

Do you have questions about **how to stay safe** while using technology? Do you suspect that your abuser may be **tracking you or finding out information about you** using technology (like GPS, your phone, social media sites, etc.)? Are you wondering what role technology might play in your **TPO hearing**? Review these tips and ask an advocate in the Safe Families Office if you have any questions.

TRACKING Tracking can happen through cell phones, cell phone applications that use your location, social media, friends & family, or through tracking devices in cars.

- 1** If it is safe for you to do so, **disable GPS/location tracking services** such as “Find my iPhone” and “Find my Friends” which may show your location. You can do this through your phone’s settings or by calling your service provider.
- 2** **Do not accept** a computer, cell phone, or tablet/iPad as a gift. Devices like these could have **pre-installed spyware, keyloggers, or trackers**. Do not leave any such devices unattended or lend them to anyone.
- 3** Be careful of opening **e-greeting cards, suspicious attachments, or website links** on your devices. Links like these could secretly install spyware on your device.

SOCIAL MEDIA It’s important to check on your social media privacy and security settings to ensure that your abuser cannot access your information.

- 1** If it is safe for you to do so, **change your email and social media passwords and/or phone lock screen code**. Make sure to choose something your abuser can’t guess.
- 2** **Review the privacy and security settings** on your social media accounts. Usually, you can set your accounts to be private so the abuser can’t see your activity. You can also opt out of having your profile be searchable on the social media website and search engines (like Google).
- 3** Use **different usernames and profile pictures** for each social media app/website, and have **more than one email account**. It is harder for your abuser to find you if your profile information is not the same on each social media account.

DURING THE TPO PROCESS You may be able to use **photos, screen shots, or other electronic evidence from your phone during the Temporary Protective Order process**. For that reason, you may want to make sure to keep this information as evidence. **You should back-up your phone** in case anything happens to the device.

You can take screen shots of abusive messages or threats. Ask an advocate if you don’t know how to take a screen shot or back-up other evidence.

Are you concerned about your ability to continue using technology while maintaining your safety and privacy? Check out these resources:

<https://www.safeshepherd.com/advocates> - take things off the internet

Techsafety.org – social media guides (like Facebook and Twitter) and general safety and privacy tips