

# IS YOUR CLIENT SAFE?

fact sheet series



February 2012

## Safety Planning for Your Client

**If your client is in immediate danger, refer her to the police and to the closest community-based victim assistance program right away.**

Planning for safety includes many factors. Here are some very basic steps your client can take to start a safety plan and to remain safe.

1. Prepare a safety bag and leave it with a trusted family member or friend. The safety bag should include:
  - clothing and toiletries for her and her children
  - cash for a bus or taxi, phone calls, and basic necessities
  - a list of important telephone numbers (including emergency shelters/transition houses)
  - medications and prescriptions
  - a spare set of house and car keys
  - valuables
  - important documents, such as passports and immigration papers, birth certificates, Care Cards, status cards, driver's licence, marriage certificate, court orders, any protection orders, and financial documents (e.g., bank statements, insurance papers, and tax returns. (Take a photocopy of her abusive partner's Social Insurance Number and Care Card, and make a note of his birth date if it is safe to do so. Also make photocopies of information relating to her abusive partner's income and assets, including pay stubs, tax returns, company records and ledgers, bank accounts, and RRSPs.)
2. Set aside some money (a little at a time) in a safe place. Or ask friends or family members to hold money for her.
3. Keep a journal and bring in any evidence of the abuse, including pictures, threatening letters or emails, records of medical visits, police reports, witness statements, or apology notes or emails.

You may also recommend that your client use a computer outside of her home (such as at a public library or at a trusted family member or friends' house), in case her computer use is being monitored. Her abuser may be tracking the websites she has visited or reading her emails.

For more information, see the Legal Services Society fact sheets *Live Safe — End Abuse: Safety Planning* and *Protection Orders*

[www.legalaid.bc.ca/publications](http://www.legalaid.bc.ca/publications)

(click *Abuse & family violence*).

### Other resources include:

- BC Transition House Society website  
[www.bcsth.ca](http://www.bcsth.ca)
- Domestic Violence BC website  
[www.domesticviolencebc.ca](http://www.domesticviolencebc.ca)  
(click *Staying Safe*)
- Ending Violence Association of BC website  
[www.endingviolence.org](http://www.endingviolence.org)  
(under *If You Need Help*, click *For more information and resources — Safety Planning*)
- Legal Services Society booklet *Surviving Relationship Violence and Abuse*  
[www.legalaid.bc.ca/publications](http://www.legalaid.bc.ca/publications)  
(click *Abuse & family violence*)
- *Safety Planning for Women Who Are Abused*  
[www.spotthesigns.ca](http://www.spotthesigns.ca)  
(click *Spot the Signs*)
- **VictimLink BC at 1-800-563-0808** to get help from a victim service worker

This fact sheet is a companion piece to the brochure *Is Your Client Safe? A Lawyer's Guide to Relationship Violence*.

### Other fact sheets in the series:

[Encouraging Disclosure](#)  
[Relationship Violence Client Resources](#)  
[Relationship Violence Legal Resources](#)  
[Safety Planning for You and Your Staff](#)



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**ENDING VIOLENCE**  
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