

Identifying the Dangers of Firearms in
Domestic Violence Situations
A Supplemental Screening Tool for Firearms

Please use the following tool during your safety assessment if a victim answers **yes** to the question: Does the abuser have weapons?

It is imperative that each victim is allowed to design a safety plan that best suits the needs of their individual situation. To help a victim determine whether, when, how or for what period of time they may want firearms/ammunition removed from the abuser and have the abusive partner prohibited from possessing a valid FOID card, help them consider the following:

1. Does your partner own, possess, or have easy access to firearms? _____
If yes, how many? _____
2. Are the firearms owned legally? _____
3. How long has your partner owned, possessed, or had access to firearms?

4. Does your partner use the firearms for protection, hunting, recreation?

5. Does your partner use a firearm in his/her line of employment?

6. What is your partner's job? _____
7. Where does your partner store the firearms (i.e. gun safe, vehicle, closet, hidden, carries concealed on person)? _____
8. Does your partner keep the weapons loaded? _____
9. Has your partner done anything or said anything that leads you to believe or fear that he/she might use a firearm in an assault on you? What has he/she done or said? What does that behavior mean or suggest to you?

10. Has your partner ever used or pointed a firearm against you, someone else, a pet, or himself? If yes, please describe.

11. Has your partner threatened, shot, or wounded you, someone else, or a pet with a firearm? If yes, please describe.

12. Has anyone in your partner's family or a close friend of your partner's ever committed suicide or threatened to commit suicide?

13. Do you think you may be safer if the guns are removed from your partner?

14. Do you think that it may be more dangerous for you if the guns are removed? Consider the risks and benefits of removal vs. non-removal.

* **Reminder:** There is a possibility that a judge may order remedy 14.5 even if a petitioner has not specifically requested the remedy on the petition. This may influence what information you choose to share, regarding firearms, in your written statement that is included in the petition for an order of protection.

Consider the risks and benefits of removal vs. non-removal with the victim:

Each victim will have unique and special considerations that may play a role in the choices they make regarding firearms and safety. Some special considerations may include:

The victim's partner is a:

- **Law enforcement officer.**
- **Gang member or participant in other types of criminal activities.**
- **Hunter.**

**For more detailed information please see pages 8-9 in your Advocates Guide.*

Safety Planning

If a victim chooses not to use the legal remedies available to them validate the victim's choice and discuss other options that may be available to increase safety such as:

Firearm Storage:

- How are the firearms stored?
- Are there gun/trigger locks?
- Is ammunition stored separately?

Victim Access:

- Does the victim have access to the firearm?
- Would it be safer for the victim to move the firearm to a less accessible location?

Children:

- Are there children in the home?
- Help the victim talk about gun safety with her children
 - Stop!
 - Don't Touch
 - Leave Area
 - Tell An Adult