

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER PROGRAM STANDARDS

The overall goal of these standards is to increase victims' safety and ensure victims have access to services that meet their self-defined needs. Program services should be relevant to the populations that exist within the community.

FACILITY STANDARDS

1. *Facility: The facility shall comply with all applicable codes, ordinances and licensing regulations of the state and/or local jurisdiction in which the facility is located.*
2. *Policies: There shall be written policies and procedures regarding:*
 - a. *Measures for securing the facility and its occupants.*
 - b. *Security of belongings for residents.*
 - c. *Provisions for food for shelter residents. Programs shall ensure that culturally appropriate food is available.*
 - d. *Provisions of access for residents to clothing and personal hygiene items, including those that are culturally appropriate.*
 - e. *Available laundry facilities at no charge to the residents.*
 - f. *Disaster plans and procedures for meeting potential emergencies such as fire and severe weather.*
 - g. *Designated smoke-free and smoking common areas.*
 - h. *Arrival and departure.*

I. SERVICES

- A. **Shelter.** Programs shall provide temporary emergency housing for victims of domestic violence and their children. Should the shelter be unable to provide housing, it will utilize the database on available shelter bedspace or directly contact other shelters or safe housing providers, to locate other appropriate temporary housing options.
- B. **General Advocacy.** Programs shall provide assistance in meeting a domestic violence victim's self-defined needs through:
 1. **General services** which must include, but are not limited to: a 24-hour staffed office within the defined service area, 24-hour telephone access so that one telephone call enables a victim of domestic violence to speak directly to an advocate, make arrangements for emergency housing and transportation to safety; accompaniment to appointments as appropriate, and coordination of services provided by other agencies.
 2. **Information and referral** to resources, which may include but are not limited to: childcare, services for children, income maintenance, legal services, food and clothing, medical services, transitional housing resources, and social services.
- C. **Legal Advocacy.** Programs shall provide assistance in pursuing civil, criminal and family court remedies.
- D. **Group Interaction.** Programs shall provide regular, ongoing opportunities for group interactions/gatherings among victims of domestic violence through formal support groups and/or informal settings.

II. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Programs shall provide a formalized orientation and training for new employees, volunteers and board/advisory members.

Programs shall provide for ongoing training opportunities for their employees and volunteers, utilizing both in-house and outside training sources.

III. COMMUNITY EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Programs shall provide at least four presentations to community service groups, civic organizations, special populations, professional organizations or school groups, on the scope of domestic abuse, prevention strategies, available agency services, the root causes of domestic abuse and the need for social change.

Programs shall also impact public awareness through various means such as planned events, distributing brochures, contact cards and posters, media use, inclusion in community provider directories, local phone book listing, and by other means as resources allow.

IV. SYSTEMS CHANGE & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Programs shall work to improve the community's and the system's responsiveness to the needs of domestic violence victims and their children through training and informal contact with persons having contact with them. This may include those working in law enforcement, court services, legal representation, corrections, health, education, social services, and the ministry. Systems change includes such activities as monitoring, influencing and developing operational policies, procedures and practices, and community organizing. The programs shall work to secure sensitive, effective policies, procedures, protocols and practices for working with victims of domestic violence. Systems change efforts prioritize the needs and rights of victims, rather than institutions.

V. PARTNERING

Programs shall identify and be knowledgeable of other professional service providers and system's staff in their area. Programs shall actively work to improve their relationship with involved agencies to better serve victims of domestic violence and their children. Programs shall partner with agencies in order to promote cooperative service, better manage resources, and to enhance the overall response to victims of domestic violence. Partnering may involve cooperative training and community events, professional memberships, collaborative workgroups and agreements, information sharing, community provider networks, referral agreements, interagency feedback and service evaluations, administrative and programmatic resource sharing, and other creative means.