

A safety plan is a personalized strategy that includes ways to remain safe, an identified support system, and tactics to cope with emotions.

While some of these suggestions may seem obvious, in a moment of crisis or when triggered by panic, your brain will not function the same way it does while you are calm. Planning in advance will help you act quickly and could calm some feelings of fear and panic you may be experiencing now. Remember, the emotions you are experiencing as a result of the trauma are all normal reactions to abnormal events that have occurred in your life.

Ways to Remain Safe

- Contact OVA to obtain the following materials regarding the offender:
 - release information and exit photo
 - parole agent contact information (see reverse for more info)
- Call your local law enforcement authorities to notify them of the offender's upcoming release and any safety concerns you may have.
- Consider notifying bystanders such as neighbors and a supervisor at work.
- Alert your child's school/daycare, if applicable.
- Install additional security measures at your home, such as locks, lights, cameras.

Identifying Your Support System

- Seek out supportive and trusted people such as family members, friends or coworkers.
- Acquire a list of your local twelve-step group or counseling group, if applicable, and note the meeting times.
- Reconnect with a counselor you may have seen in the past or reach out to your local victim services agency for a referral to see a new counselor. There is no shame in needing to talk through these experiences with someone.

Tactics to Cope with Emotions

- Gather information and a basic understanding of:
 - parole conditions of your offender (listed in the letter you received)
 - protection from Abuse Orders (PFAs) and Sexual Violence Protection Orders (SVPOs) by contacting your local county victim witness service
 - local services and their phone numbers, including shelters
- Practice self-care by identifying a location you can go to if you need to relax and feel safe and/or:
 - engage in exercise, regardless of intensity
 - develop a daily meditation, prayer or mindful exercise
 - find a daily devotional book or journal for your thoughts

Your situation is going to be unique and different than anyone else's; some of these suggestions may not be applicable to you. If you have specific concerns regarding the release of your offender or assistance with any of the above, please contact the Office of Victim Advocate at 800.563.6399.