



March 31, 2020

Letter from President Breanna Zwart



Hi everyone,

Greetings from...home!

You've heard it said everywhere by now, but it bears worth repeating - stay home. It really is an amazing act of social solidarity right now, and gives our nurses, doctors, and hospitals the chance to help those who need it most.

Thank you for your phone calls, emails, and texts. I've heard from so many of you. These tough times have hit all of us in different ways. Some have expressed gratitude to have a job that can be done from home. Others are trying to make ends meet under dire financial circumstances. I've heard from small business owners trying to save their businesses for their families and employees, and parents struggling to feed their children.

I'm also incredibly grateful for the video calls with friends and family - time that I'd otherwise not have. In every situation, no matter how dire, we can all try to find silver linings.

As Women's History Month comes to a close, please find a few resources below and to the right.

Safety For Survivors

While the COVID-19 pandemic requires social distancing and #StayHome, for many *home* is [a place of abuse](#). According to the CDC, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men will experience physical violence by their intimate partner at some point during their lifetimes. Intimate partner violence



The Commission and Department on the Status of Women remain dedicated to serving the City and County of San Francisco, and are here to support you and the community.

COVID-19 Resources

[Safer at Home](#) Executive Order: CA Governor Gavin Newsom has directed all Californians to heed the public health directives from the Department of Public Health, which orders all individuals living in the State of California to stay at home or at their place of residence except as needed to maintain continuity of operation of the [federal critical infrastructure sectors](#), critical government services, schools, childcare, and construction, including housing construction. The order went into effect on Thursday, March 19th and will remain in effect **until further notice**.

Real-Time COVID-19 Updates**: For the most up-to-date COVID-19 information, concerning new cases and suggested best practices for staying healthy, please visit the [San Francisco Department of Public Health's](#) page.

[San Francisco Resources Guide](#): Here you will find resources for families, businesses and workers.

[DOSW Resources Guide](#): Here you will find

alone affects more than 12 million people each year, and 30 to 60 percent of intimate partner violence perpetrators also abuse children in the household.

While families are confined to their homes, some examples of how abuse can play out include:

- **Increased Abuse:** The abuse may worsen during this time as survivors may be spending more time in contact with their abusers. Survivors may also experience new or different types of abuse during this time.
- **Isolation:** Abusers can use this time to further isolate survivors from their loved ones.
- **Parenting:** Survivors who co-parent their children with their abusers may be facing unique challenges during these times, such as barriers to visitation and/or increased exposure to the abuser due to lack of accessible childcare. For example, in order for a survivor to work, he/she/they may need to utilize their abuser for childcare.

SAFETY TIPS FROM SURVIVORS

1. Buddy System Code Word

Identify at least two people that you can contact with a “code word” to let them know if you are in trouble. Plan in advance what they should do if you send them the code word.

2. “Safest Room”

If there is an argument, identify an area of the home you can move to where there are no weapons. Make a mental note of ways for you to leave the house, apartment, or building, such as a door or window to exit. For some survivors, especially those quarantined at home with an abuser during coronavirus, no room may feel safe, so we call it the “safest rooms”. If you can at least identify the lowest risk areas, you may be able to reduce harm.

3. Planning with Children

- **Code Words:** If you have children, decide how to communicate urgency. For example, when one survivor’s daughter was little, the survivor would open her arms and the daughter knew that meant to come running to her for safety. Some survivors also create a “code word” with their children that means they should go to the “safest room” in the home that you have already decided upon.
- **Emergency Numbers:** If for some reason you are not able to make emergency calls and you

resources related to the Department on the Status of Women VAW Grant Program, as well as other city resources.

Women We Honored

The 2020 San Francisco Women's History Month theme is "Valiant Women of the Vote." The San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women and the Department on the Status of Women co-hosted the event.

Mayor Breed spoke about the need to include everyone's voice in the public process, and the importance of supporting programs and resources that assist women, families, children, and San Francisco's most marginalized residents. She presented certificates of honor to the women of the Women's March and Nadia Rahman, in recognition of their efforts to register women to vote and make San Francisco a more equitable place.

"Today, we honor the women who are helping women find their voice and get involved in government," said Mayor Breed. "These Valiant Women of the Vote are fighting for the voting rights of others—especially women, but also people of color, low-income people, and people from underserved communities. I want to thank the awardees for their contributions to our City, and I look forward to celebrating Women's History Month and continuing to lift up the achievements of all women in our community."

A certificate of honor was presented to Nadia Rahman, a Muslim American woman of color and child of immigrants who came to the United States to seek a better life for themselves and their children. She works as a digital communications expert, activist, and organizer. She uses her expertise as a marketer and storyteller to motivate and inspire others to show up and get involved in volunteer and civic engagement opportunities.

Mayor Breed also honored the co-founders of the Women's March of San

have children, give them your emergency safety numbers, if they are old enough. Please see the Resources section listed below for some emergency phone numbers.

4. Notifying the Police Before an Emergency
Ahead of time, you can notify your local police station of your concerns. Let them know the history and your concern of being in isolation due to coronavirus. It may be useful to speak with the Domestic Violence officer.

5. Exit Plan

In case you have to flee, create an exit plan ahead of time with someone who could support this need. Is there a trusted friend or relative who you can stay with?

6. Supplies, Food & Medication

Check your supplies and food. If you need food and do not have the money, check your local pantry, temple/church/mosque/etc., or other community organizations. Remember to keep your medication in the safest, easily accessible location in case of emergency.

7. Emergency Bag

Pack an emergency bag with an extra set of keys, clothes for you and your children, a pay-as-you-go cell phone, medications, copies of important documents, etc.

8. Important Documents

Make copies or take pictures of your important documents for yourself and send them to a trusted friend or relative. Important documents may include IDs, social security cards, immigration documents, birth certificates, health insurance information, and Orders of Protection. As mentioned earlier, be mindful of sending anything via phone or computer. Please use whatever method is safest for you.

9. Seeking Social Support

With social distancing and quarantining, survivors can feel even more isolated, and abusers may use further isolation as a power and control tactic. Identify trusted friends, relatives or even online support groups where you can still connect virtually. If you have a friend who may be experiencing abuse, be sure to reach out to them even more during this time.

10. Creating a "Peaceful Space"

Many survivors are feeling forced to spend more time with an abuser during the coronavirus outbreak because they may feel unsafe leaving the home, as well as unsafe staying in the home.

Francisco for their role in organizing the march and working year-round to help women register to vote, get involved in local government, and inspire women to run for office. Women's March co-founders Anne Mercogliano and Women's Commissioner Sophia Andary accepted the certificate on behalf of all the members of the Women's March of San Francisco.

Emergency Resources

All of the following resources are accessible, despite the coronavirus outbreak.

- 9-1-1: In case of an emergency at any time, please call 911.
- Emergency SOS on iPhone: Here is a link to a shortcut to using Emergency SOS to quickly and easily call for help and alert your emergency contacts if you have an iPhone: [How to Use Emergency SOS on your iPhone](#)
- Emergency Location Sharing on Androids and iPhones: Here is a link for how to set up emergency location sharing on your phone, in case you want to share your location with a trusted friend or relative in case of emergency: [How to Use Emergency Location Sharing](#)
- Sanctuary for Families Hotline: Sanctuary for Families' Hotline is still accessible from Monday-Friday from 9 AM- 5 PM. Please call us at 212-349-6009
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: The National Domestic Violence Hotline is still accessible 24/7. Please call them at 1-800-799-7233
- National Human Trafficking Hotline: The National Human Trafficking Hotline is still accessible 24/7. Please call them at 1-888-373-7888 or text them at 233-733
- Suicide Hotline: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is still accessible 24/7. Please call them at 1-800-273-8255

If you cannot leave your home, try to create a “peaceful space” for yourself in your home (if that is safe for you). You can draw pictures of a more peaceful place and put them on a wall to help you take an emotional break to visualize a more peaceful place. This is also an activity you can do with your children. You can also write positive affirmations and put them up on the wall to remind yourself of your worth.

11. Holding onto Your Plan

Consider keeping a list of your safety plan in your phone or wherever might be safe for you. Please consider what is safest for you. If you choose to write your plan somewhere, consider listing only keywords that help you remember the plan, but that would not be clear to your abuser. If this is not safe, try to memorize your plan, focusing on memorizing at least one key emergency number on your list of resources.

What to read, stream, and listen to

Finally, sharing some things that are keeping me sane as I stay inside and work to keep others safe:

Reading

- Coronavirus could be a [disaster for feminism](#). And so [it begins](#).
- How our curators [infused Soul of a Nation with Bay Area talent](#).
- [Revolutionary artworks](#) exhibited at Rainbow Sign, 1970's local hub for Black culture.
- Cleaning [decades of grime](#) off “The Hero.”
- Artist Betye Saar, now 93, on the [special power](#) in found objects.

Now streaming

- [Hillary](#): Hillary is a 2020 American documentary film about Hillary Clinton directed by Nanette Burstein. It had its premiere at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, and was selected to be shown at the 70th Berlin International Film Festival.
- [Self Made: Madam CJ Walker](#): A chronicle of the incredible story of Madam C.J. Walker, who was the first African American self-made millionaire.
- [My Brilliant Friend](#): Pseudonymous author Elena Ferrante has written four mega-popular Neopolitan novels that explore the complicated intensity of female friendship. "My Brilliant Friend" is the first in the series, and also the first to be adapted for television.

- [BookTube: Jacqueline Woodson: Lying in service of truth | BookTube](#)
- [Fundamental. Gender Justice. No Exceptions](#) The Bay area's own Global Fund for Women produced this amazing docuseries directed by the two time Academy Award winner Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy. The series profiles a distinct set of remarkable grassroots leaders working on issues from ending child, early, and forced marriage in Pakistan to pursuing LGBTQI+ liberation in Georgia. These incredible leaders are at the frontlines of fighting for gender justice, and mobilizing to write new futures for themselves, their societies, and the world. At a time of unprecedented political uprisings around the globe, *Fundamental* invites global audiences to engage directly with the dedicated and courageous leaders who are standing up for our fundamental human rights and writing new futures for themselves, their communities, and the world.
- Metropolitan Opera launched a nightly series of full-length works, [available to stream online](#) from 7:30 p.m. ET.
- Chamber Music Society has also opened its archives, making a large number of its previously recorded concerts [available to stream for free](#).

[Netflix party](#)

Netflix Party is a new way to watch Netflix with your friends online. Netflix Party synchronizes video playback and adds group chat to your favorite Netflix shows.

Creating a Work From Home playlist with friends

Quick instructions: This is best collaborated on via the chrome browser in the YT main app.

1. Create a playlist in YouTube
2. At the top look for a button that allows you to opt in as a collaborator
3. Go to [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search for any song or video.
4. Use the 3-dot menu and select Add to Playlist and select the playlist you created
5. Go back to the shared playlist and enjoy the vibe.

Some additional suggestions for ways to pass the time:

- Making comfort food
- Eating a lot of chocolate
- Donation Based Yoga (because of the two items above) <https://www.naceramekki.com/>

- Audiobooks, e-books, and movies from the SF Library
- [Kanopy](#) to find cinema collections
- [OverDrive](#) or [Axis 360](#) to find eBooks and eAudiobooks.
- Supporting local institutions and keeping the brain working with puzzles
- [Join the MOAD bookclub](#) and check out their online store
- Check out the [DeYoung store](#) for puzzles and garden tools (I picked up a few things to start my new herb garden).

Or simply remember that's ok to not stick to a schedule. It's okay to do nothing and just look at the sky.

Be well,

Breanna Zwart

President
Commission the Status of Women

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Connect with us

