

Safety Tips for People At-Risk of Domestic & Sexual Violence



Domestic and sexual violence are criminal offences and you should never have to live with violence. However, there are situations in which you and your children might remain at ongoing risk of harm. The questions below could help you think about your safety and provide ideas to help you plan.

You might remain at risk of violence in situations such as:

- If you are living with someone who is or might be violent;
- If you are preparing to leave or divorce a partner who might react violently;
- If you have divorced or separated and you're worried about them returning;
- If a perpetrator otherwise continues living nearby.

**NO ONE SHOULD HAVE TO LIVE IN FEAR OF VIOLENCE.
SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE.**



For more information about legal, safety, and other support options, contact **LICADHO** using the details below or visit the **Safety & Justice** website
www.licadho-cambodia.org/safety-and-justice

Using These Tips

Do not take steps that will put you in further danger if the perpetrator becomes aware of them. Trust your judgement: you know best what will keep you and your children safe.

While it is not your responsibility to stop the violence, it can be helpful to plan practical steps to increase your safety before and during crises.

The questions below can help you plan before violence escalates. You might have taken these steps already. Other ideas might not be relevant to your situation, or even possible for you. That is okay. Just focus on the resources and strengths you have available.

TO MAKE A PLAN TO SUPPORT YOUR SAFETY, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:



WHO CAN I ASK FOR HELP BEFORE AND DURING AN EMERGENCY? HOW CAN THEY HELP ME?

Consider if a **family member, friend, neighbour, elder, monk, boss, colleague, local authority, police, or NGO** could help. It can be difficult to reach out for help, but trusted people can play an essential role in keeping you and your children safer.

Different people might be able to provide **different types of support**, such as: emotional support, intervention in emergencies, childcare, housing, transport, financial support, legal information, or essential items like clothing. Consider **asking neighbours to call for help** if they hear or see violence.

It might also be helpful to **create a “code word”** or other signal with someone who can help in an emergency. A code word is a random word or phrase that you choose and discuss with trusted people before you’re in a dangerous situation. You can then say the agreed code word in a call or message to ask that person for **immediate help** without the perpetrator knowing.



WHERE CAN I GO TO STAY SAFER? WHERE CAN MY CHILDREN GO?

Consider immediately **going elsewhere** if a threat is escalating or you feel unsafe. Consider in advance where you and your children could go. Your options might include a **trusted person's house, an authority, a pagoda, or other public place** such as a market, busy street, village centre, restaurant, or store.

Think about **transport** and how you would get there in an emergency. Consider places where you could stay either **short or long-term**.



ARE THERE ANY PHONE NUMBERS I MIGHT NEED IN AN EMERGENCY?

If you have access to a phone, consider saving a **list of contact details** for police, local authorities, and other trusted people. Alternatively, consider **memorising at least one essential phone number**.



WHICH AREAS OF MY HOME ARE SAFEST?

If a threat is escalating or you feel unsafe, consider if you can **move towards the safest area** of your home.

Some areas might be safer because they are **easy to escape** from via doors or windows. Other areas might be less safe because they have **dangerous heights** (such as stairs, balconies and rooftops) or **dangerous items** that could be used as a weapon by the perpetrator (such as kitchen knives or farming tools).

Consider if you can store items that could be used as weapons out-of-sight or in hard-to-reach places.



HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILDREN BE PREPARED AND STAY SAFER?

Consistently offer your children **reassurance and affection**. Emphasise that any violence is not their fault. Assure them they **should not try to intervene** or protect you.

Depending on your child's age, consider teaching them in advance what to do if a threat is escalating or they see or hear violence. Consider **teaching them the step-by-step actions** they can take, such as going to or hiding in a safe place and alerting others that you need help.

Discuss in advance which places are safest, how they will get there, who they can ask to help, and how to find any important phone numbers.



IF I AM PREPARING TO LEAVE, WHAT ESSENTIAL ITEMS WOULD I NEED TO TAKE WITH ME?

It might be dangerous to return home after leaving, especially if you plan to divorce or separate. Consider if you can safely take items such as your:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keys | <input type="checkbox"/> Medication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cash or valuables | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's items |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phone | <input type="checkbox"/> Important documents (such as ID cards or birth certificates) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic clothing | |

Consider if you can keep a **small bag packed** with essential items in case you need to leave quickly. Alternatively, consider **keeping essential items at a safer place** before leaving, such as at a trusted person's home or your workplace.



CAN I INCREASE MY FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE FROM THE PERPETRATOR?

Consider if you can increase your **financial independence** by:

- ✓ Saving money
- ✓ Keeping money and valuables with a trusted person
- ✓ Joining a saving group
- ✓ Opening your own bank account
- ✓ Hiding your valuables such as cash and gold
- ✓ Increasing your own income



ARE THERE RISKS OF THE PERPETRATOR HARMING ME OR MY CHILDREN AT WORK, UNIVERSITY OR SCHOOL?

Consider **informing trusted, appropriate people** at the workplace, university or school about any potential risks to you or your children's safety. **Explain how they can help** you, such as by not disclosing your location, not allowing the perpetrator to enter the premises, and not allowing a child to leave with them.

If a perpetrator comes to your workplace or school, consider staying inside until you are sure they have left the area. Alternatively, assess in advance the safest way to leave.



ARE THERE RISKS OF THE PERPETRATOR HARMING ME OR MY CHILDREN WHILE COMMUTING?

If possible, consider travelling by **different means** and/or by a **different route** each day. Consider asking someone to accompany you or your child.



IS MY PHONE OR SOCIAL MEDIA POSING ANY RISKS TO ME?

Be aware that **Facebook and social media posts** may give a perpetrator information about where you are.

Do not use **passwords or PIN numbers** that the perpetrator could easily guess, such as your birth date or phone number. If it is safe to do so, regularly change the passwords on your phone, social media, and banking accounts. However, be mindful that a perpetrator who had access to your account will likely realise you changed the password.

Consider **blocking** a perpetrator's phone number and social media accounts to reduce unwanted contact.

Close this page after you have finished using it, and if possible, delete this page from your browsing history. Dispose of or store this leaflet somewhere secure if it has been printed.



CAN I MAKE MY HOME SAFER?

Consider if you can install **sensor lights or cameras** to alert you when someone is nearby. If you are not living with a perpetrator, consider if you can **install or change locks** and strengthen any **weak areas** of your home that would be easy to enter from.

YOU DESERVE SUPPORT FROM AUTHORITIES, ORGANISATIONS, & YOUR COMMUNITY. CONTACT LICADHO FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Contact

The Cambodian League for the Promotion & Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO):
012 536 300 or 015 553 855

For more information and resources, visit the **Safety & Justice** website
www.licadho-cambodia.org/safety-and-justice

