

Explanation of Mandatory Reporting of Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation

Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (HCDVCC) commits to maintaining our clients' right to privacy and confidentiality. There are circumstances, however, in which agency staff must by law disclose certain identifying client information. One circumstance would be if HCDVCC suspects the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child, a person who is elderly, or a person with a disability.

According to Section 261.101 of the Texas Family Code and Section 48.051 of the Human Resources Code, HCDVCC **staff must make a report to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) in the following situations:**

1. When there is reason to believe that a child has been abused, neglected, or exploited.
2. When there is reason to believe that an individual who is elderly or a person with a disability has been abused, neglected, or exploited.

Notice of Confidentiality Rights

At HCDVCC you have the following rights regarding the confidentiality of your personal information and communications with HCDVCC staff and volunteers:

- 1 HCDVCC **will be keep your information confidential to the greatest extent allowed by law.**
- 2 You may choose what information you want to provide to HCDVCC. **HCDVCC will not deny you access to services if you choose not to provide certain identifying information.**
- 3 As a client of HCDVCC, you have the **right to request and receive a copy of your records.** If you would like to do so, please work with your advocate to submit a request to the custodian of records at HCDVCC.
- 4 After your first appointment with HCDVCC, you may choose a referral to other (partner) agencies for additional help and support. Partner agencies include: Bay Area Turning Point, The Bridge Over Troubled Waters, Fort Bend Women's Center, Houston Area Women's Center, Daya, Northwest Assistance Ministries, Montgomery County Women's Center and the Montrose Center, . **You decide how much or how little of your personal information HCDVCC will or will not share with each partner agency.** An advocate will offer a general overview of each partner's obligations to keep your information confidential. If you choose to have HCDVCC share some of your personal information with a partner agency, an advocate will explain exactly *how* and *what* information will be shared. If you later decide that you do not want the information shared with any HCDVCC partners, let us know and we will not share any more information with those partners.
- 5 HCDVCC keeps client records, but limits the information it keeps to items needed to establish goals and advocacy, document the need for and delivery of services, protect the liability of the center and its employees, volunteers, and board members, as well as for statistical and funding needs. HCDVCC keeps these files for 5 years regardless of whether you exit voluntarily or if for some reason your services are terminated. HCDVCC limits access to files to staff working on your case. This includes advocates working with you, their immediate supervisor, and the Executive Director.
- 6 If you have any questions or concerns about this notice or your rights, or if you have a concern that your confidential information was not treated appropriately, please contact Shelli Collins, shelli@hcdvcc.org.
- 7 HCDVCC will not share the information you provide including your name, address, phone number, and other information that could identify you with other individuals or agencies without your permission unless it falls under the following exceptions:
 - a. If you **sign an informed, written, reasonably time-limited written release** for HCDVCC to speak with someone outside of the agency, which can be revoked by you at any time.
 - b. **HCDVCC staff are required by law to report certain situations even if you don't give them permission to share or report the situations.** This includes reporting suspected child abuse, neglect or exploitation, and the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of the elderly or a person with a disability. In Texas, program staff reserve the right, but are not required, to alert outside people if there is an imminent threat to a client or others close to them. Staff and advocates will inform you of any reporting requirements prior to having conversations with you and will tell you when they must make a report and what information will be shared. Even when these reports are made, HCDVCC should not share information beyond what is required by law.
 - c. If a properly issued court order is received a staff member will contact you. If you do not want the file released, HCDVCC's attorney will file a Motion to Quash. If the motion is not successful, HCDVCC will comply with the court order.
 - d. HCDVCC staff are required by state law to report abusive, illegal, or sexually exploitative acts committed by other mental health service providers.
 - e. HCDVCC must share some general information about the types of services provided and overall demographics (e.g., age and income

ranges, average number of children, ethnicities) of people that use HCDVCC services with the agencies that fund HCDVCC like the Office of the Governor (OOG) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) depending on which program you are being served by. However, **HCDVCC** will never share information that specifically could identify you as someone who used their services unless specifically authorized in writing by you.

f. HCDVCC staff may share your information with other staff in order to assist with service provision.

Considerations for Remote Consent for the Informed Use of Technology based Communications (Phone, Texts, Individual and Group Video Chats, Email, Electronic Signatures)

Remote informed consent might be needed for survivors who live far away from the program, those who are at work during the program's office hours, and those who may not be able to easily meet in-person for any number of reasons including cases of emergency.

Alternative options, like using phone, text, email and video chat/meetings have issues related that include preventing impersonation, privacy, and safety concerns.

You have the right to private and confidential communications with HCDVCC and the right to accept or refuse sharing your personally identifying information (PII) as follows:

- It's up to you to determine the best way to meet your current need by having HCDVCC disclose personally identifying information (PII) OR NOT, including by technology based communications/client file or data storage;
- You are aware of the pros & cons of sharing information (listed below) and communicating via technology based communications, as well as alternative ways to meet the need without providers having to disclose PII;
- These technology based communications (What's app, Go To Meeting, Zoom, Teams, other virtual communication platforms, text, cell phone, email, etc.) will only be used if in person meetings cannot be had, there isn't an ability or enough time to complete a traditional written, and/or signed consent either in person or via mail is obtained;
- We will store your PII data/file on Microsoft 365/Sharepoint unless you decline.
- HCDVCC can confirm we are actually communicating with the survivor whose PII will be disclosed – see below;
- HCDVCC has clear written instructions on the release form about what information should be disclosed, to whom the survivor wants it disclosed, the method by which it will be disclosed, and the time limit for making the disclosure;
- You were able to review a written version of those instructions on the form before signing it.

Preventing impersonation:

Can we establish a code to be texted or spoken to ensure it's you when using text or phone calls to communicate?

Privacy and safety:

Email is not a secure way to communicate. Abusive partner may have your email password, can you create a new email for our communications? If not, can you erase the emails from my agency from the inbox and deleted box? Please limit the personally identifying information you send in emails to only what is necessary. Most email providers (even many of those marketed as encrypted) have access to the content of the emails sent and received by account holders. If they can access the content, then the communication may not be regarded as truly confidential.

Can you let me know when the safe times for communication for phone, text, or video chats are by sending me a text with the code we agree on?

Can you erase all your texting with me right after if you feel the abusive partner will see your phone or is capable of commandeering your phone and looking without your permission?

Abusive partner may have GPS activated on your phone to know your whereabouts – please de-activate.

Abusive partner may have loaded spyware on your cell phone or can trace electronic signature documentation. Please check all apps and security settings.

Technology based communications/file or data storage may be HIPPA compliant but still not completely safe to use. Those cloud based/internet based platforms may have administrators and employees that have access to the communications/use/information shared, so not just HCDVCC staff has access to the information. In addition, their policies may say the company will respond to court orders accordingly which may adversely affect any court proceedings you have or will have with your abusive partner.

I understand all the above technology communications and information/data sharing risks. I understand the below are **not** completely confidential but agree to communicate with my HCDVCC advocate with the platform(s) I choose as follows. I can also choose in person communications and landline phone communications, but that may result in slower response times since HCDVCC mobile and housing advocates do not work from the office.

What's App
 Teams
 Go To Meeting

Zoom Meeting
 Microsoft Teams

email
 cell
 text

Phone 1: _____ Safe to call? No Yes Safe to text/leave message? No Yes

The safe times to contact me are: _____.

The code word I'll use if not safe is: _____.



Release of Liability

Support Mobile Advocate

I, _____, head of participant household, have requested non sheltered program intervention services for myself and my child/children.

For and in consideration of intervention services provided by HCDVCC, I hereby release and discharge HCDVCC, a non-profit organization, its directors, officers, agents, and volunteers of and from any and all manner of claims, cause of action, debts, or demands, which I, my heirs, successors, or assigns, may have hereafter for claims in connection with personal injury, property damage, theft, any and all claims of any sort whatsoever arising in connection with my services provided by HCDVCC.

I, _____, hereby authorize the HCDVCC to provide necessary emergency medical care for myself and/or children. While we are receiving services, I release HCDVCC from any liability incurred by obtaining such medical care.



Grievance (Complaint) Procedures

Support Mobile Advocate

Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (HCDVCC) values your input on how we provide services and wants to hear about your experience. Any information you provide will be taken seriously and will help us continue to improve our services for every survivor.

If you have a question or complaint about something that occurred while you were at HCDVCC, the first step is to discuss this with your advocate.

If you are not able to come to an acceptable result after discussing the issue with your advocate or do not feel comfortable talking about the issue with them, HCDVCC encourages you to submit a grievance or complaint, also found on the client page of the HCDVCC website.

If you prefer not to submit it in writing, please ask to talk to Shelli Collins, Housing Director (shelli@hcdvcc.org). She will make every reasonable attempt to review your grievance within 3 business days or sooner.

If a resolution is not achieved through these steps, you can request that the grievance go before Barbie Brashear - the Executive Director, who will make every reasonable attempt to review it within 5 business days. This is the final step in the grievance process and the decision made at this point will stand as the final decision from HCDVCC. If at any point you would like the contact information for the Health and Human Services Commission Family Violence Program, one of HCDVCC's funders, your advocate will provide that to you at your request.

Follow the steps below to file a grievance with HCDVCC:

Write up the grievance (complaint) and sign and date it. The form is available on the website under the client's tab, your advocate can provide you with a form or you may write your own. If you prefer not to submit it in writing please ask to speak to the Housing Director Shelli Collins at shelli@hcdvcc.org

Include the following details:

- a. Name and advocate's name.
- b. Details about the situation or concern
- c. Date of the issue or incident
- d. Any specific way you would like to see the issue resolved.

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT



WHO CAN FILE A COMPLAINT?

Members of the public, program participants, developers, contractors, agencies, subrecipients, etc.

TYPES OF COMPLAINTS

All types of complaints from the public are accepted. Common complaints include fair housing concerns, cases of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse, and cases of Conflict of Interest. Whatever the complaint, we will share the concern with the appropriate party.

YOUR ROLE

✓ When you're on a call with an unhappy client, please collect and email us the following:

- *First Name and Last Name*
- *Address (if applicable)*
- *Project or Application Number (if applicable)*
- *Phone Number*
- *Email*
- *Preferred Contact Method*
- *Reason for Complaint*

HOW WE RECEIVE COMPLAINTS



HOTLINE

832-394-6388



IN PERSON OR VIA MAIL

2100 Travis St. 9th Floor
Houston, Texas 77002
Attn: CGA Complaints and Appeals



EMAIL

**hcddcomplaintsappeal@
houstontx.gov**

HOW WE PROCESS COMPLAINTS

1

Receive
Complaint

2

Assess &
Investigate

3

Collaborate
with Division

4

Resolve Complaint
within 15-working days

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

houstontx.gov/housing/complaints.html





Termination Policy

Support Mobile Advocate

If my behavior puts the safety of other clients, staff, and/or volunteers at risk, HCDVCC may exit me from services. These behaviors include:

- Being violent and/or abusive towards others

If HCDVCC exits me from services due to one of the above, I understand that I can request:

- An exit interview in order to discuss services.
- A safety plan.
- Referrals to other community resources that may be of assistance to me.

HCDVCC will make every reasonable effort to have the exit process planned collaboratively by client and advocate.

I also understand that I have a right to file a grievance (complaint) or an appeal if I believe that the exit is not appropriate. The grievance form is available on HCDVCC website under the client tab, or my advocate can provide me with that grievance form. I also understand that HCDVCC will retain my records for five years, and that I have a right to request a copy.

I also understand that I can request contact information for HUD for complaint purposes.

Note: When exiting someone from services, HCDVCC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act; §504 of the Rehabilitation Act; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; and other applicable laws and regulations. HCDVCC will apply this policy equally to all people.

Rights & Responsibilities – Non-Resident Services

- Everyone at the Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (HCDVCC) has the following rights and responsibilities:
- Participate in creating a safe environment. We ask that you help prevent abuse and violence by not committing physical, emotional, or verbal abuse with staff, volunteers, or other clients. We also ask that you not bring drugs, alcohol, weapons, or other unsafe items onto HCDVCC property.
- Receive respect without discrimination on the basis of national origin, language, religion, race, color, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.
- Have your interests and personal choices recognized without blame or judgement. We are here to support you in making your own decisions.
- Have your civil and legal rights honored and upheld.
- With the exception of mandatory reporting as required by law or a court order, to have information that would identify you kept confidential and only released with your specific written consent. We ask that you respect the private information and safety of other clients by not discussing names of, or information about, other clients, except with HCDVCC staff, if necessary.
- Have all policies, procedures, expectations, client rights, and other relevant information, especially any document requiring your signature, explained to you in your chosen primary language.
- Be responded to respectfully without opinion or judgment when offering your statement of events. If a conflict with a staff member arises that you feel cannot be resolved, you can speak with the Director of Services, as outlined in HCDVCC's Grievance Policy.
- Have an advocate, when requested and when possible, advocate on your behalf.
- Be provided with personalized services, including referrals that are in your best interest. You also have the right to refuse any services offered in this agency and to discuss with staff any concerns or disagreements regarding services.
- Ask for what you want and need, to change your mind, and to choose not to answer a question.
- View or request a copy of your client file anytime you ask for it.
- Not be exploited or abused in any way by a staff, volunteer, or board member of this organization.

Nondiscrimination Statement

When determining client eligibility, HCDVCC will comply with the Human Resources Code, Title II, 51.002; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the Age Discrimination Act, Title 40; Commission regulations regarding civil rights; The Texas Health and Safety Code, 85.113; and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (42 U.S.C. Chapter 110).

These acts collectively provide in part that no persons in the United States shall be excluded from participating in or be denied any aid, care, service or other benefits provided by federal and or state funding. They may not otherwise be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, political beliefs, or religion.

1. The Human Resources Code, Title II, 51.002 (9) states that a survivor of family violence means:

- A. an adult member of a family or household who is subjected to an act of family violence; or
- B. a member of the household of the adult described in Paragraph (A), other than the member of the household who commits the act of family violence, including an act of emotional abuse.

2. The Texas Administrative Code defines, for the purpose of eligibility, a survivor of family violence as:

- A. an adult member of a family or household who is subjected to an act of family violence;
- B. a member of the household of the adult described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, other than the member of the household who commits the act of family violence, including an act of emotional abuse;
- C. survivors not directly served by a Commission family violence service provider;
- D. a member of the family or household who may have been subjected to sexual abuse by a batterer; and
- E. a survivor of dating violence.

3. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI states in part that potential clients cannot be denied services and benefits due to race, color, national origin, or religion in any program that receives funding from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

4. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 applies to all recipients of federal assistance from HHS. This law prohibits excluding or denying individuals with disabilities equal opportunity to receive benefits and services.

5. The Americans with Disabilities Act, Title III prohibits discrimination against clients because of a mental or physical disability. This law provides qualified disabled clients with the right to access services and benefits by ensuring facility accessibility where benefits and services are provided. This law requires shelter centers to make every reasonable effort to accommodate clients who are protected under the intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The agency will document all accommodations made and will keep this information in an administrative folder.

6. The Age Discrimination Act requires equal access to services and benefits regardless of the client's age. This law states that no person, based on their age, can be denied benefits from, be excluded from participation in, or be limited in access to, any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance. This law prohibits policies or practices that would exclude a client based on her/his age or the age of any dependents.

7. Additionally, if HCDVCC provides counseling services by a licensed psychologist, social worker and/or professional counselor (not all programs employ licensed counselors), HCDVCC can provide ongoing counseling services to minors who are survivors of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse, or who are contemplating suicide or suffering from a chemical or drug addiction or dependency without emancipation, parental consent or parental accompaniment, in compliance with the Texas Family Code Section 32.004. Before admitting a minor into services under these circumstances, the staff person who receives the hotline call or interacts with the minor will first attempt to contact a supervisor to determine whether the center will accept the minor into services.

8. The Health and Human Services Commission's (HHSC) regulations regarding civil rights in Chapter 395 of the Texas Administrative Code prohibit discrimination in all HHSC programs based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and religion. All HHSC agencies must also provide access to potential clients with limited English proficiency.

9. Texas Health and Safety Code, §85.113 and §85.114, relating to HIV/AIDS requires that any organization under contract with the Department of Human Services must have workplace guidelines concerning HIV, and although we do not have such a contract, we still follow guidelines similar to the following guidelines:

- 1) All employees will receive some education about methods of transmission and prevention of HIV infection and related conditions.
- 2) Programs will make accommodations to keep persons with HIV infection employed and productive for as long as possible.
- 3) The program will protect confidentiality of employee medical records.
- 4) The program will make HIV-related policies consistent with current information from public health authorities, such as the Centers for Disease Control of the United States Public Health Service, and with state and federal law and regulations.
- 5) Persons with HIV infection are entitled to the same rights and opportunities as persons with other communicable diseases.
- 6) Employers and employees should not engage in discrimination against persons with HIV infection unless based on accurate scientific

information.

[10. The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act as outlined in 42 U.S.C. Chapter 110\) prohibits programs from imposing fees or income based eligibility standards in exchange for assistance or services. It also confers specific requirements to all grantees and sub-grantees to support access to services for survivors of family violence who identify as LGBTQ.](#)

Staff and volunteers of HCDVCC will receive training on client eligibility and all applicable federal and state laws.

In determining the eligibility of individuals seeking services from this agency, HCDVCC bases its screening procedures **solely on the individual's status as a victim of family violence** as defined by Chapter 51 of the Human Resources Code. Victims of family violence are eligible for services without regard to the following: income; ability to contribute, donate, or pay for services; gender, sexual orientation/identification; type of abuse, including victimization by the sex industry; disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act; number of previous times services have been sought from this organization or other family violence programs; cultural barriers of this organization, including language; number of children accompanying the victim; or immigration status. Staff and volunteers will be trained on client eligibility and all applicable federal and state laws

HCDVCC makes every reasonable effort to serve non-English, or Limited English Proficiency (LEP), speaking persons seeking services in their native language. For cases in which staff or volunteers do not speak the victim's language, staff or volunteers will utilize existing community resources to provide interpretation and translation services. Staff or volunteers will seek assistance from the telephone company for language line services only when face-to-face communications cannot be facilitated.



Wellness Check

Support Mobile Advocate

Feel free to share as much as you feel comfortable while receiving services from HCDVCC. Some services may have time limits, so I will let you know when that applies, but the most important thing I want you to know is that our door is always open.

HCDVCC's main goal is for you to know what options and services are available so that you get to make choices and decisions that are right for you. Do you mind if I ask a few questions to get to know you so that I can offer the best help?

1. How are you doing today?
2. How are you doing physically? Do you need any emergency medical attention?
3. Do you have any children? If so, do you need anything for your children right now?
4. What questions can I answer for you about our agency?
5. Can you tell me about what's your main concern?
6. What do you think is important for me to know about you?
7. What are your biggest worries?
8. What types of services would be most helpful to you right now?
9. Is there anything you need help with today before we end our conversation?
10. Explanation of available services (some services depend on if funding is available):
 - Confidentiality
 - Assessments to evaluate your individual situation for best options with services and safety
 - Personalized safety planning and crisis intervention

Information about victim's rights and services available for victims in the criminal justice system

- Flexibility in scheduling support for face to face (virtual and/or in person) meetings
- Navigation/advocacy with different systems/programs in the community, such as:
 - Law enforcement
 - Harris County District Attorney's Office
 - Family Law
 - Domestic Violence agencies
 - Housing/ VAWA relocation assistance
 - Immigration Assistance
 - Public Benefits
 - Medical Field
 - Others as needed
- Crime Victim's Compensation assistance
- Address Confidentiality Program assistance
- Information regarding protective measures/tools to increase safety
- Advocacy within the criminal justice system to help increase offender accountability, if desired

Safety Plan

Family violence is never the survivor's fault. Safety can be a concern for survivors of family violence though and the following questions and prompts are steps you may choose to take to help you increase your safety in different situations. You may choose to keep a copy of this document to help to remember safety steps you have outlined, but it is a good idea to keep it in a safe place where your partner is not likely to find it. If your partner becomes aware of this information, create a new safety plan.

Safety Steps During a Violent Incident

Choosing the actions you would take if something happens now may help you in the moment to make quicker decisions.

If you think there is going to be an argument or a violent incident, where can you move that is safer (a room with a door or window to the outside)?

If you need to leave, it can be helpful to think about the following:

- What is the safest way to leave (which specific door, window, stairwell, etc.)?

It can be helpful to think about how to get out of each room in advance. Consider

- Where would you go?

- If you can't go there, where else might you go?

- Where can you keep your keys and wallet where you will be able to find them?

- What might you tell your children about what they should do?

Other things to consider:

- Is there a neighbor or trusted person who you could talk to about calling the police? How would you alert them (call, text, if they hear suspicious noises)?

- Is there a code word you can use with children, family, or friends so they know to call for help?

- ***You know your partner best and can judge the situation.*** If the situation is very serious, trust your instincts on how best to calm the situation down.

Preparing to Leave

If you decide to leave your partner, plans and preparation can be critical. Abusive partners often escalate their violent behavior if they believe their partner is leaving the relationship.

- Do you have someone or somewhere, besides your house, you can leave some money, an extra set of keys, extra clothes, and copies of important documents?

- Can you open a separate bank account to increase your independence?
- Can you get an alternative/prepaid cellphone to make phone calls without your partner knowing?
- Who can you talk to about staying with them when you leave?

- Other steps?

- It helps to review and rehearse this plan often, and, as appropriate, practice it with your children.
- If it is safe, keep a journal/log of all violent incidents, noting dates, events, and threats made (including ones made online or through text messages and phone calls).
- Take screenshots or forward any threatening social media posts or messages, emails, voicemails, etc. to a safe account or to someone you trust.
- Some things to think about taking when you leave or to keep with a trusted person:
 - Cellphone/Tablets
 - ID card
 - Birth certificates for you and your children
 - Lease/rental agreement or deeds
 - Work permits
 - Passport

- Social Security cards
- School records
- Medical records
- Car title and registration
- Credit/debit cards
- Insurance papers
- Jewelry
- Medications
- Financial documents
- Sentimental items

Staying Safe after Leaving

If you are living away from your abusive partner, there are steps you can take to increase your safety. Some of them might work well for you and others may not. Think about other factors specific to your location and situation that will help you be safer.

- Changing locks
- Changing passwords on all accounts and social media
- Turning GPS off on all devices
- Making sure all windows are secure
- Having an outside lighting system with motion sensors
- Installing a security system
- If available, you can give your workplace security a photo of your abuser
- Change store locations or public places (coffee shops, restaurants, etc.) that you frequently go
- Talk to an advocate about how to keep your address confidential, including enrolling in the Address Confidentiality Program, if necessary
- Other steps I can take

Protecting my Children's Safety

Sometimes it is important to restrict who has permission to pick up your children, including your partner. This can require a court order in some instances. If applicable, you can inform the following about pick-up permission:

- School and/or teacher: _____
- Day Care staff and/or babysitter: _____
- Place of worship: _____
- Other: _____

Other things to consider about safety and your children:

- As appropriate, teach your children when and how to call 911
- You can plan with your children when and how to leave if violence escalates or a part of the residence they can go if they feel afraid
- If you are worried about your partner finding your current location, talk to an advocate about how to protect your children's school or place of activity from publishing personal information and from posting pictures of your children
- Where can you meet for visitation or exchanges that feels safer?:

- Sometimes abusers use family phone plans or gifts to children as a way to track your whereabouts. How can you screen gifts or talk to your children about this?:

Staying Safe with a Protective Order

Abusers may obey Protective Orders, but one can never be sure which partner will obey and which will not. If you move to a different county in Texas, you can register your Protective Order with the county and local law enforcement. If you are worried about filing your Protective Order with your address information, talk to the Court Clerk or an advocate about how to avoid that. The following are some steps that you can take to help the enforcement of the Protective Order:

- You can keep copies of your Protective Order in the following places as well as keeping a copy with you at all times:

- Make sure that your Protective Order is filed with either the District or County Clerk and you know the process of how to get a certified copy if needed. Their address and phone number is:

- You can give your Protective Order to local law enforcement in the city or county where you work, you live, and places where you often go. Their names and phone numbers are:
- You can inform your employer, close friends, children's schools, and others that you have a Protective Order in effect and can give them copies if needed.
- The local family violence program can help if issues come up with your Protective Order. Their number is:
- If your partner violates the Protective Order, call the police to report the violation, contact your attorney and advocate, and document all violations.
- If law enforcement does not help, you can contact your advocate or attorney to file a complaint. My advocate and/or attorney's name and

phone number is:

Protecting your Emotional Safety

The experience of being abused physically and/or verbally is usually exhausting, scary, and emotionally draining. The process of building a new life for yourself takes *much energy and incredible courage*. Some options to help you during this difficult time:

- When you have to communicate with your partner in person or over the phone, you can do the following before and/or after to feel better:

- If you feel upset, you can:

- Remind yourself of all your strengths, one phrase I can use for this is: _____
- Create a peaceful space for yourself: _____
- One thing you can tell yourself when you feel like others are trying to control or abuse you:

- Other things that make you feel stronger:

Understanding your Technology Safety

- Some things to consider about cellphones:
 - Do you know how to turn off your GPS on your phone?
 - Do you have a shared family plan where your partner could track you or monitor who your calls?
 - Is it safer for you to have a separate alternative or prepaid cellphone?
 - Do you know how to check your list of apps to make sure something was not downloaded on your phone?
 - Other ways to increase safety with your cellphone:

- Some things to consider about online safety:
 - Can you create a private email account?
 - Is it safe for you to change account passwords that your abuser knows?
 - Is there a public computer or a computer of a trusted friend you can use if you're worried about your online activities being monitored?
 - Do you know how to delete history on your computer and how that can be unsafe in certain situations?
 - If you are trying to keep your location confidential from your partner, try googling your name to see if your location is easily found.
 - Keep in mind to not google your name often.
 - Other ways to increase safety with your computer and/or online accounts:

(Additional tech safety planning available at nnedv.org/resources/safetynetdocs.html)

Other Strategies to Feel Safer:

Telephone Numbers to Remember:

- National Domestic Violence Hotline: **1-800-799-SAFE (7233)**
- Family Violence Program: _____
- Counselor/Advocate: _____
- Police Department: _____
- Victim Services: _____
- My workplace: _____
- Attorney: _____
- School/Daycare: _____
- Doctor/Health Care Provider: _____
- Friends: _____
- Family Members: _____
- Other: _____