

# Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence

## Program Standards



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# Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence Program Standards

## Introduction

The Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence (NNADV) defines "domestic violence" as: a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners or family members.

To address the needs of individuals experiencing domestic violence, NNADV supports community-based organizations throughout the state to provide a range of counseling, advocacy, and residential services. Individuals experiencing domestic violence include:

1. Any adult who is subjected to assaultive or coercive behaviors by a spouse or former spouse, any other person to whom the person is related by blood or marriage, any other person with whom the person is or was actually residing, any other person with whom the person has had or is having a dating relationship, any other person with whom the person has a child in common, the minor child of any of those persons, the person's minor child or any other person who has been appointed the custodian or legal guardian for the person's minor child. This person is referred to as the Primary Victim.
2. A child, under the age of 18, who is a dependent of the Primary Victim or an individual under the age of 18 experiencing intimate partner violence or violence in a dating relationship.

To assure the protection, health, safety, and well-being of persons receiving domestic violence services in Nevada, NNADV has developed a set of program and service standards for its member programs. All member programs should meet the standards set forth in Sections C1 through C26. Member programs with on-site residential/shelter components should meet all the standards set forth in Sections C1 through C26 and Sections S1 through S8. Member programs with both on-site and off-site residential/shelter/safe-homes components should meet the standards set forth in Sections C1 through C26 and Sections S1 through S9.

## Core Standards

### C1 BASIC SERVICES

Domestic violence programs should provide the following support and advocacy services to battered women, their children, and other domestic violence victims:

- 24-hour hotline
- Crisis intervention
- Safety planning
- Emergency shelter (or access to), which includes safe homes and/or hotel/motels
- Domestic violence counseling/advocacy
- Support/education groups
- Children's services
- Legal systems advocacy
- Other social service advocacy
- Emergency transportation

- Information and referral

In addition, domestic violence programs, to the extent possible, should engage in the following:

- Public education and outreach activities;
- Training to or with community agencies/systems; and
- Systems advocacy activities initiated to effect policy or procedural change.

## **C2 EMPOWERMENT MODEL**

All domestic violence programs should utilize a self-help and empowerment service model. Such a model:

- protects and promotes safety for all victims and other family members;
- builds on the strengths and resources of individuals and families;
- offers options and support for independent decision-making based on specific individual and family needs and circumstances; and
- assists individuals and families to obtain protection and needed services that are respectful of cultural and community characteristics.

## **C3 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### **C3.1 Statement of Purpose and Philosophy**

The organization has a well-defined, written mission statement that is understood by the Board, administration, staff, and volunteers of the agency. The organization reviews the statement on an annual basis.

The organization recognizes in its mission statement, vision statement, or core values statement that domestic and sexual violence and stalking are social issues and are not based on individual pathology. The organization further recognizes that abused women have numerous alternatives available to them regarding their future and they have the right and ability to choose among them.

### **C3.2 Status as a Non-Profit Organization**

A domestic violence program should be either:

**C3.2.1** A freestanding, independent domestic violence organization privately incorporated in the State of Nevada as a non-profit organization, with a governing board of directors that serves voluntarily and maintains legal responsibility for the operations of the organization. Its statement of purpose indicates that a principal purpose is to operate programs and services for survivors of domestic violence and their children.

OR

**C3.2.2** A private, non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Nevada that has established within its program of multiple services, a domestic violence project or program component dedicated to providing services for survivors of domestic violence and their children. The organization has a governing board of directors that serves voluntarily and maintains legal responsibility for the operations of the organization.

## **C4 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **C4.1 Functions**

All domestic violence programs should have a governing board of directors, which is organized to fulfill the following basic functions for the organization:

- Determining the mission and purpose of the organization,
- Selecting a chief executive who directs the organization's activities,
- Supporting the chief executive and assessing her/his performance,
- Ensuring effective organizational planning for short-term and long range activities,
- Ensuring that adequate resources are available to support organizational activities,
- Ensuring the effective management of the organization's resources,
- Determining, monitoring, and strengthening the organization's programs and services,
- Enhancing the organization's public standing,
- Ensuring the legal and ethical integrity of the organization and in maintaining accountability, and
- Recruiting and orienting new board members and assessing board performance.

### **C4.2 Composition**

**C4.2.1** Board members should be selected based upon their ability and willingness to assure good governance by providing fiscal and program oversight and by participating in fundraising activities that enable the organization to fulfill its stated mission and purpose.

**C4.2.2** The board should be representative of the communities in which it operates and include at least one formerly battered woman.

## **C5 BY-LAWS**

The board of directors of a domestic violence program should adopt a set of by-laws that sets forth how it will fulfill the functions enumerated in section [C3.1]. The by-laws should be consistent with established practices for non-profit organizations and should minimally include the following:

**C5.1** Provisions for the timely selection of members and officers;

**C5.2** Term of board membership;

**C5.3** Rules for conducting board meetings;

**C5.4** A statement of the duties of corporate officers;

**C5.5** A listing of board committees and their duties;

**C5.6** A description of the board's relationship to the chief executive and a delineation of the powers of the chief executive;

**C5.7** A conflict-of-interest policy delineating how board members should avoid conflicts that could compromise the organization;

- C5.8** Quorum requirements, which should be a simple majority of the members of the board of directors;
- C5.9** A description of fiscal matters, including provisions for an annual audit or financial review; and
- C5.10** Provisions to be made in case of agency closing, including the payment of all agency liabilities; a plan for the disposition of program records, property, and net assets; and notification to NNADV of the Board's decision to close the program.

## **C6 ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

All domestic violence programs should have the following:

- C6.1** Documentation of their legal propriety, including articles of incorporation, 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, and corporate by-laws;
- C6.2** A Federal Employer Identification Number issued by the Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Treasury Department;
- C6.3** Evidence of the annual filing of the organization's board of directors with the Nevada Secretary of State;
- C6.4** A record book of minutes of meetings of the board of directors. Minutes should include the date of the meeting, a listing of those in attendance and those absent, a record of actions taken and a record of program and committee reports. Minutes should reflect that the board meets on a regularly scheduled basis, at least quarterly;
- C6.5** A written operations manual delineating program policies and operating procedures, which should be updated annually;
- C6.6** An annual operating plan approved by the board of directors. The plan should include program goals and measurable objectives, and a budget for the operating expenses of the program and revenues from public and private sources.

## **C7 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

### **C7.1 Staff Management**

- C7.1.1** There should be written personnel policies that include, at minimum, the following:
  - Hiring practices
  - Employee compensation and benefits
  - Staff training/staff development
  - Grievance procedures and disciplinary actions
  - Non-discrimination/equal opportunity policy
  - Sexual harassment and bullying policy
  - Substance abuse policy
  - Workplace violence policy
  - Conflict of interest policy

- Code of Ethics
- Whistleblower policy

**C7.1.2** There should be written job descriptions for all program positions including, but not limited to:

- Job title;
- Job classification;
- Tasks and responsibilities of the job;
- The requisite skills, knowledge, and experience; and
- Hours of work.

**C7.1.3** Job descriptions should be regularly reviewed and updated, as needed.

**C7.1.4** Individual staff should be evaluated, at minimum, on an annual basis.

**C7.1.5** There should be an orientation program for new staff members that serves to introduce them to the program's philosophy, goals, policies, and procedures.

**C7.1.6** There should be written procedures to address on-going staff training.

**C7.1.7** A written record should be maintained for each staff member documenting all training completed by the individual. This documentation should be maintained in each individual's personnel file.

**C7.1.8** The program should have written policy/procedures for the confidential maintenance of personnel records.

**C7.1.9** Employees should have the right to inspect their own records; to request the correction or removal of inaccurate, irrelevant, outdated or incomplete information from their records; and to submit rebuttal data or memoranda to their own records.

## **C7.2** Fiscal Management

**C7.2.1** All fiscal systems should comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

**C7.2.2** The program should operate in accordance with an annual budget approved by the board of directors prior to the beginning of each fiscal year.

**C7.2.3** The program should create and maintain financial reports on at least a quarterly basis, accurately reflecting the financial activity of the program including a comparison of actual to budgeted revenue and expense. The statements should identify and explain any significant variation between actual and budgeted revenues and expenses.

**C7.2.4** Financial statements should be provided to the board of directors, at minimum, on a quarterly basis.

**C7.2.5** The program should have written policies governing the following matters, where applicable:

- Investment of the assets of the organization;

- Purchasing practices;
- Reserve funds;
- Compensation, including salary and benefits;
- Expense account reporting; and
- Earned income.

**C7.2.6** The program should have a written internal control policy and procedure that describes the manner in which financial transactions are received and recorded within the organization, including:

- Segregation of duties;
- Incoming and outgoing mail;
- Bank deposits;
- Issuing payroll checks;
- Coding and documenting financial transactions;
- Printing and signing checks;
- Petty cash and gift card management;
- Expense account reporting and reimbursement;
- Reconciliation of internal records;
- Access to accounting software;
- Written agreements from independent contractors and consultants.

**C7.2.7** The program should ensure that IRS Form 990 and other tax documents are filed in a timely fashion.

**C7.2.8** For programs using accounting software, the software should allow for entry and tracking of payroll, accounts receivable, and accounts payable. The software should have the ability to produce a general ledger.

**C7.2.9** Cash Receipts or Accounts Receivable Journals should be maintained and should reflect a separate accounting of income received. For programs using an accrual basis of accounting, the journal should also reflect the month in which the income is realized.

**C7.2.10** Cash Disbursements or Accounts Payable Journals should be maintained and should reflect a separate accounting of actual costs. For programs using an accrual basis of accounting, the journal should also reflect the month in which the expenses are incurred.

**C7.2.11** A Payroll Journal should be maintained and should reflect a separate accounting of all payroll transactions pertaining to employees (full or part-time). The journal should identify gross salary, benefits and taxes deducted, and net salaries paid for each employee. Appropriate payroll deductions should be made in a timely manner and appropriately documented by the program.

**C7.2.12** Programs that outsource payroll information to a payroll administrator for processing should maintain payroll records by making appropriate journal entries into the general ledger. All records received from the payroll administrator should be retained by the program for audit purposes.

**C7.2.13** All financial transactions should be appropriately recorded in a timely fashion.



## **C8 FUNDRAISING**

- C8.1** The organization should have a diversified (government, private, foundation, etc.) funding base to meet core services.
- C8.2** The organization should develop an annual fundraising plan, which includes amounts needed to meet organizational goals and a plan to raise those funds.
- C8.3** The board should create a fundraising policy, including regulation of how funds are raised and/or obtained, and monitoring and approving the allocation of funds raised.
- C8.4** The board should have fundraising responsibility for the organization.

## **C9 VOLUNTEERS/INTERNS**

- C9.1** The program should establish requirements for selection of volunteers/interns and provide orientation, supervision, and periodic evaluation. Lines of supervision should be defined clearly.
- C9.2** The program should have written policies and procedures for utilizing volunteers and/or student interns.
- C9.3** There should be a written job description for each volunteer/intern position. Volunteer job descriptions should be developed utilizing the same format as those for staff. Job descriptions should be provided to each volunteer/intern.
- C9.4** There should be a file maintained for each volunteer/intern that includes, at minimum, a signed confidentiality statement, documentation of all training completed, and a job description.
- C9.5** Each program should designate at least one staff person (paid or unpaid) to be responsible for recruiting volunteers/interns on an annual basis at minimum.
- C9.6** Volunteers/interns providing direct services should complete at least the 20 hours of domestic violence training outlined in Appendix A. They also should participate in four additional hours of domestic-violence related training annually.
- C9.7** Training for volunteers/interns not providing counseling/advocacy services should be determined by the volunteer's responsibilities, the amount of time contributed by the volunteer, and administrative considerations related to the availability of training.
- C9.8** Volunteers/interns who do not provide direct services should receive a basic orientation about the duties they perform. At minimum, volunteers/interns not involved in direct service delivery should be informed about the program's principles and practices regarding confidentiality.
- C9.9** There should be a process for monitoring and evaluating volunteer activities.

## **C10 FACILITIES**

All programs should make provisions for the following physical requirements:

- C10.1** There should be rooms or areas offering reasonable privacy where individual assessment and/or counseling can take place, and a room or rooms for group meetings or other group activities.
- C10.2** The program should have sufficient space arranged and furnished in a manner appropriate to record keeping and other clerical functions.
- C10.3** Toilets, lavatories, and bathing facilities (in residential settings) should be accessible. All such lavatory facilities should be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner.
- C10.4** All exits should be well marked by the use of appropriate exit signs.
- C10.5** All rooms, corridors, and/or stairways should be sufficiently illuminated.
- C10.6** All programs should have adequate personal/property liability, fire insurance.
- C10.7** All facilities should be clean, safe, sanitary, and in good repair at all times. Programs should replace or repair broken, run-down, or defective furnishings and equipment promptly.
- C10.8** The program's building, parking lots, and facilities should be accessible to, and functional for, service recipients and staff members.
- C10.9** Programs should ensure that an appropriately equipped first-aid kit is available in all program facilities and in all program vehicles used to transport service recipients. Staff should be trained in CPR and basic first aid.
- C10.10** The program should have posted telephone numbers of emergency services, including fire department, police, medical, services, poison control, and ambulance.
- C10.11** The program should have written procedures for the following:
- Reporting all accidents, incidents, and safety hazards;
  - The investigation, evaluation, and documentation of follow-up of the above; and
  - The provision of safety-related information to all employees.
- C10.12** The program should have written procedures in place that prohibit the use of weapons in all facilities.

## **C11 FIRE PROTECTION**

- C11.1** All facilities should be maintained in conformity with the regulations adopted by State and local fire marshals for the prevention of fire and the protection of lives and property against fire.
- C11.2** All locks or fasteners should permit free escape from the inside of any building.
- C11.3** Fire extinguishers should be installed, inspected regularly, and kept charged and filled at all times. The number, type, and location of fire extinguishers should conform to local

fire and safety regulations. Staff and volunteers should know how to operate fire extinguishers.

**C11.4** There should be more than one method of egress from all buildings and from each floor.

**C11.5** Required exits in facilities owned/leased by the program should be continuously maintained free of all obstructions or impediments to immediate use in the case of fire or other emergency.

**C11.6** Fire evacuation plans should be appropriately posted throughout the building. All common areas and sleeping rooms should have such plans prominently displayed.

**C.11.7** There should be smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in working order throughout the facility.

## **C12 DISASTER/EMERGENCY PLANS AND PROCEDURES**

**C12.1** Provisions should be made for the safety of service recipients and staff members in case of fire or other emergency. The program should have established plans to deal with disasters and emergencies (such as fire, firearms on the premises, flood, earthquake, bomb threat, intruder on the property; etc.) and staff members should be instructed in the procedures to be followed, and their respective duties.

**C12.2** Procedures for evacuation and other emergencies should be posted, reviewed, and tested at frequent and regular intervals to ensure effectiveness and staff readiness.

## **C13 ACCESS TO SHELTER**

**C13.1** Each program should have a trained program worker available 24 hours a day who is able to assess requests for shelter and arrange for immediate intake into a domestic violence shelter, safe home, or hotel/motel.

**C13.2** Programs should ensure that a trained program worker is physically present to admit service recipients into their shelter. Programs should make reasonable efforts to have a trained program worker physically present to admit service recipients into safe homes or hotels/motels.

**C13.3** Each program should have written procedures regarding their shelter intake process. Specific referral procedures relative to persons determined to be ineligible for shelter, and adult male victims of domestic violence, as well as transgender victims, seeking emergency shelter because of battering should be included.

**C13.4** Each program should have written criteria that define the circumstances under which a resident may be asked to leave the shelter. Programs should ensure that residents are made aware of the criteria.

**C13.5** Programs should have written procedures that guide staff in facilitating the transition for residents and their children who are being asked to leave the shelter.

## **C14 HOTLINE STANDARDS**

- C14.1** Programs should provide a 24-hour crisis call hotline. The number should be listed in the local phone book. It should be widely distributed or available from local telephone information services in the area where the program is located.
- C14.2** Each program should manage its hotline in the manner outlined below:
- The hotline should operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
  - Programs should have a designated domestic violence telephone line that serves as the hotline.
  - Those staffing the hotline should be trained in, and familiar with, all referral and intake practices adopted by the program.
  - Service recipients calling the hotline should be able to speak, within 15 minutes, to a trained program worker, from whom they can obtain services, including access to shelter.
  - Safety issues should be addressed in every call.
- C14.3** At a minimum, each program should assure that there will be a person who has completed the 20 hours of training and is a staff member or volunteer of the program to whom a victim can speak and from whom she/he can get the information needed to meet emergency needs (i.e., crisis counseling, medical, and legal information).
- C14.4** There should be written procedures that address how hotline and direct service staff/volunteers will meet the emergency need of non-English speaking and hearing-impaired service recipients.
- C14.5** If the program utilizes a call-forwarding system for the hotline, a professional answering service, or any other system, it should guarantee that the caller's first contact is supportive. An answering machine is not an acceptable alternative.
- C14.6** Written procedures should be developed for use by staff and volunteers describing the steps to be taken to access shelter or safe homes on a 24-hour basis.

## **C15 INFORMATION, REFERRAL, AND RESOURCES**

- C15.1** The program should establish and maintain linkages with community agencies and individuals for the provision of those services which are required by the participant(s) and/or their family, but which are not provided directly by the program
- C15.2** Programs should ensure service linkages through the development of a community resource list, which should include, but not be limited to: hours of operation: eligibility criteria, and the cost for service. Hotline and direct service staff/volunteers should have access to this listing while they are on duty. The resource list should accurately reflect the resources that are available in the community.
- C15.3** Each program should take an active role in developing and maintaining on-going relationships with, but not limited to, the following agencies:
- Child Protective Services
  - Welfare
  - Housing

- Court Personnel
- Police

**C15.4** To the extent possible, the program should engage and train community agencies and individuals to further the aim of creating a community-wide environment that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of survivors of domestic violence and their children.

## **C16 SERVICE PROVISION**

The safety of all victims, survivors, and their dependent children should be the primary goal of all domestic violence programs. All programs should assure the discussion of safety issues and options for each person seeking assistance. All counseling/advocacy services should be respectful of and respond to each individual's life situation, respecting each person's right to self-determination.

**C16.1** The program should not discriminate in the provision of services based on age, race, creed, sex, ethnicity, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion.

**C16.2** Programs should have a written grievance procedure for service recipients designed to allow them to make complaints without fear of retaliation. These procedures should be known by staff and volunteers and made available to service recipients.

**C16.3** Written procedures should be developed to enable program personnel to meet the needs of non-English-speaking, hearing-impaired, and cognitively impaired service recipients.

**C16.4** There should be a written policy concerning the development of safety plans for recipients and their dependent children. Safety plans should be specific to the needs/goals of each victim and should reflect steps relevant to safely leaving, safely staying, and/or safely living on one's own.

**C16.5** When deemed safe and appropriate and when granted in written permission by the person served, the program should follow up at least once in the first thirty days after the person served is no longer active with the program to determine if there is any need for further service and to offer assistance in obtaining those services where possible.

**C16.6** All programs should have written policies and procedures to educate staff and volunteers about child abuse and neglect, including the impact of verbal abuse, the use of non-violent alternatives to child discipline, and methods for detecting and intervening when acts of child abuse and neglect are suspected. Programs also should have written policies and procedures to educate staff and volunteers on elder abuse and vulnerable person abuse.

**C16.7** All programs should have written policies and procedures regarding the reporting of suspected acts of child abuse and neglect, elder abuse, and vulnerable person abuse and should assure that a copy of the mandatory reporting statutes for these types of abuse are available for staff review.

**C16.8** There should be clearly defined reasons for the involuntary termination of services. This information should be provided both orally and in writing to participants during intake.

## **C17 DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

- C17.1** The program should develop written policies and procedures for hotline and direct service workers to address the barriers and accommodations to accessing domestic violence services for persons who are:
- Physically disabled
  - Disabled and use the services of a personal care attendant or service animal
  - Cognitively disabled
  - Non-English speaking
  - Hearing impaired
  - Visually impaired
  - In need of transportation assistance due to a disability
- C17.2** The program should coordinate efforts with other service providers who can address the physical, specialized needs of an individual who has a disability. Specialized needs may include, but not be limited to, interpreters, personal care attendants, transportation, etc.
- C17.3** Programs should have access to material/information available in alternative formats such as Braille, audiocassette, large print, etc.
- C17.4** The program should respect all people's race, religion, ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and ability, and should not allow differences to affect a person's opportunities.
- C17.5** The program's board, staff, volunteers, and contractors should reflect the diversity of the organization's constituencies and the broader community.

## **C18 EVALUATION**

- C18.1** Each program should provide opportunities for adult and child service recipients who have received shelter and/or non-shelter services to offer feedback about those services.
- C18.2** Each program should have a process by which service recipient feedback can be utilized to enhance program services.

## **C19 CONFIDENTIALITY**

The confidentiality of client-advocate communication is essential in protecting victim safety and privacy. Domestic violence programs should rigorously protect all information regarding program participants and their children and should fully comply with the confidentiality provisions of the Nevada Revised Statutes and applicable federal laws.

- C19.1** Each program should have a written policy ensuring that adult and child service recipient information will be held confidential unless the service recipient gives the program permission to release such information or when certain exceptions apply which do not require prior written consent. Staff, volunteers, and board members should be informed and provided a copy of this policy and its application to their specific role(s) with the program.

- C19.2** The confidentiality policy should include, but not be limited to:
- A confidentiality statement;
  - Definitions of confidential communications, observations, and information;
  - Method of maintenance of records;
  - Who has access to records;
  - Procedures for the retention and destruction of records;
  - Procedure for releasing information with consent of the service recipient; and
  - Exceptions for release of information not requiring the service recipient's written consent.
- C19.3** The program should maintain the confidentiality of all service recipient case records and identifying information. Employees of the program should not disclose any information concerning the service recipient or her/his family, directly or indirectly, to any person unauthorized by the service recipient.
- C19.4** The program should obtain an informed and voluntary consent from the service recipient for the disclosure of information contained in the service recipient record. A copy of the consent form should be offered to the service recipient and a copy maintained in the service recipient's records. The consent should be in writing and should include, but not be limited to:
- The name of the person and organization to whom disclosure is made;
  - The specific information disclosed;
  - The purpose of the disclosure;
  - A dated signature of the service recipient or guardian;
  - A dated signature of a witness;
  - An expiration date of the consent (generally not to exceed 30 days.)
  - An indication that the consent is revocable at the written request of the person giving consent and that the service recipient has been informed of this right.
- C19.5** Programs should not accept a third party release of information.
- C19.6** Programs should not use "blanket release forms."
- C19.7** Each program should have written procedures defining how they will respond to the service of legal process, subpoenas, and warrants that may require the release of service recipient information, including identifying information.
- C19.8** The program's policies on confidentiality should be part of the orientation of all paid or volunteer staff members. These policies also should be made known to governing bodies, outside consultants, other organizations, and service recipients.

## **C20 INTAKE/RECORDKEEPING**

- C20.1** Intake policies should be designed to meet needs, not to exclude from service, except where providing the service would result in an adverse interest to another service recipient who is currently receiving services or has received services in the past, or where services would be rendered to an individual who is not eligible for program services.
- C20.2** Programs should furnish the following written information to each adult service recipient as part of the intake process:

- An explanation of services provided by the program;
- The program's confidentiality policy;
- Program rules/guidelines;
- Possible reasons for termination of service, both voluntary and involuntary;
- The policy governing the discipline of children;
- The policy and procedure for reporting suspected cases of child, elder, and vulnerable person abuse or neglect;
- The grievance procedure for resolving matters relating to the provision of services and matters between program participants;
- Program time limits related to the provision of service;
- Service Recipient's Rights.

**C20.3** Records should be maintained for each individual or family that should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Basic demographic data;
- Statement of need for service;
- Service/Goal plan;
- Documentation of services provided;
- Exit interview/service evaluation and other dispositional data;
- Any follow-up contacts.

## **C21 CASE RECORDS**

**C21.1** The contents of the case files should include clear and specific material pertinent to the service recipient's situation and the services provided to the service recipient in support of the case plan.

**C21.2** All entries should contain only sufficient information to document the nature of the service provided. Case records should be free of any reference to service recipient feelings, emotional/psychological assessments, etc. and should not contain direct quotes from the service recipient.

**C21.3** Records concerning minor children of adult victims of domestic violence should adhere to the same policies/procedures applicable to the case files of the parent/guardian.

**C21.4** Programs should have a written policy regarding the right of service recipients to access their own case records and the procedure for informing the service recipient of the right and the process for obtaining access to their records.

## **C22 CHILD, ELDER, AND VULNERABLE PERSON ABUSE REPORTING**

**C22.1** All programs should have a written policy and procedure regarding child, elder, and vulnerable person abuse reporting. This should include the following:

- A policy statement describing the program's role as a mandated reporter of suspected child, elder, and vulnerable person abuse;
- Definitions of child, elder, and vulnerable person abuse under current law;
- When suspected child, elder, and vulnerable person abuse should be reported;
- A description of the reporting process, to include the staff person(s) authorized to make the report and complete the reporting form.



- What steps the staff member should take to inform the parent/guardian receiving services from the program of the abused child/elder/vulnerable person's disclosure;
- What procedure(s) the staff member should follow if the suspected perpetrator of abuse is presently receiving services from the program.

## **C23 DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM**

**C23.1** All programs should develop and maintain a data collection and record-keeping system that allows for the efficient retrieval of data needed to measure the program's performance in relationship to its stated goals and objectives.

**C23.2** It is the organization's responsibility to keep accurate statistical records. Accurate statistics are essential in determining organizational policies, formulating budgets, accounting to the public for actions and expenditures, interpreting programs and problems to the public, identifying and defining unmet needs, and shaping present programs or developing new programs to meet those needs.

## **C24 TRAINING**

**C24.1** The content of domestic violence program's training should reflect NNADV's analysis of the nature and scope of domestic violence, as well as the historical and societal attitudes in which it is rooted.

**C24.2** Members of the board of directors should participate in an orientation that includes, but is not limited to:

- Fiscal and legal roles/responsibilities for board members of a nonprofit organization;
- Program-related topics, such as the organization's history, philosophy, relationship to NNADV, funding, staffing, services provided, and policies and procedures;
- Introduction to domestic violence;
- Confidentiality and privilege; and
- Ethics and boundaries in domestic violence services.

**C24.3** All individuals (staff and volunteers) working in the program who will be in a position to provide direct services to domestic violence victims and their children and/or have access to client files should complete a minimum of 20 hours of training conducted either by the domestic violence program or NNADV.

**C24.4** Training approaches utilized in the 20-hour program should include:

- A minimum of 20 hours of training using a variety of training techniques. Recommended topic areas and timeframes are noted in Appendix A;
- A minimum of 5 hours of training should be devoted to a supervised practicum (i.e., hands-on contact with service recipients meant to develop or enhance the trainee's ability to provide direct service).
- A training manual given to each participant from which reading assignments can be made.

**C24.5** If it is necessary to lead a new advocate through a course of self-study, it should be conducted under close supervision and should include careful documentation of the coverage of all topics listed in Appendix A and reflect 20 hours of time spent in training activities (plus an additional 5 hours of supervised practicum).

**C24.6** In order to ensure staff and direct service volunteers have the most current information, programs should develop a plan for providing an additional 4 hours of domestic violence training on an annual basis. Documentation of participation in such training should be maintained in the appropriate files.

## **C25 PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

**C25.1** Each program should endeavor to increase awareness of their services to victims of domestic violence in their service area.

**C25.2** Programs should provide education programs/information to the community.

**C25.3** Each program should do outreach to the ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity of battered women and their children and other victims of domestic violence in their service area. Programs should also do outreach to domestic violence victims in traditionally underserved populations, such as the elderly, lesbians and gays, people with physical and cognitive disabilities, etc.

**C25.4** Each program should provide services in a manner that responds appropriately to the diversity of service recipients who seek their services. Programs should actively seek staff and volunteers who reflect the ethnic diversity of the population in their service area.

**C25.5** Each program should provide education to professionals in their service area about the dynamics and extent of domestic violence and the resources available from the domestic violence program.

**C25.6** Each program should collaborate with other service providers to meet the specialized needs of victims who are elderly, have a physical or cognitive disability, or do not use English as a primary language, or some other factor presenting a barrier to accessing domestic violence services.

**C25.7** Each program should have written materials, intake forms, brochures, etc. in alternative formats to meet the needs of victims with visual, hearing, or cognitive disabilities.

## **C26 INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY**

**C26.1** All program information should be managed with regard for confidentiality, safety, accuracy, integrity, reliability, and cost-effectiveness.

**C26.2** Programs should have information systems in place that provide timely, accurate, and relevant information. The program's information system should include data storage and retrieval, as well as data entry. All data should be backed-up regularly and stored off-site.

**C26.3** The program should have written policies that prescribe how all organizational information is gathered and stored, how accuracy is maintained, how and what information is backed up, and to whom information is made available.

- C26.4** Procedures should be reviewed annually to ensure that operations are effective and efficient.
- C26.5** The responsibility for maintaining the organization's information system(s) should be delegated to at least one staff person, volunteer, or board member.
- C26.6** The program should develop and maintain a catastrophic recovery plan to deal with unforeseen events. The plan should include accurate equipment lists for insurance purposes and off-site back-up copies of key data and information.
- C26.7** Programs should monitor ongoing technological developments that have the potential to impact their information systems or mission.

## Shelter Standards

### S1 SHELTER FACILITY

- S1.1** Private areas should be available for counseling.
- S1.2** Furnishings should be clean and in good repair.
- S1.3** At minimum, there should be access to some form of public or private transportation to and from the facility, other service providers, and the courts.
- S1.4** Lavatory/bathing facilities should be maintained in a clean, sanitary manner.
- S1.5** There should be sleeping rooms with a bed for each individual in the shelter. Cribs should be provided for infants. All cribs and bedding should meet current safety standards.
- S1.6** Lighting should be adequate to the use of each area.
- S1.7** There should be written policies/procedures regarding the security of residents' belongings.
- S1.8** A telephone should be available to service recipients.
- S1.9** The program should ensure that all structures on the grounds of the facility accessible to service recipients are maintained in good repair and are free from any undue hazard to health and safety.
- S1.10** Programs should provide adequate lighting of exterior areas to ensure the safety of service recipients and staff during the night.

### S2 INTAKE AND ADMISSION

- S2.1** Within 24 hours or the first working day after initiation of service, the program should:
- Conduct an initial screening of further risks of violence, to the individual, minor children, or any other vulnerable family member;
  - Determine the emergency needs of the victim, if any, including medical and dental care, legal assistance, food, housing, and clothing; and
  - Develop an initial plan for services.

- S2.2** Each program should have written guidelines and rights that are given to a participant as part of the intake process. These should include, but not be limited to:
- An explanation of services available;
  - House guidelines/responsibilities;
  - Confidentiality policy;
  - Possible reasons for termination of service (voluntary and/or involuntary);
  - Policy and procedures for mandated reporting of child, elder, or vulnerable person abuse or neglect; and
  - Procedure for resolving grievances relating to the provision of services.
- S2.3** There should be records maintained for each participant or family that should include, but not be limited to, the following:
- Intake form;
  - Service plan for participants, developed with the full participation of the service recipient;
  - Emergency health releases, if applicable, for women and/or children;
  - Child care releases, if applicable;
  - Exit interview/service evaluation and other dispositional data; and
  - Documentation of services.

### **S3 HEALTH AND SAFETY OF RESIDENTS**

- S3.1** The program should have written policy and procedures pertaining to the health and safety of shelter residents. These include, but are not limited to the following:
- Meeting the medical needs of residents, including emergency situations;
  - The use of alcohol and prescribed/non-prescribed drugs;
  - Prohibition of physical or verbal abuse.
- S3.2** The program should make a reasonable effort to provide a secure and accessible location to safeguard medication.
- S3.3** Programs should have written procedures for the control and prevention of contagious diseases. Procedures should ensure the program's compliance with federal and state laws and ensure the confidentiality of service recipient, staff, and volunteers associated with health care issues.
- S3.4** Programs should have a written plan for ensuring the availability of emergency medical and dental care for all residents.

### **S4 RELIGION/SPIRITUALITY**

- S4.1** Every resident should have the option of practicing their religious/spiritual beliefs so long as they do not interfere with the rights of other shelter residents. Under no circumstances should the receipt of services be contingent on attendance at religious services or adherence to particular religious beliefs or practices.

## **S5 PERSONAL HYGIENE**

**S5.1** Programs should ensure the availability of personal hygiene products for all shelter residents. Particular attention should be paid to items for people of color (such as hair care products), persons with disabilities, or others with special needs.

## **S6 CLOTHING**

**S6.1** If an adult or child is admitted to shelter without adequate clothing, the program should ensure that they are provided with clean, well-fitting clothing appropriate to the season, and the individual's age, sex, and particular needs.

## **S7 FOOD SERVICES**

**S7.1** Programs should comply with all state and local requirements regarding the preparation, handling, and storage of food.

**S7.2** Programs should ensure that residents are, on a daily basis, provided with food of such quality and in such quantity as to meet the recommended daily dietary allowances of current federal guidelines.

**S7.3** Programs should ensure that a resident is provided at least three meals or their equivalent available daily at regular times. Between meal snacks of nourishing quality should be available.

**S7.4** Programs should ensure that the food provided for residents is in accord with her/his religious beliefs and personal practices.

**S7.5** Programs should purchase and provide to residents only food and drink of safe quality. Storage, preparation, and serving techniques should ensure that nutrients are retained and spoilage is prevented.

**S7.6** Programs should show evidence of effective procedures for cleaning all equipment and work areas.

**S7.7** Hand washing facilities, including hot and cold water, soap and paper towels, should be provided adjacent to food service work areas. Disposable gloves should be worn by anyone handling food.

## **S8 CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**S8.1** Programs should provide the following services for children residing in shelter:

- Orientation to the shelter;
- Safety planning with mother and children;
- Advocacy with outside systems;
- Information and referral services;
- Age appropriate information about domestic violence.

- S8.2** When women with children are admitted to shelter, staff should conduct an orientation to the program in a manner appropriate to the child's level of understanding and assist the parent or guardian in arranging for the child's continued education.
- S8.3** Safe and secure play areas should be provided for children.
- S8.4** Each program should have a written policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment of children by either the parent or childcare provider while a family is receiving services and provide each with a copy of the policy. No staff member or volunteer/intern should use corporal punishment or restraints on any child.

## **S9 SAFE HOME STANDARDS**

- S9.1** All programs operating safe homes should have a written agreement with the host family outlining the following:
- Program responsibilities;
  - Safe home responsibilities;
  - Per diem rate (if applicable);
  - Hours of availability;
  - Confidentiality;
  - Safety provisions;
  - Length of stay; and
  - Provisions for support counseling for the victim and her/his children.
- S9.2** All programs should develop written guidelines for residents of safe homes. These guidelines should include, but not be limited to:
- Confidentiality of host family;
  - Length of stay;
  - The use of unauthorized drugs or alcohol; and
  - Prohibition of the use of violence.
- S9.3** Programs should make reasonable efforts to have a trained program worker physically present to admit service recipients into safe homes or hotels/motels.
- S9.4** There should be a written letter of agreement between the safe home resident and the program. The safe home should receive a copy. This agreement should include a "sign off" on house guidelines, responsibilities and service recipient rights statement.
- S9.5** Documentation of liability insurance coverage of the host family, currently in force, should be provided.
- S9.6** Where possible, a medical release should be obtained from the safe home resident.
- S9.7** Programs should document the occurrence of an in-depth screening of the home that addresses the suitability of the house and host family or individual.
- S9.8** Training for Safe Home providers should include, but not be limited to:
- Historical perspectives on the movement to end violence against women;
  - Introduction to domestic violence;
  - Confidentiality;

- Cultural competency;
- Survivor-centered advocacy;
- Ethics and advocacy;
- The impact of domestic violence on children;
- Civil and criminal procedures; and
- Purposes and procedures of safe home support.

## APPENDIX A

### TRAINING TOPICS AND TIME FRAMES

All aspects of the domestic violence program's training program described in Section C22 should reflect NNADV's analysis of the nature and scope of domestic violence as well as the historical and societal attitudes in which it is rooted. Topic areas to be covered, with suggested timeframes, should include, but not be limited to:

#### A. Historical Perspectives on the Movement to End Violence Against Women (1.5-2 hours)

- History of the domestic violence movement
- Views of women throughout history
- A history of women's victimization
- Other forms of violence against women
- Importance of language

#### B. Introduction to Domestic Violence (1.5-3 hours)

- Myths & facts about domestic violence
- Decisions about staying and leaving
- Definition of domestic violence and the role of power and control
- "The Abuser Mindset"
- Batterer-generated vs. life-generated risks and critical issues
- Dating violence

#### C. Confidentiality and Privilege (1.5-3 hours)

- Definition
- The statute granting the privilege
- Release of information, breaches, conflicts of interest
- Practice(s) related to common confidentiality situations
- Local program policies and procedures

#### D. Introduction to Cultural Competency (1.5-3 hours)

- The relationship between domestic violence and oppression and its relevance to the advocacy relationship
- Examination of forms of oppression
- Interrupting oppression and learning ally behavior

#### E. Introduction to Survivor-centered Advocacy (4-6 hours)

- Feminist approach to helping
- Survivor-centered Advocacy
- Goals of Survivor-centered Advocacy
- Empowerment and options counseling

F. Ethics and Boundaries in Advocacy (1.5-3 hours)

- Definition of ethics
- Ethical responsibilities
- Establishing and maintaining boundaries

G. The Impact on Children (1.5-3 hours)

- The prevalence and impact of witnessing on children
- The batterer as parent
- Mitigating factors
- Interventions with children
- Mandatory reporting of suspected acts of child abuse and neglect

H. Advocacy Skills (3-6 hours)

- Principles of advocacy
- Understanding key systems
  - Civil: Protection Orders Against Domestic Violence
  - Criminal: Law Enforcement Response to Domestic Violence
  - Victim of Crime Compensation Program
- Advocacy strategies

I. Skills development (3-7 hours)

- Crisis, crisis intervention and suicide
- Problem solving
- Safety planning
- Goal planning

J. Program Related Topics (1-3 hours)

- Program history, philosophy, relationship to NNADV
- Organizational structure, funding, staffing, etc.
- Program policies and procedures
- Information about local community resources