

ELDER ABUSE SAFETY PLANNING

(SUPPLEMENT TO GREY BRUCE ELDER ABUSE RESPONSE PATHWAY)

Based on the caller's circumstances, responders/211 staff may decide to review safety planning strategies for seniors being abused. Safety planning may be appropriate if the senior is not in immediate danger and a referral to services is pending. A safety plan may be a key element in keeping the senior safe.

Here are a few steps and strategies to help the caller think about a safety plan:

- Keep important contact numbers in a trusted location for quick use. This may include contact numbers for family members, friends, neighbours, service providers, accessible shelters, etc.
- Plan an escape route out of your home, including your route to a safe location such as a neighbour, friend, family member etc.
- If you have a disability, and your abuser is also your caregiver, set up an emergency contact provider or shelter that can accommodate your disability.
- Ensure that some form of emergency transportation is available if you need it.
- Put important papers such as birth certificates, social insurance numbers, citizenship and immigration papers in a safe place such as a safety deposit box or with a trusted friend.
- Put together a suitcase of essential items such as clothing and medicines. Store in a safe place.
- Make plans for any pets that you have if you need to leave quickly and are unable to take them with you.
- Create a code word that can be used on the phone with a person you trust. The code word could mean to contact the police or to inform them that you are leaving.
- If the situation becomes serious, use your judgement and intuition. Consider if you can give the abuser something they want to protect yourself until you are out of danger.
- Remember to delete your internet search history and call history if you are searching for resources so that the abuser cannot figure out your safety plan.
- If you have a support person that your abuser is not aware of, keep that person's name and address confidential.
- Review your safety plan often to make sure it is current and the safest way to leave.

This information has been adapted from the Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council Safety Plan.

Additional Resources:

- 1) *Safety Plan. Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council.*
 - <https://www.albertaelderabuse.ca/getting-help/safety-plan>
- 2) *Fact Sheet: Safety Plan for Older Adults. Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario. *This resource may be used by older adults for the purpose of **creating a personalized safety plan**.*
 - https://eaopn.ca/factsheets/#Safety_Plan_older_adults
- 3) *Safety Planning for Older Adults Keeping Safe in Unhealthy Relationships, Toolkit for Service Providers 2017. Elder Abuse Ontario.*
 - https://cnpea.ca/images/safety-panning-toolkit-full-document-eao_mar-29-2017.pdf