

ENGLISH

# MY SAFETY PLAN

## AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



**the doj & cd**

Department:  
Justice and Constitutional Development  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**



**NHTL**  
National House of Traditional Leaders

# TABLE OF CONTENT

## **Personalized Safety Plan.....2**

What is a Safety Plan?.....	2
Why do I need a Safety Plan?.....	2
What are the important things I must consider?.....	2
Is it necessary to revise my Safety Plan?.....	2

## **Me and My Safety.....3**

STEP 1: My Personal Safety Needs .....	3
STEP 2: Safety when preparing to leave the shared residence.....	4
STEP 3: Safety during a violent attack .....	
STEP 4: Safety in my own home.....	9
STEP 5: Safety with a protection order.....	9
STEP 6: Safety at the workplace, school or in public.....	12
STEP 7: Safety and drug or alcohol abuse.....	13
STEP 8: Safety and my emotional health.....	14
STEP 9: Telephone/ toll- free/ cellular numbers I must know.....	15

# PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN

## What is a Safety Plan?

A safety plan helps me to identify action steps that I must take in order to increase my safety and that of my family against domestic violence.

I know that the domestic violence occurs when my abuser subjects me to any of the following forms of abuse:

- **Physical abuse**, e.g. when I am assaulted or threatened with violence;
- **Sexual abuse**, e.g. when I am raped, or forced to perform or watch a humiliating sexual act;
- **Emotional, Verbal and Psychological abuse**, e.g. when I am subjected to constant insults, ridicule or name calling;
- **Economic abuse**, e.g. when I am prevented from earning any income;
- **Intimidation**, e.g. if I receive threatening and fearful messages or 'sms';
- **Harassment**, e.g. when I repeatedly receive phone calls or being constantly watched to cause me fear;
- **Stalking**, e.g. when the abuser repeatedly follows me or demands to talk to me against my will;
- **Damage to property**, when the abuser intentionally damages my property without my consent, and
- **Any other controlling or abusive behaviour.**

I can draw up my safety plan when I have identified the slightest possibility of any of these forms abuse on me.

## Why do I need a Safety Plan?

I need a safety plan to help me avoid or minimize any violence against me, because I may not always know when violence will occur.

## What are the important things I must consider when I develop my Safety Plan?

- Before I develop my safety plan, I must list all the things that may expose me and my family to danger now and in the future.
- In my safety plan, I must set out action steps that I can take in order to increase my safety and that of my loved ones.
- The action steps must be easy and quick to do in a safe way.
- I must keep my safety plan in a place where the abuser cannot find it.
- It is not necessary to write my personal details on my safety plan, in case it falls into the wrong hands.

# ME AND MY SAFETY

Me and My Safety			
Name of my key Rescue Organization/ person		Tel/ Cell No	
Local Police Station		Tel/ Toll Free No	
Date of issue		Revision dates	

## Safety and My Personal Needs

It is important that I list all my personal safety needs in my plan. [Below, list all your personal needs.]

STEP 1: MY PERSONAL SAFETY NEEDS		
My Personal Safety Needs	My Personal Safety Needs	My Personal Safety Needs

I may use some or all of the action steps suggested below, depending on how relevant they are to my situation. I may also add some new steps that I find necessary to increase my safety.

STEP 2: SAFETY WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE THE SHARED RESIDENCE	
If I share residence with the abuser, it is important that I develop an Escape Plan to help me leave the scene quickly and safely. I must also ensure that the abuser does not know of my plan and where I will be escaping to. In drawing up this plan, I may use some of the following suggestions:	
2.1.	I must get an Escape Bag that is small and easy to carry, and keep it in a safe place that I can quickly reach when in need.
2.2.	I must pack my Escape Bag with all items I will need when I leave the shared residence.
2.3.	If I am an elderly or disabled person, I must also get a whistle or anything I can easily use to raise alarm.

# ME AND MY SAFETY

## STEP 2: SAFETY WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE THE SHARED RESIDENCE

### CHECKLIST OF ITEMS TO TAKE WHEN LEAVING A SHARED RESIDENCE

When I decide to leave the shared residence, I must take with me certain important items.  
I must prepare these items, and put them in a place where I can quickly grab them all at once.  
*[Make a list of your important items, and tick where appropriate.]*

2.4.	Item(s)	Is it packed in my Escape Bag?		
	PLANNING FOR ME	Yes	No	N/A
	Identity book/ Driver's licence card/ Passport			
	Refugee/ Work permit			
	Certified copy of Protection Order or any relevant Court Order			
	Medication/ Medical prescription / Medical records/ Medical Aid, Hospital or Clinic card			
	Duplicate keys, e.g. for House, Car, Escape venue, Office, Safe, etc.			
	Taxi/ Bus/ Train ticket or fee, or Rental car fee			
	Cash/Bank cards, e.g. ATM card, Credit card, Savings card, Cheque card/ book, etc.			
	Old Age Pension/ Disability or child support grant card			
	Public Phone card/ Alternative cellular phone sim card/ Pocket Telephone & Address Book			
	Birth/ Marriage/ Divorce Certificate or Ante-nuptial contract document			
	Insurance/ Bond/ Lease contract(s)/ Title Deed & other related documents			
	Business or work related documents			
	Essential clothing items			
	Other			

# ME AND MY SAFETY

	Item(s)	Is it packed in my escape bag?		
	PLANNING FOR MY CHILDREN/ DEPENDANTS	Yes	No	N/A
	School uniform, books, reports & other related items			
	Children's favourite toys			
	Essential clothing items			
	Birth/ Adoption Certificates & other related documents			
	Medication/ Medical records or cards			
	Other:			
2.5.	If necessary, I may have extra clothing or items kept elsewhere by a friend, rescue person or organization to avoid escaping with a heavy bag.			
	Full Name of the Person/ Organization	Tel/ Cell No		
2.6.	I will visit local organizations or specialists that provide services for victims of domestic violence, and with their assistance, decide which services I need.			
2.7.	I will visit local shelters to apply for accommodation I may use after I have left the shared residence. I will also ask how they operate and choose the one that will best suit my needs.			
	Name of Shelter	Tel/ Toll Free No. Cell No of the Contact Person	Services I will need	

# ME AND MY SAFETY

2.8.	I must choose an escape place that is easy to reach and unknown to the abuser. If I am an elderly or disabled person, I may also need a person who will accompany me to my escape place. I must also choose a <b>night</b> escape place that can be quickly and safely reached.		
	<b>My 1<sup>st</sup> Escape Choice &amp; Contact details</b>	<b>My 2<sup>nd</sup> Escape Choice &amp; Contact details</b>	<b>My night escape place &amp; Contact details</b>
2.9.	I must alert my rescue person at the escape place(s) that I may arrive <u>without notice</u> . If possible, I must arrange with them on how I will get access into the premises, e.g. know where house keys are kept.		
	<b>How will I gain access into 1<sup>st</sup> Escape Choice?</b>	<b>How will I gain access into 2<sup>nd</sup> Escape Choice?</b>	<b>How will I access my night escape place?</b>
2.10.	I must ask <u>at least two rescue persons</u> to seek relevant help whenever the abuse occurs, e.g. when they hear strange noises coming from the place where the abuse usually occurs, or when they receive an alarm from me.		
2.11.	I must teach my children and other people I trust in my residence on how to get immediate help before or during an attack, e.g. by calling police or signalling my rescue person/ organization.		
	<b>Name of Person / Organization</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>	<b>Type of assistance that is required/ expected</b>
	Local police	10111 1112	To quickly come and arrest the abuser.
	Ambulance		

# ME AND MY SAFETY

2.12.	I must decide on a secret code phrase, word or signal that I will use to communicate with my rescue persons when I need immediate help. <i>[Rehearse your secret code with your rescue persons. To avoid confusion, it is advised that you use ONE code with all of them.]</i>		
	<b>Code Phrase</b>	<b>Code Signal</b>	<b>Code Word</b>
	'We have that rehearsal.'	Send a blank sms or missed call, Blow a whistle 3 times, etc.	Shout, 'CPI', which your rescue person would understand as meaning 'Call Police!'
2.13.	I must identify from my residence or any other place where violence usually occurs the low and high risk areas, as well as the quick and safe escape route. I must, thereafter practice how I would safely reach the low risk area and escape route, without making the abuser aware of my intention.		
	<b>High Risk Areas</b>	<b>Low Risk Areas</b>	<b>Quick and Safe Escape Route</b>
2.14.	If the abuser sexually abuses me in our house, I will take measures to avoid being alone with him/her, e.g. I will move to a spare bedroom, change door locks, use a key block, etc. <i>[Specify how you would avoid being alone with the abuser.]</i>		
2.15.	If I am an elderly/ disabled person who is abused for the social grant, I will find ways of protecting my money from theft or robbery, e.g. keep my ATM card in a secret place, unknown to the abuser, change my ATM pin number, give my ATM card/money for safe-keeping to a person I trust, keep my ATM card separate from my pin number etc. <i>[State the action you will take to prevent this abuse from occurring or recurring.]</i>		
2.16.	If the abuser has access to my phone, I must ask my rescue persons to block their names and numbers from appearing on the call display by dialling #31#, followed by my number. I must do the same. Then, the word, 'private', will appear on the phone screen of the person called.		
2.17.	If it is not safe to use my phone, I may use a public phone, a private /secret sim card or cell phone, or any other safe and fast way of contacting my rescue persons.		
2.18.	To minimize danger around me, I must ensure that I clear every room of all items that the abuser may use to harm me during an attack, e.g. scissors, display knife holders, dangerous ornaments, etc.		



# ME AND MY SAFETY

2.19.	<p>Before I leave, I must find ways of making money to secure my financial independence, e.g.  <i>[Identify your passions and skills, and then decide what you will do in order to earn money.]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get a job or start a small business,</li> <li>• Ask for money from certain person(s) or seek financial help from certain agencies, e.g. National Youth Development Agency.</li> <li>• Open a secret savings account with a financial institution, e.g. Bank, Post Office, etc.</li> <li>• Apply for a Maintenance Order at the local Magistrate's Court for the maintenance of myself and/ or minor children,</li> <li>• When applying for a Protection Order against the abuser, I may also request the Magistrate to impose an additional condition that orders the abuser to make regular payments of a reasonable amount of money towards the maintenance of myself and/ or minor children, OR</li> <li>• Do any other thing to help me gain my financial independence. <i>[State this thing].</i></li> </ul>
2.20.	I must constantly rehearse my Escape Plan to see if it will safely work when it is time to escape. I must also periodically review it with my counsellor, rescue person(s), or any other relevant person to ensure that it provides me with maximum safety at all times.

## STEP 3: SAFETY DURING A VIOLENT ATTACK

In order to increase my safety during a violent attack, I may use some or all of the following suggestions:

3.1.	As soon as I sense that there will be a violent attack, I must move to a low risk area or towards my escape route. For instance, I must move away from a kitchen where there are knives, pens or similarly dangerous instruments, which the abuser may use to harm me.
3.2.	With or without being noticed by the abuser, I must quickly raise alarm to alert my rescue persons of the attack. I may use my secret signal or take any other action that is quick, safe and most suitable at the time.
3.3.	When it is time to escape, I must use a quick and safe escape route.
3.4.	I must quickly take my Escape Bag and other light items I planned to leave with, and then escape when it is safe to do so.
3.5.	If the situation is very serious and it is very dangerous to escape or raise alarm, I must do whatever possible to protect myself until I am out of danger. I must always keep in mind that there is always a way out from every situation.
3.6.	I must alert people at my escape place that I am coming or request them to provide me with the necessary assistance to ensure that I get there quickly and safely.
3.7.	Once I am at the safe place and have sustained injuries from the violent attack, I must immediately call for medical assistance (i.e. call for ambulance), or call the police to quickly take me to a medical practitioner.
3.8.	If possible, I may ask a friend or any person around to take photographs of my injuries for the purposes of using them as evidence in court.
3.9.	I must keep any clothing item or property that got damaged during the violent attack as they may form part of essential evidence in court.
3.10.	If I have been sexually abused during the attack, I must NOT take a bath or wash/ dispose of any clothing item that I had on; otherwise I will be washing away evidence that may be essential for DNA purposes.

# ME AND MY SAFETY

## STEP 4: SAFETY IN MY OWN HOME

It is not always possible to avoid the occurrence of a violent incidence in a residence shared with the abuser. Even when I do not live with the abuser, I must take some or all of the following safety measures to avoid or minimize harm against me:

4.1.	If the abuser has/ had the keys to my residence, I can change the door and gate locks as soon as possible. I can also ask the court to order him/ her to return all my residence keys, and prohibit him from possessing duplicates thereof.
4.2.	I can improve the security system in my home, e.g. by installing an alarm system, erecting iron bars on windows and doors or putting additional locks and key blocks, where necessary.
4.3.	If I have my bedroom to myself, I can share it with a person who is aware of the abuse so as to avoid being alone with the abuser, e.g. my sister, friend or any other person I trust.
4.4.	If the abuser is no longer staying with me, I can ask people I trust to call me or the police should they see the abuser entering my premises.
4.5.	I must teach my children, care-giver, helper or any person I stay with on what to do when the abuser enters my residence or any specified part thereof without my permission or in violation of the Protection Order. <i>[List the things you will teach them to do, e.g. call police at 10111.]</i>
4.6.	I must teach my children, day care/crèche teacher or school teacher on what to do when the abuser abducts or tries to abduct them (i.e. take them away by force) without my permission. <i>[List the things you will teach them to do]</i>

## STEP 5: SAFETY WITH A PROTECTION ORDER

I know that the law allows me to obtain a Protection Order against the abuser. Should I decide to get this Order, I must take some steps to ensure that it is issued. It is also important that I take some measures to ensure that this Protection Order is legally enforced, should the abuser break or violate it. The following are some of the steps I can take:

5.1.	I must seek all information regarding the process of applying for a Protection Order either from the Prosecutor, Clerk of the Court from Domestic Violence Division, Police, Social Worker, Counsellor, Traditional Leader or any other relevant service provider. I must know where and how to obtain a Protection Order, and also when and how it will protect me. The law demands that I must receive this information in the language in which I understand.
5.2.	If I'm a minor (i.e. below the age of 21 years), the law allows me to apply for a Protection Order against the abuser, with or without the assistance of my parent or guardian.
5.3.	If I cannot personally apply for the Protection Order by reason of fear, anxiety, depression or sickness, I may authorise <i>in writing</i> any person, who has a material interest in my well-being, to make this application on my behalf. This person may be a relative I trust, a counsellor, social worker, police official, doctor, boss/supervisor, teacher, etc.
5.4.	If necessary, I may ask the Magistrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not to disclose my new residential address when issuing this order, or</li> <li>• Not to allow the abuser from entering my residence or shared residence</li> </ul> <i>'Shared residence'</i> means the house or a place I share with the abuser.

# ME AND MY SAFETY

5.5.	If I have already obtained a Protection Order against the abuser, I may apply for the amendment of such Order to include the above prohibitions or any of the following prohibitions:		
	<b>Other Prohibitions, Conditions &amp; Obligations</b>	<b>Yes, I need it</b>	<b>No, I don't need it</b>
	Stop the abuser from entering any part of the shared residence, e.g. the main bedroom or any other room in the house.		
	Order the abuser to contribute towards the payment of rent or mortgage attached to my residence or shared residence.		
	Stop the abuser from entering my workplace/ school.		
	Add a condition to my Protection Order that a police officer accompanies me to the shared residence to collect my personal belongings.		
	Direct that my new residential address be omitted from the Protection Order so as to prevent the abuser from knowing where I stay.		
	Remove any firearm or dangerous weapon from the possession or control of the abuser.		
	Refuse the abuser access to our children, if it will be in the best interest of our children to do so, etc.		
5.6.	The abuser commits a crime even when he/she violates an Interim Protection that was properly served upon him/her.		
5.7.	<p>If the abuser violates the Protection Order (whether such Order is interim or final), I must take the following steps to have the Order legally enforced and the Warrant of Arrest executed by the police:</p> <p>Step 1: I must immediately report such violation to the <b>nearest police station</b> or alert my rescue person or any person I trust to provide the necessary assistance.</p> <p>Step 2: I must produce to the police my certified Protection Order and suspended Warrant of Arrest. If I do not have these documents with me, I can ask the police to contact any person or police station that has copies thereof, or if possible, request the police to take me to the place where I keep them.</p> <p>Step 3: The police will either give me Form 10<sup>1</sup> to complete, or assist me to write an ordinary affidavit stating how the protection order was violated by the abuser. I must <b>not withhold from the police any important information regarding this crime.</b></p> <p>Step 4: I must provide the police with full names of eyewitnesses or persons who have knowledge relevant to this crime.</p>		

<sup>1</sup> Regulations of the Domestic Violence Act, 1999

# ME AND MY SAFETY

5.8.	<p>The police may also provide me with assistance in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accompany me to collect my essential belongings from my residence or any other place,</li> <li>• Take me to safe house or escape place, if it will be dangerous to continue to stay at my house or shared residence,</li> <li>• Remove any firearm or dangerous weapon from the possession or control of the abuser, if such firearm or weapon was used or threatened to be used in the violation of the Protection Order,</li> <li>• Take me to a doctor, when necessary,</li> <li>• Give the necessary support to my children or dependants, etc.</li> </ul>																			
5.9.	<p>Besides the police, I may contact the following person, organization or government department for necessary assistance:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Who/ What to contact?</th> <th>At what number(s)?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Head Office of the National Prosecuting Authority/ Local office of the Senior Prosecutor</td> <td>012- 845 6000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Local Magistrate's Office</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community Police Forum</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-governmental organization (NGO) / Community-based Organization (CBO)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Any relevant Community Safety Organization</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>My counsellor/ social worker/ lawyer/ Legal advisor, etc.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Office of the Independent Complaints Directorate</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Any other person/ Organization</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Who/ What to contact?	At what number(s)?	Head Office of the National Prosecuting Authority/ Local office of the Senior Prosecutor	012- 845 6000	Local Magistrate's Office		Community Police Forum		Non-governmental organization (NGO) / Community-based Organization (CBO)		Any relevant Community Safety Organization		My counsellor/ social worker/ lawyer/ Legal advisor, etc.		Office of the Independent Complaints Directorate		Any other person/ Organization	
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5.10.	<p>Should the case be taken to court, I know that I have the responsibility to give evidence in court for the State. I must cooperate with the prosecutor until my case is finalized. Failure to do so may result in the abuser being found not guilty.</p>																			

# ME AND MY SAFETY

## STEP 6: SAFETY AT THE WORKPLACE, SCHOOL OR IN PUBLIC

When I am at my workplace, school or in a public place, I may do some or all of the following measures to increase my safety:

6.1.	If my Protection Order prevents the abuser from entering my workplace premises or any specified part thereof, I must provide the head security/my boss/supervisor/shop steward/ any relevant person with a certified copy of the Protection Order, as well as the recent photograph of the abuser, if necessary.
6.2.	If I am a student, I must provide the school head security/ principal/ any other relevant person with a certified copy of the Protection Order that prevents the abuser from entering the school premises or any specified part thereof. If necessary, I must attach the recent photograph of the abuser to this Order.
6.3.	When going to or leaving my workplace or school, I can ask a friend, colleague or any other person I trust to accompany me to my car or train/bus/taxi station. I must have at least three (3) Safe Buddies on whom I can rely for this purpose.
6.4.	If I use public/ private transport, I can take the following measures to increase my safety:
6.6.	If the abuser knows my shopping routine, I can use different places, days and times of shopping or always do my shopping with a person I trust. I can also take the following steps to increase my safety when I am in a public place:



# ME AND MY SAFETY

## STEP 7: SAFETY AND DRUG OR ALCOHOL ABUSE

I use alcohol or drugs, and I know that the use of these substances can reduce my ability to act quickly or wisely to protect myself and my dependants from or during an abusive incident. However, I can take the following steps to increase my safety:

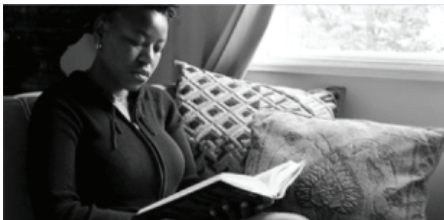
7.1.	I abuse alcohol and/or illegal drugs to forget about my abuse. I am aware that possessing illegal drugs is a serious crime. I also know that I may not be able to beat my alcohol or drug abuse on my own. Therefore I must seek help from relevant specialists or organizations:										
	<table><thead><tr><th>Name of Person or Organization</th><th>Contact Details</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>South African National Council on Alcoholism &amp; Drug Dependence (SANCA)</td><td>011- 781 6410/ 012- 542 1121</td></tr><tr><td>Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)</td><td>086 143 5722</td></tr><tr><td>Employee Wellness Programme</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>	Name of Person or Organization	Contact Details	South African National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence (SANCA)	011- 781 6410/ 012- 542 1121	Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)	086 143 5722	Employee Wellness Programme		Other	
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Employee Wellness Programme											
Other											
7.2.	Whilst I still struggle with the abuse of alcohol or illegal drugs, I can also take the following protective measures:										
7.3.	If I use legal drugs to cope with depression, anxiety, stress or for any other reason, I will ask my doctor to suggest other coping mechanisms that will increase my safety. I may also join a support group, local gym or participate in any other relevant healing programme.										



# ME AND MY SAFETY

## STEP 8: SAFETY AND MY EMOTIONAL HEALTH

I know that this abuse has affected my emotional health. I have lost some courage, hope and self-esteem. To restore my emotional health and avoid further difficult emotional challenges, I can do some of the following: *[Tick where applicable]*

8.1.	If I feel sad or depressed, I can:					
	Take a walk/ drive		Go to church/ Pray/ sing		Cook a new/ favourite recipe	
	Swim/ do any sport activity		Read an interesting book		Take a bath	
	Do gardening/ farming activity		Volunteer in community activity		Wash a car/ watch TV	
8.2.	<p>If I feel sad or depressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can talk to a person who really cares and is always supportive to me, e.g. counsellor, psychologist, spiritual leader/ pastor, support group leader/member,</li> <li>• I can repeatedly do positive self talk, e.g. 'I'm a survivor!'; 'I'm a good parent!'; 'I'm beautiful and lovely!'; 'I am an achiever!'; 'I'm useful!'; 'I'm successful!'; 'I'm brilliant!'; 'I'm a good provider!'; 'I'm strong!';</li> <li>• I can meditate or think about one special thing that will make feel good about myself,</li> <li>• I can do other activities that would make me feel good and strong.</li> </ul>					



# ME AND MY SAFETY

## STEP 9: TELEPHONE/ TOLL- FREE/ CELLULAR NUMBERS I MUST KNOW

[List here all important numbers]

9.1.	Person/ Place	Toll-Free No.	Telephone No.	Cellular No.
	Police Station/ Community Policing Forum	10111; 1112		
	Lawyer/ Legal Advisor			
	Ambulance/ Paramedics			
	Local Hospital/ Clinic/ Private or Family doctor			
	Health-Based Organizations, e.g. SANCA			
	Community Organization:			
	Childline	0800 555 555		
	Stop Gender Violence Helpline	0800 150 150		
	National Counselling Line (LifeLine)		0861 322 322	
	Street Committee / Neighbourhood Watch / Neighbours			
	Counsellor/ Psychologist			
	Traditional Leader			
	Pastor/ Spiritual Leader			
	Work/ Boss/ Supervisor/ Rescue Person/ Friend			
	Other			

### For more information, contact:

Chief Directorate: Promotion of Rights of Vulnerable Persons  
**Department of Justice and Constitutional Development**  
 Private Bag X81, Pretoria 0001  
 Tel: 012 315 1670  
[www.doj.gov.za](http://www.doj.gov.za)

SOCA Unit  
**National Prosecuting Authority**  
 Private Bag X752, Pretoria 0001  
 Tel: 012 845 6000  
[www.npa.gov.za](http://www.npa.gov.za)

**National House of Traditional Leaders**  
 Private Bag X804, Pretoria 0001  
 Tel: 012 395 4640  
[www.nhtl.gov.za](http://www.nhtl.gov.za)