

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM AND PERSONNEL STANDARDS

## Introduction

Domestic Violence Program Standards provide guidelines for existing programs and direction for communities that are developing new programs. The Standards Committee, comprised of directors of domestic violence programs of all sizes and types, has acknowledged that Idaho has reached a level of service provision that requires development of a formal process to more effectively ensure program accountability and assure victims are treated fairly, professionally, and given the help needed. A minimum quality of services for battered victims and their children should be assured.

It is our hope that these standards will provide an opportunity for new programs to follow a format that meets ethical and program standards agreed upon by representatives of domestic violence shelters in Idaho. It is also our hope that these standards may be a framework for grantors to use in assessing a program's viability for funding and its ethical and service contributions to battered victims and their children.

The Idaho Council on Domestic Violence will require compliance with at least basic program standards in the domestic violence grants it awards. New programs must meet these standards or demonstrate that an established domestic violence program already meeting these standards is working with them and compliance is expected within six months. Proof of this mentoring relationship will be required in the grant application.

It is also acknowledged that as more information is gathered on the most effective services to offer domestic violence victims and their children, the standards will reflect those changes. It is therefore thought that these standards are a work in progress, continuing to grow and change.

The ICDV will have oversight responsibilities related to these standards. Programs will be monitored on a regular basis to assure the minimum standards are met. It is the Standards Committee's hope that domestic violence programs will take seriously the information offered in these standards. It is with much thought and research that they were developed and it is believed that their implementation will further assist programs in helping domestic violence victims.

## **Domestic Violence Program Standards:**

### **I. BASIC PROGRAM:**

All Basic Programs must have at least one staff person who fulfills the position “Crisis Advocate/Victim Advocate” as defined in Personnel Standards. A basic program:

- A. Provides twenty-four (24) hour crisis intervention by a trained staff/volunteer in person or by phone. Crisis intervention may include:
  - 1. Personal support and information about the effects of victimization
  - 2. Safety planning
  - 3. Information about local medical and legal resources related to domestic violence and sexual assault
  - 4. Information on crime victims’ compensation and civil protection orders
  - 5. Information about and referral to victim services available in the community
- B. Has a confidentiality policy, signed by all staff and volunteers, with specific definitions of the policy and expected behaviors.
- C. Has a policy ensuring that criminal background checks are conducted on all staff and volunteers upon beginning of service.
- D. Has available a trained staff/volunteer to provide one-on-one client support, whose purpose is to provide practical help as needed, to provide information and referrals to services, and to provide emotional support.
- E. Has written policies and procedures established by the governing board that includes a process for staff performance evaluations.
- F. Has established meetings that promote staff/volunteer communication.
- G. Provides a weekly support group for adult victims of domestic violence, which is facilitated by trained staff/volunteer.
- H. Has written educational materials available to clients and other members of the community.
- I. Makes referrals to legal assistance as available.
- J. Does not allow paid staff members to serve as voting members of its program’s governing board.
- K. Holds governing board meetings at least quarterly.

## II. INTERMEDIATE PROGRAM:

In addition to basic program standards, an intermediate program:

- A. Operates a twenty-four hour shelter or safehome for victims of abuse which:
  - 1. Has a security system (see Security Standards, Page 13)
  - 2. Meets health standards (see Health Standards, Page 14)
  - 3. Has an annual fire inspection to assure compliance with local fire codes and has a posted fire evacuation plan
  - 4. Has written shelter policies and procedures
  - 5. Has client access to food and clothing
- B. Provides a minimum of weekly goal setting exercises for resident clients by a trained staff/volunteer, either individually or in a group.
- C. Provides a weekly support group and educational group for clients by a trained staff/volunteer or professional; provides child care during groups.
- D. Makes case management and therapy available to clients either in-house, through contracted services or through referral. Therapy is conducted or supervised by professionals (as defined in Section I, Personnel Standards, Paragraph I) and may include a substance abuse evaluation.
- E. Has a trained staff/volunteer available to provide support in court during domestic violence proceedings.
- F. Provides community education presentations.

## III. ADVANCED PROGRAM

In addition to basic and intermediate program standards, an advanced program:

- A. Has a shelter with a twenty-four hour on-site staff.
- B. Has a written procedure for client evaluation of the program.
- C. Enhances staff development through scheduled, on-going training.
- D. Provides legal counsel to clients, through in-house or contracted services.
- E. Provides therapy to adults and children, conducted by or supervised by professionals as defined in Personnel Standards, Paragraph I. Therapy may include a substance abuse evaluation.
- F. Provides a structured children's program.
- G. Provides parenting and/or life skills for shelter residents.

## **Domestic Violence Personnel Standards:**

For the purposes of these standards, job titles and responsibilities may vary from program to program. However, the basic functions generally fall into these categories. All Basic Programs must have at least one staff person who fulfills the Crisis Advocate/Victim Advocate position. Allowable continuing education can include CEU's in pertinent areas of study, workshops, or self-study through reading, videos or other resources. The ICDV will make available to programs a listing of its current written, audio and visual resources.

### **I. MINIMUM:**

#### **A. Crisis Advocate/ Victim Advocate:**

1. Thirty (30) hours of training approved by the Idaho Council on Domestic Violence (ICDV). Fifteen of these hours shall be completed before working with clients. Completion of all the training shall be done within four months of employment. Training shall include the following:
  - a. Dynamics of Domestic Violence:
    - Cycle of violence
    - Types of abuse
    - Power and control wheel
    - Batterer tactics and social reinforcers of tactics
    - Effects of domestic violence on children
    - Relationship between domestic violence and child abuse
  - b. Sexual Assault:
    - Childhood sexual assault issues
    - Acquaintance rape
    - Spousal rape
    - Emotional responses and healing stages after rape
    - Secondary victims of rape
    - Adult survivors of sexual assault
  - c. General Victim Service:
    - Crisis and stress theory
    - Confidentiality
    - Crisis intervention and listening skills
    - Historical perspective of violence against women & development of related issues
    - Role playing
    - Victim safety planning
    - Mental disorders
    - Suicide intervention
    - Use of local resources and services
    - Substance abuse
    - Advocacy

- d. Domestic Violence, Women and the Law
  - Domestic violence laws
  - Idaho victims rights
  - Mandatory reporting laws
  - Stalking
- e. Cross-cultural service delivery and diversity; immigration laws
- f. Internship of crisis calls

B. Domestic Violence Program Director

(Job titles and responsibilities may vary from program to program. Examples are Program Director, Director, and Executive Director.) For the purposes of these standards:

1. All of the “Crisis Advocate/Victim Advocate” basic requirements
2. Skills in the following:
  - a. A sound working knowledge of all program positions
  - b. Public speaking
  - c. Understanding of liability issues
  - d. Ability to form collaborative relationships
  - e. Delegation
  - f. Knowledge of policies and procedures
  - g. Human resources
  - h. Management and budgeting
  - i. Knowledge of funding sources
  - j. Grant management

C. Court Advocate

1. All of the basic requirements for “Crisis Advocate/Victim Advocate”
2. Ten (10) hours of additional training to include: Civil Protection Orders, custody, courtroom procedures and etiquette, moral support.
3. Experience with protection order hearings (numbers can be adjusted according to number of CPO’s done in respective county(ies)).

D. Legal Advocate

1. All of the “Court Advocate” requirements
2. Forty (40) additional hours of training which may include problem solving skills, adult learning theory, court-ordered domestic violence class curriculum, work in court as a court advocate.
3. Education about legal and ethical issues

E. Shelter Staff

1. All of the “Crisis Advocate/Victim Advocate” basic requirements
2. Ten (10) additional hours of training which must include CPR, mediation/problem solving

F. Shelter Manager

1. All of the “Crisis Advocate/Victim Advocate” basic requirements
2. Twenty (20) additional hours of training which must include CPR, mediation/problem solving, group planning, organizational skills, social skills, meal planning

G. Sexual Assault Advocate

1. All of the “Crisis Advocate/Victim Advocate” basic requirements
2. Ten (10) hours of additional training, which must include advanced listening skills, forensics/rape kit, hospital procedures, and criminal justice procedures

H. Children’s Advocate

1. All of the “Crisis Advocate/Victim Advocate” basic requirements
2. Twenty (20) hours of additional training which must include early childhood development, effects of domestic violence on children, organized play

I. Counselor

1. All of the “Crisis Advocate/Victim Advocate” basic requirements
2. Idaho LPC, MSW or MED or equivalent with specialty in counseling
3. Experience in victimization issues
4. Knowledge of basic legal and ethical issues
5. Ability to utilize community resources appropriately

To maintain the Minimum Level, all staff shall complete twenty (20) hours per year of continuing education relevant to their position.

To PROGRESS to the intermediate and advanced levels, personnel shall fulfill the requirements below as well as any continuing education requirements for specific positions (A - I).

II. INTERMEDIATE:

All basic requirements of particular position (i.e., “Crisis Advocate”, “Court Advocate”) enhanced by an additional fifteen (15) hours of training and two years in crisis work.

To maintain this Intermediate Level, twenty (20) hours of continuing education per year is required.

III. ADVANCED:

All intermediate requirements of particular position plus five (5) years in crisis work.

To maintain this Advanced Level twenty (20) hours of continuing education per year is required.

## **Security Standards:**

### **I. \*BASIC**

- A. Must have written house rules, to be signed by the client upon entering the program.
- B. Must have written policies and procedures, to include, but not be limited to: safety planning, non-disclosure of location, coming and going of clients, security for children playing outdoors

### **II. \*INTERMEDIATE PROGRAMS**

In addition to those standards for basic programs, intermediate programs:

- A. Must have secure locks for all windows, doors and other building accesses to help prevent the entry of intruders
- B. Must have telephone available for emergency calls
- C. Must have secure area for children to play

### **III. \*ADVANCED PROGRAM**

In addition to those standards for basic and intermediate programs, advanced programs:

- A. Must have alarm system and/or panic buttons linked to law enforcement or a security company

\*Programs that cannot meet any of these standards because of fire code or building limitations must have alternate security measures reviewed and approved by the ICDV

## **Health Standards:**

These standards shall apply to all programs, regardless of level:

- A. **DRUGS:** All medications shall be kept in a locked or secure location to prevent unauthorized access. Programs shall have written policies regarding appropriate distribution of client medications.
- B. **LICE AND CONTAGIOUS CONDITIONS:** Head checks for lice shall be conducted as appropriate on all clients, with treatment and follow-up checks/treatment provided as necessary. Programs shall have written policies for checking and treating other contagious conditions.
- C. **CLEANING:** Shelter bedrooms shall be checked regularly for health and safety reasons. Bedding shall be washed at least weekly. Plastic covers are required for beds and pillows; covers shall be cleaned between clients. Shelter kitchens and bathrooms shall be carefully cleaned on a regular basis.
- D. **HYGIENE:** If necessary, clients shall be given written or verbal instruction on hygiene issues such as hand washing, personal care and food storage and preparation.
- E. **FIRST AID:** First aid supplies recommended by the Red Cross, Public Health or other appropriate entity shall be available at all times.
- F. **HIV:** Programs shall use universal precautions and make gloves available.

Adopted by the Council on Domestic Violence: November 20, 1998

## **Recognitions:**

The Standards Committee was made up of a member of the Idaho Council on Domestic Violence and program directors representing both urban and rural domestic violence programs in Idaho. The ICDV members would like to acknowledge those whose time, wisdom, and commitment was so valuable in working toward the completion of the standards: Natalie Steffler, chair; Carol Wallace; Denise Bender; Daina Farthing; Deborah Gabardi; Kathy Beauchamp; Teena Schuldt; Ann Wheeler; Victoria Mecham; Bev LaChance; Holladay Sanderson; Tina Alexanderson; Celia Heady; Irene Masterson; and Carolyn Beaver.