



Safety Guidance for Survivors

This resource is designed to support you whether you are **still living with the perpetrator** or have **safely exited**. Everything here is about **risk management** — reducing danger and helping you stay safe.

If You Are Still Living With the Perpetrator

- Familiarise yourself with your Safety Exit Plan. You'll find this in the *Domestic Abuse Breakthrough Handbook* (PDF included). Review it often.
- Leave safely before informing authorities (if possible). Risk rises once you leave, and rises again when the perpetrator realises their behaviour has been exposed. If you can exit first and then report, it is often safer.
Exception: If you are in imminent danger, call emergency services immediately.
- Position yourself near an exit. Whenever possible, keep yourself closest to the door in case things escalate suddenly. Never allow yourself to be trapped in a corner.
- Carry essentials on you. Wear clothes with pockets. Keep your phone and keys with you at all times.
- Avoid arguments. Even when they are clearly wrong, you will never get them to admit it. Trying will only distress you and may antagonise them further. This isn't about being silent — it's about managing escalation. You cannot 'win' an argument with someone determined to make you the villain.
- Set up emergency contacts. Save trusted contacts under 'A'. Add emergency services too.
- Silent Emergency Calls:
 - In the UK, a silent 999 call followed by pressing 55 signals you cannot speak but need help.
 - In Australia, calling 000 and pressing 55 does the same.
 - In New Zealand, calling 111 and pressing 55 alerts operators that you need help but cannot speak.
- **Even if you cannot press 55, regardless of the country you are dialling from, it is still worth dialling emergency services. Most operators are trained to listen for signs of distress and may escalate the call if they identify an immediate risk.**
- Use safe words. Agree on a safe word with a trusted friend or family member so they know when to call the police.

Once You Have Safely Exited

- Maintain strict no contact: No phone calls, no texts, no social media. This is addiction, not love.

■ Expect manipulation. They may try guilt, remorse, or promises of change. Do not put yourself in that position.

■ If children are involved: Lay down clear, written boundaries about all contact. Keep it child-focused only. Use text or email for all communication. Where possible, ask a third party to facilitate phone calls. Breaches of boundaries may amount to stalking (two or more unwanted incidents). Record and report them.

Protecting Yourself Legally and Practically

■ Stay factual, avoid name-calling. Stick to behaviours and facts. Do not use diagnostic labels unless medically documented.

■ Document everything. Complete your TITRA timeline and log ongoing incidents using the Incident Recording Template provided.

■ Never expose them publicly. Do not post on social media or share with employers, unless it is required for your safety. Until they are convicted in court, doing so risks defamation charges and retaliation. It may trigger revenge motives or last-resort thinking, making them more dangerous.

■ **Don't think of this as protecting their reputation — think of it as protecting yourself.**

■ **Risk management is a joint effort.** It is about what professionals do — but also about the choices you make each day. Every step should aim to manage, not increase, your risk. ➡ It isn't about being right; it's about being safe.

■ Action Step:

- Review your Safety Exit Plan today.
- Start your TITRA timeline and log any new incidents immediately.
- Keep this resource close for quick reference.