

# SAFETY PLAN CHECKLIST FOR COURT APPEARANCES



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These suggestions are a guide for court personnel, advocates and law enforcement considering safety planning for victims and witnesses during and at court appearances. The checklist encompasses four areas of concern: Environment, Lethality, Court Capacity for Victim Safety and Alternative Strategies.

## Environment

- Entrance/Exit to the Court environment
- Parking Areas and Sidewalks
- Victim Waiting Area
- Furniture Placement
- Security/law enforcement personnel
- Bailiff
- Advocates

## Lethality

- Checklist/Evaluation (standard from this workshop or websites of victim assistance groups)
- History of Assault (from advocate, does not need to be a re-interview of the victim)
- Victim Concerns (from the advocate's discussions with the victim about the court appearance)

## Court Capacity for Safety

- Staffing Patterns
- Entrance/Exits
- Safe Waiting Areas
- Waiting Area and Personnel for Supervising Children

## Alternative Strategies

- Closed Circuit Television Testimony
- Escort to and from the courtroom
- Placing staff between the offender and the victim/witness so line of sight is disrupted
- Placing offender and/or victim in an adjoining room or calling them into the court separately