National Domestic Violence Hotline
Staying Safe During COVID-19

https://www.thehotline.org/2020/03/13/staying-safe-during-covid-19/

Avoiding public spaces and working remotely can help to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but for many domestic violence survivors, staying home may not be the safest option. We know that any external factors that add stress and financial strain can negatively impact survivors and create circumstances where their safety is further compromised. Here are a few suggestions to make this uncertain time a little safer.

Create a safety plan.

A safety plan is a personalized, practical plan that includes ways to remain safe while in a relationship, planning to leave, or after you leave. Here at The Hotline, we safety plan with victims, friends, family members, and anyone who is concerned about their own safety or the safety of someone else.

You and your partner may be told by either or both of your employers to work remotely to limit social interaction. Having a safety plan laid out can help you to protect yourself during this stressful time. You can learn more about safety plans here, and you can find an interactive guide to safety planning here.

Because there may be limited shelter availability due to COVID-19, consider alternatives such as staying with family or friends, staying in motels, or sleeping in your vehicle. Be extra mindful of good hygiene practices if you’re leaving as well – wash your hands regularly, avoid touching your face, minimize contact with surfaces that other people have had contact with, etc.

Practice self-care.

COVID-19 is causing uncertainty for many people, but getting through this time while experiencing abuse can feel really overwhelming. Taking time for your health and wellness can make a big difference in how you feel. To learn more about how to build in self-care while staying safe, you can learn more here.

If you’re a friend or family member of someone experiencing abuse, you may not be able to visit them in person if you live in an area where there are COVID-19 cases. Seeing someone you care about being hurt is stressful. Remind yourself that you can’t make decisions for someone else, but you can encourage your loved one to think about their wellbeing, safety plan and practice self-care while they are in their home.

Reach out for help.

While people are encouraged to stay at home, you may feel isolated from your friends and family. Even if you are isolated, try to maintain social connections online or over the phone, if it is safe to do so, and try to stick to your daily routines as much as possible.

For any victims and survivors who need support, we are here for you, 24/7. Call 1-800-799-7233 or 1-800-799-7233 for TTY, or if you’re unable to speak safely, you can log onto thehotline.org or text LOVEIS to 22522.