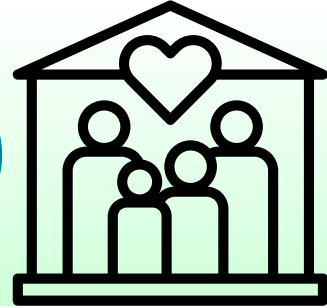


Family Safety Plan



Every family, regardless of immigration status, should have a Family Safety Plan to protect their children, finances, and home. This plan is crucial for preparing for potential emergencies. While especially important for immigrant families, a comprehensive safety plan benefits everyone. The following information will help you create your own.

What to Include in Your Safety Plan:

- Family member biographical information (see attached “Adult Form & Child Form”)
- Copies of all essential documents (see attached “List of Important Documents”)
- Information about your finances (see attached “Financial Form”)
- Documentation demonstrating that your child has your consent to travel (see attached “Travel Consent Form for Child” as an option)
- Any other relevant information specific to your situation

Step 1: Consult with an Expert About Your Immigration Options

What you will need in your family safety plan may depend on your immigration status. Consult with an immigration expert, such as an immigration attorney or a Department of Justice Accredited Representative to determine your immigration options. This toolkit includes information and resources to find reliable immigration legal assistance. See the *Community Immigration Law Center (CILC) Attorney and Representative Referral List*.

Step 2: Make a Child Care Plan

Select a Caregiver: Identify and confirm a trusted adult to care for your child. Ideally, this person should have lawful immigration status. Develop a care plan with the following:

- List of emergency contacts
- Important information about your child
- Copies of essential documents

Update School Information: Be sure to update contact information at your child’s school or daycare. Notify them who can pick up your child in case of an emergency.

Determine Travel Preferences: Decide in advance whether your child will travel with you or remain in the U.S. If applicable, complete any necessary forms to authorize your child to travel with another adult. See the attached “Travel Consent Form for Child” as an option to use.

Step 3: Put the Child Care Plan in Place

After identifying and agreeing with a potential caregiver, begin implementing your plan. Ensure they are aware of their designation as an emergency contact and know how to access your important documents and information. Both you and your child should memorize the caregiver's phone number. For added security, consider consulting a family attorney to formalize the childcare plan, designate a legal guardian, and establish power of attorney for your financial affairs.

What is a Guardianship?

The most formal arrangement is to have a court appoint a guardian for your child. The benefit of guardianship is that once someone has been appointed as a guardian by the court, that person has full legal and physical custody of your child, meaning they can make decisions on behalf of your child. Please note, when a guardian is appointed, this does not terminate parental rights, but suspends them while guardianship is in place. The drawback of guardianship is that it must be terminated by the court to regain parental rights.

What is a Power of Attorney?

A power of attorney is a written document you can sign to grant another person the authority to act on your behalf in specified ways. For example, a power of attorney may designate another person to handle your finances, make business decisions, use your money to pay your rent or mortgage, use your money to provide for your child, and other similar actions.

Step 4: Create a File of Important Documents

Organize your important documents into two distinct folders:

1. **Caregiver Folder:** This folder should contain the information your designated caregiver will need, including:
 - School records
 - Medical history and medication information
 - Important contact details
2. **Individual Family Folders:** Create separate folders for each family member that contain copies of immigration and other vital documents.

Store these folders in a secure location and let a trusted individual (friend, family member, or community member) know their location. (Consult the “List of Important Documents” in this toolkit to guide you in this process.)

Step 5: Talk to your Child and Family Members About the Plan

Without worrying them, let your child know who will pick them up from school and care for them if you are unable to. Reassure them that they will be taken care of, even for a short period of time, until you can do so again. Ensure all household members and other trusted relatives know about this plan.

Step 6: Finalize Your Family Safety Plan

Tailor Your Plan: This Family Safety Plan is designed to be flexible and adaptable. Every family is unique, with different needs and compositions. Whether you have children, pets, or a non-traditional family structure, this plan can be customized to fit your situation. Be sure to include all the information relevant to your specific circumstances.

Beyond People: While your loved ones are your top priority, extend your plan to cover other important aspects of your life. Consider arrangements for the following:

- **Home Care:** Who will look after your home while you're away?
- **Pet Care:** What will happen to your pets if you cannot take them with you? (See attached "Pet Form")
- **Belongings:** How will you ensure your valuables and essential possessions are safe?

Financial Planning: Unexpected situations can come with financial burdens, therefore, organizing your finances in advance can be helpful. Consider saving for potential legal expenses, travel costs, bonds, or other emergencies that may arise (see the attached "Financial Form").

Passports: Having passports for all family members facilitates travel and may be crucial during emergencies.

- Contact your consulate to obtain passports from your home country.
- For information on obtaining a U.S. passport, visit www.travel.state.gov or refer to the attached "Applying for a U.S. Passport" document.