

Address Confidentiality Program



Welcome to the Safe at Home Program Orientation

Address Confidentiality Program



Background

- The Missouri State Highway Patrol reported 38,717 incidents of domestic violence and sexual assault in 2007.
- 30 other states have adopted or are in the process of implementing address confidentiality programs.
- Revised Missouri Statute: 589.660 – 589.683
- Code of State Regulations: 15 CSR 30-70
- Effective: August 28, 2007



Program Overview

The goal of the Safe at Home Address Confidentiality Program is to help survivors of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault and stalking stay safe by keeping their address out of the hands of their assailants.

Safe at Home has two basic parts:

- 1.) The program provides a designated address for survivors to use when creating new records with state and local agencies and the courts.
- 2.) The program provides participants with a cost-free forwarding service for first-class mail, legal documents and certified mail.

*no jurisdiction
over old records*



Application Assistant

- Potential participants must meet in person with a registered Application Assistant to enroll in the program.
- An Application Assistant is an employee of a state or local agency, or of a nonprofit program that provides counseling, referral, shelter or other specialized service to survivors of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault or stalking.
- Must be trained and registered by the Secretary of State.
- Receives registration for 2 years.
- Assists in the completion and filing of application materials.

*SOS has 5 business days to
respond to application*

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Program Application Process

- A participant must have good reason to believe that she or he is a victim of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault or stalking and fears further violent acts from the assailant.
- The participant should be in the process of relocating or have recently relocated to an address unknown to his or her assailant and that is not part of any public record.
- Application is made in person with a registered Application Assistant.

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Program Application Process

- The Application Assistant explains the program services and participant responsibilities and determines if Safe at Home should be a part of the client's overall safety plan.
- Upon receiving a properly completed Safe at Home application via an Application Assistant, the Safe at Home program manager certifies the applicant as a program participant for 4 years.
- The participant is assigned an authorization code, a voter code if he or she registers to vote or updates his or her voter registration, and is issued an authorization card that identifies the individual as a Safe at Home participant.

120 participants
parent + child
statewide

total was
100 participants
in the 1st yr.

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Authorization Card Sample

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STATE OF MISSOURI

Signature
JANE DOE

has been certified by the Secretary of State as a participant in the Safe at Home program in accordance with RSMo 589.660 – 589.683.

Authorization # Voter Code # Expires MM/DD/YY

Jane Doe

PO Box 1409
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1409

Authorization code, name, post office box and zip code **MUST** be used on all correspondence.

If you have any questions regarding the Safe at Home address confidentiality program or the valid use of this authorization card, please call toll-free: (866) 509-1409
OR
E-mail: safeathome@sos.mo.gov

FRONT

BACK

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Mail Forwarding Service

- Safe at Home provides a cost-free forwarding service for first-class mail, legal documents and certified mail to participants using the designated address.
- Mail addressed to a participant at the designated address should appear as follows:

Jane Doe

PO Box 1409
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1409

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Mail Forwarding Service

- Mail received at the designated address will be forwarded the same day to the confidential mailing address provided by the participant.
- Delivery of a participant's mail may be delayed as much as 5 to 7 days.
- The Secretary of State is designated as each participant's legal agent for service of process and receipt of certified mail, first-class mail and legal documents.
- When service of process or certified mail has been received by Safe at Home, it is considered received by the participant.

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Agency Responsibilities

- Program participants use the designated address when creating new records with state and local agencies and the courts.
- When presented with the Safe at Home authorization card, state and local agencies and the courts must accept the designated address as the person's address.
- Agencies cannot require the participant to disclose his or her confidential address.
- State and local agency and court employees may photocopy the participant's authorization card.

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Agency Responsibilities

- Questions regarding the use of the authorization card may be directed to the Safe at Home toll-free telephone number listed on the back of the card.
- Agencies that require verification of residency in a service area or district (schools, libraries, county/city services) may request confirmation from the Safe at Home program office and it may be verified without revealing the confidential address.
- Program regulations provide procedures for specific information requests from agencies or law enforcement.

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Contact Information

Safe at Home

Brenda Sites, Program Manager

PO Box 1409

Jefferson City, MO 65102-1409

PHONE (866) 509-1409/FAX (573) 522-1525

SafeAtHome@sos.mo.gov

www.MOSafeAtHome.com

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PO Box 1409

Jefferson City, MO 65102-1409

TOLL FREE PHONE (866) 509-1409

FAX (573) 522-1525

safeathome@sos.mo.gov

The Safe at Home Program became law on August 28, 2007, as an act of the First Regular Session of the 94th General Assembly. (RSMo 589.660 – 589.683) (15 CSR 30-70)

The goal of the Safe at Home program is to help survivors of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, or stalking, who have relocated or are about to relocate, in their effort to keep their assailants from finding them. The Safe at Home program provides for a designated address to use when creating new records with state and local agencies and the courts and acts as a mail forwarding service. These services limit an assailant's ability to access public information which could identify the new location of a victim who is in the program. Safe at Home is not a witness protection program; rather it is a mail forwarding service.

DESIGNATED ADDRESS SERVICE

Each Safe at Home participant is granted the use of a Jefferson City Post Office box address as her or his designated address. The designated address has no relation to the participant's confidential address. All participants use the same Post Office box as designated by the program. First-class mail, legal documents, and certified mail, are sent to the Post Office box and then forwarded, **at no cost to the participant**, to the participant's confidential mailing address. Service of process is accepted by the Secretary of State and the documents are forwarded by certified mail, at no cost to the participant, to the participant's confidential mailing address.

Safe at Home also allows participants to use the designated address when creating records with state and local agencies and the courts. Program participants can register to vote confidentially, obtain a driver's license and make public records without fear that those records will put them at risk of being located by their assailant.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Must have good reason to believe that she or he is a victim of domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, or stalking and fears further violent acts from her or his assailant
- Has relocated or is about to relocate to an address unknown to the assailant and that is not part of any public record;
- Is a resident of Missouri or is about to become a resident of Missouri;
- Is at least 18 years old, or a parent or guardian acting on behalf of a minor or incapacitated person;
- Is willing to designate the Secretary of State as their agent to receive legal documents, service of process, and first-class and certified mail; and

- Understands there will be a 5 to 7 day mail delay (since mail first comes to Safe at Home and is then forwarded to her or his confidential mailing address).

HOW TO APPLY

Qualified applicants may apply for program participation at a local qualified agency. Agencies qualified by the Secretary of State may include state or local agencies or nonprofit programs that provide counseling, referral, shelter, or other specialized services to victims of domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault or stalking. Please call Safe at Home or access our website for a listing of statewide Application Assistants who can assist an interested person. Application Assistants will:

- Work with victims to integrate the Safe at Home program into their overall safety plan;
- Assist potential program participants in the application process; and
- Forward the application to the Safe at Home office.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SAFE AT HOME PARTICIPANT

Upon receipt of a properly completed application by the Safe at Home program, a participant is certified as a program participant for four years and will be issued a Safe at Home authorization card. The authorization card will contain an authorization number unique to each program participant. When using the designated address, the authorization number must be included in the address. Because mail from all participants comes to the same Post Office box, the authorization code is an important identifier that will help to expedite the mail forwarding process.

Once accepted into the program, participants should use the designated address when creating records and accessing services with state and local agencies and the courts. The Safe at Home authorization card must be presented to an agency when requesting to use the designated address.

Participants are required to notify the Safe at Home program within ten days of any changes in their name or mailing address in order to remain in the program.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

State and local agencies and the courts must accept Safe at Home designated addresses for any record, unless the agency has received prior approval from the Secretary of State for statutory or administrative exceptions. Agency employees may request verification of a program participant by asking for the participant's authorization card. A photocopy of the authorization card may be placed in the participant's agency file and shall serve as confirmation of Safe at Home participation. The authorization card does not serve as a legal form of identification.

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How Safe at Home Works: It's as simple as 1, 2, 3!

1 A survivor of domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, or stalking relocates to an address unknown to their assailant.

2 The survivor completes the Safe at Home application with the assistance of an Application Assistant registered by the Missouri Secretary of State. The applicant must have good reason to believe that she or he is a victim of domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, or stalking and fears further violent acts from her or his assailant.

3 Once the applicant is approved by the Safe at Home Program, the applicant will be given a designated address. This address may be used by the participant as her or his address on records when an address is required by state and local agencies and the courts.

The Safe at Home Address Confidentiality Program is administered by the Missouri Secretary of State's office. For more information, please call (866) 509-1409, e-mail SafeAtHome@sos.mo.gov or visit www.MoSafeatHome.com for more information.