

## EXIT INSTRUCTIONS

### **If you are being abused...**

Are you here as a result of someone hitting or threatening you- a spouse, boyfriend, lover, relative or someone you know?

As you read this, you may be feeling confused, frightened, sad, angry or ashamed.

**You are not alone!** Unfortunately, what happened to you is very common. Domestic violence does not go away on its own. It tends to get worse and more frequent with time. **There are people who can help you.**

If you want to begin talking about the problem, need a safe place to stay or want legal advice- call one of the agencies listed below!

### **While still at the Clinic...**

- Think about whether it is safe to return home. If not, call one of the resources listed below or stay with a friend or relative.
- You have received instructions on caring for your injuries and taking any medications prescribed. Remember, if you have received tranquilizers, they may help you rest but they won't solve the problem of battering.
- Battering is a crime and you have the right to legal intervention. You should consider calling the police for assistance (see information below). You may also obtain a court order prohibiting your partner from contacting you in any way (including in person or by phone). Contact a local domestic violence program or attorney for more information.
- Ask the doctor or nurse to take photos of your injuries to become part of your medical record.

### **When you get home...**

- Develop an "exit plan" in advance for your children. Know exactly where you could go even in the middle of the night- and how to get there.
- Pack an "overnight bag" in case you have to leave home in a hurry. Either hide it yourself or give it to a friend to keep for you.
  - Pack toilet articles, medications, an extra set of keys to the house and the car, an extra set of clothing for you and your children and a special toy for each child.
  - Have extra cash, loose change for phone calls, checkbook, or savings account book hidden or with a friend.
  - Pack important papers and financial records (the originals or copies)..such as social security cards, birth certificates, green cards, passports, work authorization and any other immigrant documents, voter registration cards, medical cards and records, drivers license, rent receipts, title to the car and proof of insurance, etc.
- Remember, if you feel your safety is in danger, get out of the situation even if you haven't had a chance to plan the above!

## CALLING THE POLICE

**LOCAL RESOURCES:**  
**Police Emergency: 911**  
**Police Dispatch: 553-0123**  
**Woman, Inc.: 864-4722**

**When someone has injured you or violated any civil protection or criminal stay away order, do the following:**

- 1.** Call the police at 911, if it is an emergency. Tell them you are in danger and you need help immediately. Let them know if you have a court order that tells the perpetrator to stay away from you or not to harm you. If the police do not come quickly, call again and say “this is my second call.” Keep notes of the time and date of your call(s).
- 2.** When the police arrive, tell them only what the perpetrator did. Describe to the police your injuries, how you were injured, how the perpetrator violated the court order, and if the perpetrator used weapons. If the perpetrator has violated a court order, show the police your order and any proof of service (the document which is signed by the person who gave the order to the perpetrator). Ask that the police file a report and give you a report number.  
  
A victim of crime is not required to provide other information, such as the victim’s immigration status. If English is your second language, insist upon an interpreter who is not a family member. If the police demand that you tell them your immigration status or need help finding an immigration advocate or attorney, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 (toll-free call). Interpreters are available 24 hours a day.
- 3.** Insist that the police make an arrest, this will give you time to get to a safer place. In some states, the police must make an arrest if they have probable cause to believe that an incident of domestic violence occurred. If your state does not have such a law, you will still be able to make a private person’s arrest. Tell the officer that unless they make an arrest or allow you to make a private person’s arrest, the perpetrator will come back and beat you. In some states the perpetrator could be released within a few hours after the police make an arrest and take the perpetrator into custody. You will want to use the hours to get to a safe location.
- 4.** You should obtain a civil protection order if you do not already have one. In many states, the police officer can get a short-term emergency protection order for you until you can get an order from a judge that will last longer. If emergency protection orders are not available in your area, you can go to court to apply for an “ex parte” protection order. Ex parte orders can: 1) tell the perpetrator to stay away from you and not to harm, threaten or contact you; 2) in most states, order the perpetrator out of your home and give you temporary custody of your children; and 3) be obtained quickly, in many places, the same day. The perpetrator does not have to go to court in order for you to get an ex parte protection order.
- 5.** If the perpetrator is arrested, and taken to the station, this is what may happen: the perpetrator may be charged and may be released before the hearing. Ask that a condition of the perpetrator’s release be that the perpetrator should not be allowed to come near you.
- 6.** If the perpetrator is not arrested, you should call the prosecutor, police department, sheriff’s office, or local domestic violence agency and inquire about complaint follow-up procedures.
- 7.** Always get the police officer’s names and badge numbers. If you have trouble with a police officer, you can complain directly to the Chief of Police or the officer’s supervisor, or the local domestic violence program.