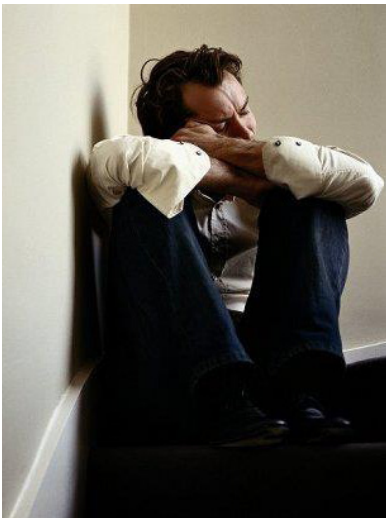


# Safety Planning with Transgender Clients FAQ

[www.forge-forward.org](http://www.forge-forward.org)  
PO Box 1272, Milwaukee, WI 53201  
[AskFORGE@forge-forward.org](mailto:AskFORGE@forge-forward.org)



**SAFETY PLANNING:  
A GUIDE FOR  
TRANSGENDER AND  
GENDER  
NON-CONFORMING  
INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE  
EXPERIENCING INTIMATE  
PARTNER VIOLENCE**

*A tool to be used by individuals in abusive relationships, by peers or loved ones, and by professionals to help increase safety for transgender victims.*  
<http://forge-forward.org/wp-content/docs/safety-planning-tool.pdf>

Research shows that transgender and gender non-conforming people are at least as likely to experience domestic violence as people of other genders, and possibly more. They may, however, be less likely to recognize the abuse and/or do anything to increase their safety. Some of the reasons include:

- **The victim or abuser may believe that it is only domestic violence if it is a man abusing a woman. Many trans people will not see themselves in this paradigm.**
- **A disproportionate number of transgender and gender non-conforming people were abused as children or youth, and as a result more transgender people may assume that abusive relationships are normal.**
- **Transgender and gender non-conforming people are frequently told, explicitly or implicitly, that they are unlikely to find a partner, and so may decide that they would rather stay with an abusive partner than "be alone."**
- **Transgender and gender non-conforming people are frequently leery of accessing health, social service, law enforcement, and other professionals, so they may be less likely to hear someone tell them their relationship might be abusive. They will also not learn that there is something they can do about the abuse by accessing supportive services.**

Because of these factors, it is critical that many types of professionals (especially those who normally do not provide safety planning services) learn about safety planning in general, and specifically about safety planning with transgender and gender non-conforming clients. These clients may never hear from others that the situation they are in could become more dangerous and that there are steps they can take to increase their safety and well-being.

Safety planning can have many components, including (but not limited to):

- **Learning that violence is seldom a one-time event and often gets worse over time;**
- **Learning that despite what the abuser may say, the victim is not responsible for the abuse and cannot control whether it happens or not;**
- **Learning which rooms of a home/apartment are more dangerous to have arguments in and what to look for to increase safety or escape;**
- **Learning the subtle ways in which an abusive partner may isolate a victim and make it harder for them/her/him/zir to leave;**
- **Learning how common technology (cell phones, computers, GPS devices, etc.) can be used to stalk a victim;**
- **Thinking through what options a victim has if the violence gets worse and the victim needs to suddenly leave;**
- **Making copies of critical documents and storing them where the victim (but not the abuser) can access them; and**
- **Identifying what people should (and should not) be told about the abuse, and what types of help should be asked of them.**

### **SAFETY PLANNING ARCHIVED WEBINAR**

*A 90-minute webinar, specifically focused on safety planning with transgender clients.*  
<http://forge-forward.org/event/safety-planning/>

### **TRANS-SPECIFIC POWER AND CONTROL TACTICS**

*A list of power and control tactics used against and by trans people.*  
<http://forge-forward.org/wp-content/docs/Trans-power-and-control.pdf>

Safety planning with transgender and gender non-conforming individuals experiencing intimate partner violence is not different from safety-planning with non-transgender victims, except in a few key areas. Transgender and gender non-conforming victims:

- **Do not have access to as many public resources like domestic violence shelters as non-transgender female victims, and so may need additional help in thinking through possible options for leaving;**
- **May be less willing or able to access professional assistance such as medical or mental health care, so planning may need to include identifying alternative sources of help and/or strategies for minimizing the risk in accessing unfamiliar professionals;**
- **May need to make and take copies of additional identity documents related to their gender and name;**
- **May need to pack or access items such as hormones, prosthetics, grooming items, and clothing of atypical sizes; and**
- **May need additional strategizing about how to stay connected with others and maintain safety in a very small cultural community where everyone may know both the abuser and the victim.**