



Financial Tips for Domestic Violence Victims and Survivors

The Allstate Foundation and NNEDV Fund suggest the following six strategies to women who are leaving or have just left an abusive situation to protect their financial security.

1. Plan for your safety by contacting your local domestic violence program to discuss your options and learn about the community resources you can access for support (i.e. emergency assistance funds, shelter, utility assistance, rent assistance, public benefits, and affordable housing). To locate a program in your community, contact that National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-SAFE.
2. Obtain a copy of your credit report and monitor your credit often. Most financial institutions provide credit monitoring services such as Privacy Guard at low costs. You can get a copy of your credit report by contacting one of the three credit bureaus. **Equifax:** 1-800-685-1111 or www.equifax.com; **Experian:** 1-866-966-1067 or www.experian.com; **TransUnion:** 1-877-680-7275 or www.transunion.com; **FREE Annual Credit Report** www.annualcreditreport.com, or 1-877-322-8228.
3. Open a post office box for mail and any financial information you may receive before you leave or immediately after you leave an abusive situation. You can obtain P.O. boxes from the United States Post Office or vendors such as Parcel Plus, Mail Boxes Etc, or UPS Store.
4. Call your utility companies – including your wireless telephone services, and financial institutions—to secure your private information with special pin codes and passwords. Be sure to do the same on all new credit, wireless accounts or utility accounts. Work with vendors to so that identifiers other than your social security number, date of birth or mother's maiden name are used to authenticate your identity.
5. Change all ATM and debit card pin codes, online banking passwords, and online investing passwords. Be sure to change the password on your e-mail account as well.
6. Be sure to make necessary changes to your insurance plans, will, or trust beneficiaries to appoint a new person if your abuser used to be your designee.