

Domestic Violence Resources in Rhode Island

Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence:

Description of Service: Help line is open 24 hours, Chat 24/7

Contact Information: 1 800-494-8100

Immigration Assistance for Victims of Domestic Violence:

Description of Service: the following organizations provide immigration help for victims of domestic violence.

Sojourner House
386 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02908
401-861-6191

Progreso Latino
626 Broad Street
Central Falls, RI 02863
401-728-5920

Diocese of Providence
Office of Community Services and Advocacy
One Cathedral Square
Providence, RI 02903
401-421-7833

Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island
645 Elmwood Avenue
Providence, RI 02907
401-784-8600

Undocumented victims may qualify for assistance under the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA): <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-113s47enr/pdf/BILLS-113s47enr.pdf>

Safety Planning

- Decide what you will do if the abuser becomes violent again. What has worked in the past to keep you and your children safe?
- Can you call the police or teach your children to call? Who else can you call? Work out an emergency code or signal with the children or with neighbors you trust. Ask the neighbors to call the police if they see or hear anything suspicious around your home.

- Know how and when you can most safely leave. Plan an escape route to get out of the house quickly. Rehearse the escape plan, and practice it with your children, if it is safe to do so. Create a few believable reasons for leaving the house at different times of day or night, like taking out the trash or walking the dog. Make a habit of backing the car into the driveway and keeping it fueled.
- Consider where you, your children, and your pets can go and whom you can call for help, either in an emergency or if you decide to leave the relationship. Talk to trusted people in your life about your situation.
- Write down a list of names, phone numbers, and addresses of people and organizations you can go to for help. Keep the list in a safe place where the abuser cannot find it, preferably not in a cell phone, which can break or get lost or which the abuser can monitor, take, or destroy.
- See the “Items to Take Checklist” on the next tab if you are planning to leave the relationship. Keep important items, such as money, spare keys, changes of clothes, medicine, and copies of important documents, with someone you trust in case you need to leave quickly.
- Contact a local domestic violence agency to learn about the resources available to you. Call the RI statewide Helpline (1-800-494-8100) to confidentially speak with an advocate.
- Do you need a restraining order? Contact a domestic violence court advocate for information and support.
- Open a post office box so you can receive mail and have a safe address to use. Open a savings account at a bank not used by the abuser. Open the account in your name using a safe address, or hide money to establish or increase your independence.
- Take steps to prove ownership of your pets. Register them with your town under your name. Do not leave pets alone with the abuser. Talk to loved ones or your veterinarian about temporary care for your pet, or contact a local domestic violence agency or animal shelter directly

Items to Take Checklist:

- Identification & driver's license
- Car registration, title, & insurance
- Birth certificates for self & children
- Social Security cards
- School & medical records
- Cash, bankbooks, ATM & credit cards
- Extra keys – house/car/office
- Changes of clothes
- Medications
- Eyeglasses & contacts
- Food & supplies for pets
- Pet registration & medical records
- Cash & food assistance cards
- Child support orders
- Passport(s), Green Card, visa, permits
- Divorce & custody documents
- Marriage license
- Copies of protective orders
- Agreements - lease/rental/deeds
- Mortgage payment book
- Current unpaid bills in my name
- Health & life insurance documents
- Jewelry, heirlooms, photos, & items of sentimental value
- Children's toys & blankets
- Address book / emergency numbers

- RI statewide Helpline (1-800-494-8100)
- Trusted friends & family; school; work
- Local police; doctor's office; hospital
- Community agencies; veterinarian

If you have ended the relationship, consider the following:

- Change the locks on doors and windows. Install a security system, extra locks, steel or metal doors, window bars, better lighting, motion-sensitive and outdoor lighting, smoke detectors, and fire extinguishers.
- Inform trusted neighbors that the abuser no longer lives with you. Ask them to call the police if they observe the abuser near your home or children or if they hear or see anything suspicious around your home.
- Avoid places (stores, banks, etc.) and routes that the abuser uses often or expects you to use often.
- Change your work hours or the route you take to work. Create a plan for leaving work safely every day and a process for screening your calls.
- Talk with schools, childcare providers, and anyone who takes care of your children about who has permission to pick them up.
- Teach your children what to do if the abuser takes them, such as calling you, the police, or trusted family members and friends.
- Change veterinarians, and avoid leaving pets outside alone.
- Obtain a restraining order, and keep it on you at all times. Call the police to enforce the order. Give copies to employers, neighbors, and schools along with a photo of the offender.
- Talk to a lawyer who specializes in family violence. Learn about options that will protect you and your children when it comes to divorce, custody, and visitation. If you have a custody agreement with the abusive partner, develop a safety plan for visitation, such as whom the children can call or where they can go if they need help. Make a plan for safe custody exchanges, such as meeting in a safe public place and bringing someone you trust.