

DESK REFERENCE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SCREENING UNDER THE FAMILY VIOLENCE OPTION

Under the Family Violence Option, all applicants and recipients of Temporary Assistance must be screened for domestic violence using the Domestic Violence Screening Form (LDSS - 4583) at:

APPLICATION • RECERTIFICATION • ANY TIME CLIENT REQUESTS

COMPLETING THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SCREENING FORM IS VOLUNTARY AND ANSWERS ARE CONFIDENTIAL.

SCREENING PROCESS:

The following provides a sample guide for workers to use when explaining the Family Violence Option to clients:

GUIDE FOR STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SCREENING

As part of your interview, I need to discuss domestic violence and a program called the Family Violence Option. We discuss this with everyone who applies or recertifies for temporary assistance. As part of the application/recertification packet, you should have received a copy of the **Handout to All Applicants for Welfare**. Please read this handout which will give you information about domestic violence. A person may be a victim of domestic violence if their partner or ex-partner does any of the following:

- physically harms or threatens harm
- forces sex or sexual activities
- constantly insults or puts someone down
- follows, harasses or stalks someone and/or
- makes someone feel afraid

Also, please read the **Domestic Violence Screening Form**. You are not required to fill out this screening form. Answering the questions on this form is voluntary. It is NOT an eligibility requirement and will NOT affect your temporary assistance grant. Answers are confidential.

The purpose of the **Domestic Violence Screening Form** is to determine if you want a referral to meet with the Domestic Violence Liaison (DVL). Since you are applying for temporary assistance, you must meet certain requirements which will be explained to you during your eligibility interview.

The meeting with the specially trained DVL will help you figure out whether meeting any of the requirements would make it more difficult for you or your children to escape from domestic violence or subject you to further risk. You may be able to get a temporary delay (waiver) from the requirement(s) because of domestic violence. Some of the requirements are that you:

- look for work
- attend programs to help you get a job
- give information about the parent/step-parent of your children
- appear in court to get child support

If you only need to get information on domestic violence services, you may not need to see the DVL. You may contact the domestic violence service provider(s) directly. I can give you the domestic violence information for our county or you may meet with the DVL for more information.

Any information that you share with the DVL is voluntary and confidential. However, information about neglect or abuse of children will be reported to child protective services.

You may decide not to fill out this form right now, but you are free to do so at any time. You could first find out about the requirements and then, if you decide to meet with the DVL, you could fill out the screening form. You can ask to see the DVL at any time.

If you wish to meet with the DVL, check "Yes" on the form and sign your name.

NOTES TO WORKER:

- If a client only needs information on domestic violence (DV) services, you should provide the client with information/brochures on the DV services in your county, or refer to the DVL.
- This guide is for screening applicants who are applying for temporary assistance. When assistance is needed for emergency situations due to DV, such as needing a place to stay, follow your agency's policy on how to handle these situations.
- Take extra precautions conducting the screening when other people are present. Clients may be reluctant to talk in the presence of other people. Do whatever possible to screen people privately due to safety and confidentiality concerns.
- Be careful not to make assumptions about the client's sexual orientation. Use gender neutral language when the sex of the client's partner is unknown. For instance, use the term "your partner" rather than "he" or "she."

COMPLETING THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SCREENING FORM AND REFERRALS

There are seven possible ways that a client can respond to the completion of the screening form:

1. Client checks "Yes," signs the form and wants to see the Domestic Violence Liaison (DVL).

- Must refer the client to the DVL as soon as possible using local procedures.
- Do not record any specific information regarding domestic violence in the case record.
- Follow local policy regarding forwarding all completed Domestic Violence Screening Forms to the DVL.
- Notify essential staff to discontinue all other assessments, especially if client is diverted to child support or employment prior to the temporary assistance eligibility interview.

2. Client checks "Yes," signs the form and does not want to see the Domestic Violence Liaison.

- Offer to refer to the DVL. If the client declines, continue with eligibility interview.
- Follow local policy to forward all completed Domestic Violence Screening Forms to the DVL.
- Write a note on the Domestic Violence Screening Form stating the client declined interview with the DVL.
- Remind client that the DVL is available at any time.

3. Client checks "Yes," but does not sign the form.

- Refer the client to the DVL as soon as possible using local procedures.
- Explain that this information will not be shared with the client's partner or former partner.
- Do not record any specific information regarding domestic violence in the case record.
- Follow local policy to forward all completed Domestic Violence Screening Forms to the DVL.
- Notify essential staff to discontinue all assessments, especially if client is diverted to child support or employment prior to the eligibility interview.

4. Client checks "No" on the screening form.

- Continue with eligibility interview. Forward screening form to DVL.
- Remind client that the DVL is available at any time.

5. Client declines to complete the form.

- Continue with eligibility interview.

6. Client checks no or is not willing to fill out the form but wants to see the DVL.

- Must refer to DVL as soon as possible using local procedures.
- Do not require client to fill out the screening form.

7. Client checks no or is not willing to fill out form but discloses domestic violence during interview.

- If client wants to see DVL, refer the client as soon as possible using local procedures.
- If client does not wish to see DVL, remind the client that the DVL is available at any time and that this is a voluntary and confidential program.

Please remember to forward all completed screening forms (checked either "Yes" or "No") to the Domestic Violence Liaison. No specific references to domestic violence screening or assessment should be made in the case record.