



Glossary

Address Confidentiality Program – A program typically created by states, to protect victims of stalking, domestic violence, sexual assault, and other crimes. It gives victims a legal substitute address (usually a post office box) to use in place of their physical address. This address can be used whenever an address is required. First class mail sent to the substitute address is forwarded to the victim’s actual address. Although a very helpful program for many survivors, it can add several days onto mail delivery. Not all states have adopted this program as it is optional.

Advocate – There are two types of advocates for survivors of domestic violence. 1) individual advocate—works to assist one woman; 2) systems or institutional advocate—works to change the practices that produce unfair outcomes for battered women as a group. See also *Domestic Violence Advocate*.

Assets – 1) Traits someone possesses that are valuable – including higher education or special skills 2) Valuable objects someone owns, including a car, house, small business or savings account.

ATM – See *Automatic Teller Machine*.

ATM Card – A card you use to access your bank account at an ATM.
Also see Debit Card.

Attorney – A person whose job is to give legal advice and to speak for people in court; lawyer.

Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) – A machine that allows you to withdraw money from your account, check your account balance or transfer money between your checking and savings accounts.

Balance – The amount of money you have in an account. With a checking account, it’s important to keep careful records. In your check register, you must record all:

- checks you write
- deposits you make
- online transactions
- ATM withdrawals

Balloon Payment – A large final payment due at the end of a loan, typically a home or car loan, to pay off the amount the monthly payments didn’t cover. Balloon payments can occur within a fixed-rate or adjustable-rate mortgage (ARM).

Bankruptcy – A federal legal process for debtors seeking to eliminate or repay their debts. There are two types of bankruptcies for individuals. Chapter 7 allows debtors to wipe out many debts in exchange for giving up nonexempt property to be sold to repay creditors. Chapter 13 allows debtors to keep all of their property and repay all or a portion of their debts over three to five years.

Batterer – A person who inflicts abuse (physical, mental, financial and/or emotional) upon a child, spouse, or other person.

Budget – A plan you create for controlling spending and encouraging saving.

Certificate of Deposit (CD) – A type of investment that requires you to invest money for a certain length of time (term) and guarantees the same rate of return (interest) for that entire time. CDs usually require a minimum deposit and are typically guaranteed by the federal government.

Check – A written order for a financial institution (such as a bank) to pay someone with money from a checking account.
Also see personal check.

Check Card – See also *Debit Card*.

Child Support – Financial support paid by a parent for a child or children who don't live with them all the time. Depending on state law, child support can be entered into voluntarily or ordered by a court or administrative agency. The support can be supplied in different forms, including medical support. It can also be in the form of a one-time payment, regular installments paid directly to the custodial parent or regular withholdings from the non-custodial parent's wages.

Child Support Enforcement Program – The federal/state/local partnership established under Part D of the Social Security Act to locate non-custodial parents, establish paternity and establish/enforce child support orders.

COBRA – A federal law passed by Congress in 1986 that provides continuing coverage of group health benefits to employees and their families when such coverage would otherwise be terminated.

Collateral – Property that someone promises or gives to a creditor to guarantee payment of a debt. This creates what's called a secured debt. If the borrower defaults on the loan, the creditor may take the property and sell it to cover the debt.

Compound Interest – Interest calculated on the initial principal and also on the accumulated interest of previous periods of a deposit or loan.

Confidential – Kept private or communicated only in private. Advocates from domestic violence programs are typically bound by state and federal guidelines regarding the release of information. They should not acknowledge

anyone's presence or participation in a local domestic violence program or shelter without written permission to release information from the domestic violence survivor.

Credit History – A record of your borrowing and re-payment habits. Credit reporting companies track your history and supply this information to credit card companies, banks and other lenders.

Credit Rating – A score assigned by three major credit bureaus. The rating is based on your credit report, which is a detailed list of your past transactions with creditors. Most information remains on your credit report for seven years, although a bankruptcy will remain for 10 years.

Credit Report – A report that details a person's past transactions with creditors. It acts as a financial history specifically related to a person's ability to repay borrowed money.

Credit Score – A score that creditors use to evaluate someone's ability to pay when applying for credit, such as a mortgage or credit card. The higher the score or number, the lower the assumed risk by lenders. Credit scores are based on information in your credit report, such as loan (including credit card) payment history and outstanding debt.

Credit Union – A not-for-profit financial institution whose members can borrow from pooled deposits at traditionally lower interest rates than banks.

Creditor – A person or company to whom money is owed.

Custodial Parent – The parent who has either sole physical custody of the child or the parent with whom the child resides for a majority of the time.

Custody – The right to determine the residence, protection, care and education of a minor child or children, especially in a divorce or separation.

Debit Card – A card that accesses money in your checking account to make purchases. If you specify "credit" at a cash register terminal, you don't need to enter a PIN and the transaction typically clears in two days. By specifying "debit" at the terminal, you initiate a "Point-of-Sale" (POS) transaction, requiring you to "swipe" your card at the terminal and also enter your PIN. The purchase amount is immediately removed from your checking account.

Debt – Money you've borrowed from a lender. In addition to paying back the money borrowed, you almost always have to pay interest. The rate of interest charged on your debt affects how you should approach paying it off. Credit card debts generally carry the highest rates (sometimes more than 20%) and should be paid off first. You can pay off debts with lower rates, like most student loans (5 to 10%) more slowly, even while saving.

Debt Management Plan (DMP) – A debt relief option where a counseling agency works with a person's creditors to come up with a more suitable monthly payment for the person's situation. Be aware and cautious of for-profit, predatory companies. See *Module 3 for additional information*.

Debtor – A person who owes a debt to another person or financial institution.

Delinquent – Not paid in full amount or on time.

DNA Test – A test of a sample of DNA that can be used to determine whether it matches particular characteristics. It has been used to determine a person's paternity.

Document – 1) A piece of written, printed, or electronic matter that provides information or evidence or that serves as an official record; 2) To record (something) in written, photographic, or other form.

Domestic Violence – A pattern of emotional, financial, physical and/or sexual violence to maintain power over another person. Abusers are motivated by the need for control and willing to use force or coercion. Also known as Domestic Abuse.

Domestic Violence Advocate – A person who works for an organization that provides help to domestic violence victims. S/he should have received specialized training in counseling domestic violence victims. Also see *Advocate*.

Economic – Having to do with money and the production of goods and services.

Economic Relief – Assistance for money issues. Examples include child support, spousal support, mortgage and rent payment, temporary possession of property (car and clothing), restitution for medical expenses and property damage. Other examples include: lost wages, attorney's fees, and the payment of bills that are due during the time of the protection order.

Economic Security – A situation of having a stable source of income that allows for the ongoing maintenance of one's standard of living currently and in the near future.

Family Violence Options (FVO) – Federal legislation passed under the Welfare Reform Act of 1994 that provides special provisions and exception for persons who are victims of family violence.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)

– An independent agency of the United States federal government that insures deposits up to \$250,000 in financial institutions that are members

Financial Abuse – A tactic used by abusers to control victims by using access to money or other financial resources. For example, individual attempts to take total or partial control of another person’s financial resources, including money, property, an inheritance or employment income.

Financial Adviser – A professional who helps individuals manage their finances by providing advice on money issues such as investments, insurance, mortgages, college savings, estate planning, taxes and retirement, depending on what the client requests

Financial Aid – Any grant or scholarship, loan, or paid employment offered to help a student meet his/her college expenses. Such aid is usually provided by various sources such as federal and state agencies, colleges, high schools, foundations, and corporations.

Financial Institution – A business that focuses on dealing with financial transactions, such as investments, loans and deposits. Typical financial institutions are banks, trust companies, credit unions, insurance companies and investment dealers.

Good Cause – A reason to cease; for example, to discontinue trying to collect child support from a non-custodial parent, support or withdrawing a sanction or penalty for failure to comply with a program requirement, i.e. job search participation.

Identity Theft – The illegal use of someone else’s personal identifying information (such as a Social Security number) in order to get money or credit.

Insurance – When you buy insurance, you agree to pay a company a certain amount each year or month, called a premium, in return for coverage of the costs of certain future problems. Everyone should have health insurance, which will assist with most types of medical treatment and care. In most states, car owners are legally required to purchase some form of auto insurance. Mortgage lenders will also require homeowners to carry homeowners insurance. Anyone with children should consider life insurance and disability insurance.

Interest – The amount paid by a borrower to a lender as compensation; the interest charged is typically directly related to ‘calculated risk’.

IOU – “I Owe You” - a signed document agreeing to a debt.

Liabilities – Things that someone is responsible for paying; such as debts or liens.

Loan Principal – The amount you still owe on a loan. The principal goes down as you make payments. You pay interest each month on the remaining principal until it’s paid off.

Local Domestic Violence Program – A community-based, not-for-profit organization committed to providing free and confidential services to domestic violence victims and their children. Services can include crisis support, safe shelter, counseling, legal advocacy and information and referral services. Advocates from domestic violence programs often accompany survivors to court, social service organizations and police stations. It’s not a requirement that

participants who experience abuse stay at a shelter to get help from these programs.

Mandated Reporter – A person (typically a teacher, nurse, counselor, advocate, police officer, etc.) who is legally required to report observed or suspected abuse of children or vulnerable adults (frail, elderly, persons with disabilities, etc.). Exact laws and mandated professionals vary, depending on state laws.

Mediation – Intervention between conflicting parties to promote reconciliation, settlement or compromise. Mediation should not be recommended in cases involving domestic violence, as the process requires both parties to have equal power for fair negotiation and overall safety.

Medicaid – A joint federal and state program that helps low-income individuals or families pay for the costs associated with medical and custodial care, provided they qualify. Although largely funded by the federal government, Medicaid is run by the states where coverage may vary.

Money Market Account – A federally insured savings account that typically pays higher dividends than a basic savings account. You are limited to six transactions a month, according to federal regulations. A transaction is any amount deposited or withdrawn.

Mortgage – A loan used to purchase real estate, typically a home, usually including the land the home is built on.

National Domestic Violence Hotline – A hotline available to persons who are experiencing domestic violence. Highly-trained advocates are available 24/7 to talk confidentially with

anyone experiencing domestic violence, seeking resources or information, or questioning unhealthy aspects of their relationship. 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).

Net Pay – The amount of money you earn minus any taxes or other deductions such as Social Security. It’s the amount you actually receive or that is deposited.

Online Banking – Online banking is also known as internet banking, e-banking, or virtual banking. It is an electronic payment system that enables customers of a bank or other financial institution to conduct a range of financial transactions through the financial institution’s website.

Order of Protection – A document issued by a court and signed by a judge to help protect you from harassment or abuse. In an Order of Protection, a judge can set limits on your partner’s behavior. Among other things, a judge can order your partner to provide temporary financial assistance to you and your children.

Order to Vacate – To give up possession of property (such as an apartment) and leave the area totally empty of contents.

Partner – Individuals may refer to their partner as their girlfriend/boyfriend, lover, roommate, life partner, wife/husband, spouse or significant other.

Paternity – The fact or state of being a father; fatherhood.

Payday Lender – A person or group that offers short-term loans, in advance of payday, at typically very high rates of interest.

Pell Grant – Money the government provides for students who need it to pay for college. Grants, unlike loans, do not have to be repaid. Eligible students receive a specified amount each year under this program.

Personal Check – A check drawn against funds deposited in your personal checking account.

Personal Identification Number (PIN) – The code you need to access your accounts through your check card or ATM card at an ATM or POS (Point of Sale) terminal.

Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act – Legislation passed in 1996, also known as welfare reform. This act significantly changed the American social safety net. Among other provisions, it placed time limits on the assistance, reductions to immigrants and included stiff work requirements. Additionally, it placed a five-year lifetime maximum on benefits, although states can and often do, reduce that lifetime limit down even further.

Power of Attorney – A formal, legally valid document that authorizes one person or party to act on behalf of another.

Prepaid Tuition Plan – A method for paying future college tuition costs at current prices. Prepaid tuition plans allow the account holder to purchase tuition credits at their present price even though they will not be used until a future year, when tuition costs will have most likely increased. Plans are state sponsored and only available in some states, but it is possible to participate in a prepaid tuition plan outside of the account holder's current state of residence.

Pre-payment penalty – A fee imposed on a borrower who pays off a loan (usually a

mortgage) before its due date. Lenders impose this kind of fee to encourage borrowers to hold a debt –and keep paying interest on it –for the whole term of the loan.

Principal – see *Loan Principal*.

Pro se – An individual representing him or herself in a legal matter.

Property – Something (as land, goods, or money) that is owned.

Public Assistance – Money or benefits (food stamps, child care, etc.) granted from the state/ federal government to a person or family to assist with day-to-day living expenses. Eligibility is based on need.

Referral – An act of sending someone to a person or place where what the person wants or needs can be met.

Revolving Credit – A line of credit that individuals and businesses can borrow from and pay back as needed (example: credit cards).

Safety – The state of being safe; freedom from the occurrence or risk of injury, danger, or loss.

Safety Deposit Box – A box rented from a financial institution and can be accessed with keys, pin numbers or some other security pass.

Social Security Administration (SSA) – A U.S. government agency that runs the social insurance programs in the United States. It covers a wide range of social security services, such as disability, retirement and survivors' benefits.

Social Security Benefits – The money benefits received by retired workers who have paid into the Social Security system during their working years. Benefits are paid out on a monthly basis to

retired workers and their surviving spouses. They are also paid to those who are permanently and totally disabled according to the strict conditions set forth by the Social Security Administration.

Spousal Support – Payment for support of an ex-spouse (or a spouse while a divorce is pending) ordered by the court; alimony.

Stock – A type of investment that represents a share of ownership in a company. You can make money on stock through payment of stock dividends and increases in the stock share price. Dividends are the payment mechanism companies use to distribute earnings to shareholders.

Subsidy – Financial assistance given by one person or government to another, to offset the cost of an item or expense.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – A federal program funded by general tax revenues (not Social Security taxes). It helps aged, blind and disabled people who have limited income and resources by providing monthly cash payments to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter.

Survivor – A person who continues to function or prosper in spite of opposition, hardship, or setbacks.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) – Assistance payments made on behalf of children who don't have the financial support of one of their parents by reason of death, disability or continued absence from the home. The program typically requires parents participate in job preparation, work and support services.

Term – A set amount of time regarding the investment period for a financial product. This usually refers to the amount of time before a loan must be completely repaid. It also refers to the amount of time funds in a certificate account must be on deposit before they can be withdrawn without penalty.

Transitional Housing – A program or project that is designed to provide housing and appropriate supportive services to homeless persons to assist movement to independent living. Many communities have Transitional Housing specifically for domestic violence survivors.

TTY – A special device that lets people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech-impaired use the telephone to communicate, by allowing them to type text messages. A TTY is required at both ends of the conversation in order to communicate.

Waive – To refrain from insisting on or enforcing (a rule, penalty, or requirement); to do away with a requirement.

Withdrawal – The taking of money out of a checking or savings account.