

Crossroads Project – Safety Tips

Options to Increase Safety

Requesting a Protection From Abuse Order (PFA)

A PFA (Protection From Abuse) is a special type of restraining order available to victims of domestic violence. This is a court order telling the abuser they shall not abuse, harass, stalk, or threaten the victim. Anyone who has been assaulted or threatened with bodily harm by a family or household member or intimate partner may request a PFA.

Filing Criminal Charges

You can file a complaint against the person who hurt you with your local Magistrate (District Justice). The police may also file a complaint if they have witnessed recent evidence of abuse. A filed complaint will usually require you testify at a hearing. If guilty, the abuser may be put in jail, fined, or both.

Help for Harassment and / or Stalking

If you are being harassed or stalked, it is important to document all incidents. You can send the abuser a stop harassment letter, notify police, and/or file a complaint with your local Magistrate.

The Most Important Thing Is To Protect Yourself

You do not deserve physical abuse. If you are in danger, leave the home. You also have the right to call the police. Never be ashamed to ask friends or family for a place to stay. If you are in danger and have nowhere to turn, Community Action, Inc.'s Crossroads Project may provide shelter for up to 30 days.

Develop a Safety Plan

Using the guidelines below create an individualized safety plan

Community Action, Inc.

Primarily Serving Clarion and Jefferson Counties, Pennsylvania

105 Grace Way, Punxsutawney, PA 15767-1209
(814) 938-3302 · (814) 938-7596 - FAX · www.jccap.org



Safety in a violent incident: Violence cannot always be avoided, but some tactics may be used to increase the safety of battered victims.

- Practice escape routes and teach children
- Use code or signal with family or children to indicate the need for police
- Keep purse and keys safe and accessible
- Tell someone about the abuse and to call the police if they suspect something

Safety when preparing to leave: Leaving must be done with careful planning to avoid increased danger from the batterer.

- Leave money, SS cards, important documents, and extra clothes in a safe place
- Learn the local Domestic Violence Program's hotline number

Safety in residence: Victims can increase safety in their own residence.

- Change locks on your doors
- Teach children to call 911
- Tell everyone your partner no longer lives with you and to report any observations
- Purchase smoke detectors, security lights, window bars, and rope ladders if necessary

Safety with a Protection from Abuse order (PFA)

- Keep protection order with you at all times
- Give copies to place of employment, schools, and police departments where you live
- Inform family and friends you have a PFA
- Call your local Domestic Violence Program if you have any questions
- Call the police if a violation occurs and report it to your Domestic Violence Program Advocate

Safety on the job and in public

- Inform supervisor, other employees, and security of your current situation
- Ask another person to screen phone calls
- When leaving, walk to car/home with others
- When driving, if being followed, go to the police station and blow the horn

Internet Safety

- Log on a safe computer; for example, at a friend's house, cyber café, or the library
- Choose complex passwords that are not easy for the abuser to figure out
- Ensure your email account is secure by changing the password frequently
- If threatening emails are sent, print them out. Email can be considered evidence
- Never give personal information in a chat room, bulletin board, or personal web page
- Remember people online may not be who they say they are

Community Action, Inc.

Primarily Serving Clarion and Jefferson Counties, Pennsylvania

105 Grace Way, Punxsutawney, PA 15767-1209
(814) 938-3302 · (814) 938-7596 - FAX · www.jccap.org

