential items to take, including:
 - **Important documents:** birth/marriage certificates, court orders, immigration documents, lease or mortgage paperwork.
 - **Identification:** passport, driver's licence, Medicare/Centrelink cards.
 - **Financial:** bank cards, account numbers, statements.
 - **Medical:** records, prescriptions, medications.
 - **Other:** keys, jewellery, items important to your children.
- Store these items safely with someone you trust, if possible.
- After leaving, Police can accompany you to retrieve any remaining personal items.
- If a **DVO** includes your children, ensure their school or daycare has a copy and is aware of the situation.
- Even without a DVO, it may be helpful to inform your child's school and create a **safety plan** with them.

After You Leave

Once you've left the relationship:

- Review your **DVO** conditions—are they still relevant? DVNQ can help you amend or apply for a new order.
- **Redirect your mail** via Australia Post (12-month redirection is available) or use a **P.O. Box** to protect your address.
- Increase home security. DVNQ may be able to assist with **safety upgrades**.
- Always carry a mobile phone and **pre-program emergency contacts** like DVNQ or DVConnect.
- **Change your travel routes** to avoid predictable routines.
- Let **trusted neighbours** know the PUV no longer lives with you and ask them to contact Police if they're seen nearby.
- Inform your **employer** and create a **workplace safety plan** if you have a DVO.
- Report any **DVO breaches** to the Police. DVNQ can assist you in making a statement.
- Contact the **Australian Electoral Commission** to request that your name/address be removed from the public electoral roll.

Technology Safety

- Turn off **location services**, GPS, and Bluetooth on your devices.
- Check your **email settings** for automatic forwarding or unusual access.
- **Sign out** of all email and social media accounts and update passwords.
- Enable **two-factor authentication** for all key accounts.
- Check children's devices for tracking apps or monitoring software.
- Inspect your **home and car for hidden cameras or tracking devices**.
- If the PUV used to live with you, **change the Wi-Fi password**.