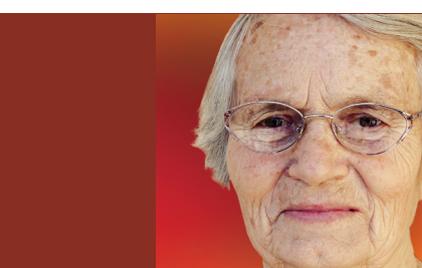


Checklist

Safety Planning For High Risk Matters



<p>Identify risks that arise for your client and assist them to make plans around their safety. For more information about safety planning with clients, please see the 1800 RESPECT Safety Planning Checklist. You can use this checklist to help you to manage your client's matter in a safe way.</p>	
<p>If your client's contact details are not to be disclosed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Do not enter any contact details which will place your client at risk on electronic case management systems. ■ Remove client details from the front of the file and from all Court documents folders. ■ Mark your client's file as "ADDRESS NOT TO BE DISCLOSED" 	
<p>Ask your client about the safest way and time to contact, send mail and/or call them. Do not SMS, leave voice mail or email unless your client is okay with this.</p>	
<p>Only speak to your client (unless you have client permission) about their case. Do not leave messages with others.</p>	
<p>If questioned by other people picking up the phone, do not disclose who you are, where you are from or the reason for your call. If required, give an innocuous reason for your call – like taking a survey or having the wrong number.</p>	
<p>Let your client know about how you will be contacting them. Let your client know that you may be calling from a private number or if it safe to do so, make arrangements to communicate via text message from an office mobile.</p>	
<p>If your client fails to respond, make an effort to confirm that your client is safe. Obtain details of an emergency contact person for your client and seek their consent to contact this person should your client become uncontactable.</p>	
<p>Consider the safest location for your client's appointments – at an office in a different location to where the other party lives, at a location with security or in a safe room at a Court.</p>	
<p>Make sure the other party's details are entered into your electronic case management system so any conflict can be identified as required.</p>	
<p>If your client requires steps to be put in place for you to manage their matter to keep them safe, make sure these are clear on your file, on electronic case management systems and with all staff. Keep detailed file notes about safety issues, risk assessments and safety plans clearly marked on your file and on electronic case management systems. Ensure that your Manager and other staff are aware of any high risk matters in your practice, any incidents that occur as well as what they need to do to keep your client safe.</p>	



<p>Talk to your client before you send letters to the other party. Check the content of your letters with your client. Time your letters so that your client can take extra safety precautions.</p>	
<p>Keep information about the children and their location confidential (such as information about the children's school or doctor).</p>	
<p>In your dealings with the Court and with other people involved in the Court process (for example, associates, experts etc), remind them of the need to keep your client's location confidential including on any documentation. Advise contact supervisors about any information which needs to be kept confidential (ie address, school location, etc). Add conditions/restraints to any Orders to keep information private.</p>	
<p>Triple check evidence (and all annexures) for any information which may reveal your client's location.</p>	
<p>Consider whether or not any subpoena that you or another party may issue in the future – will in itself reveal your client or their child's location (for example, subpoena to Anna Bay Day Care).</p>	
<p>Seek first access to subpoenaed documents to ensure that there is no information which may reveal your client's location in the produced documents.</p>	
<p>Talk to your client about preparation for Court. Ensure that a safety plan is put in place before all Court dates. Consider an application about the safest and least traumatic way for your client to give evidence (for example, by AVL). Consider arranging a secure room for your client with a support person and having your client only appear in the Court room as required.</p>	
<p>Consider different Counsel and/or lawyers appearing at each Court date (if appropriate).</p>	
<p>Consider address for service/ contact details on letters and Court documents.</p>	
<p>Speak to your Manager about whether steps need to be put in place to manage contact between the other party and you (and other staff). This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Requesting all contact from the other party to be in writing, ■ Requesting all contact from the other party to go through the Manager of your firm, ■ Providing legal support staff with a script to allow them to end incoming telephone calls from the other party and/or ■ Placing a block on incoming emails from the other party. 	
<p>Consider your own safety—including parking arrangements, personal duress alarms, as well as your electoral and social media details.</p>	
<p>Separation and/or legal proceedings may be a time of high risk for your client. Consider that the other party may have a different perception of when final separation has occurred to that of your client or you. Consider that your involvement alone may be perceived by the other party as an indicator of separation or as a symbol of your client rejecting their control.</p>	
<p>Remember that a well-intentioned action by you can have a serious ripple effect on your client's safety.</p>	
<p>Predict issues which may arise in advance and plan your response.</p>	