

# Domestic Violence Housing First Checklist

<b>How to use:</b>  Self-assess your program’s progress toward implementation of the DVHF approach and identify areas for improvement. Use the scale to determine how far along you are in completing each item in the checklist and write notes for next steps.		<b>Scale=</b> - not completed / in progress + completed	
<b>Survivor-Driven, Trauma-Informed Advocacy</b>			
<b>Required</b>	<b>Organization:</b>	<b>- / +</b>	<b>Notes/Next Steps:</b>
	We do not exclude people from services based on their income, mental health, substance abuse, or employment status.		
	When survivors request services for which they do not meet a funder’s eligibility standards, we offer other options to assist in every way possible.		
	We do not exclude people from services based on when they last experienced violence, their relationship status, or their life choices.		
	We do not require survivors to participate in support groups, counseling, or other services.		
	Our program model allows us to adapt services to each survivor’s unique circumstances, strengths, and needs.		

	We understand how to use our various funding streams in combination to address individual survivor needs.		
	Organizational training and supervision of advocates reinforces working with survivors in a survivor-driven way. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mission statement and training materials reflect survivor-driven, trauma-informed practices.</li> <li>○ Institutional support for staff that recognizes trauma experiences of staff and for preventing secondary trauma.</li> <li>○ Rules, rights, and responsibilities for clients are survivor-driven and trauma-informed.</li> </ul>		
<b>Rec</b>	There are multiple points of entry to accessing services (e.g. hotline, community outreach, legal advocacy).		
	Agency commits resources to outreach to ensure that participants who access services reflect the community's demographic.		
<b>Required</b>	<b>Staff:</b>	<b>- / +</b>	<b>Notes/Next Steps:</b>
	Advocates offer options and information, not opinions or mandates.		
	Advocates start conversations with survivors with “what do you need?” not “this is what we can offer.”		
	Advocates understand the impacts of trauma and how that can show up when working with survivors.		
	Survivors lead the advocacy process, choose their own goals, and define for themselves what safety looks like.		

	Advocates always ask survivors about their current housing situation.		
	Advocates understand the impact of trauma, are aware of potential triggers, and engage in trauma-informed practices.		
<b>Mobile Advocacy</b>			
<b>Required</b>	<b>Organization:</b>	<b>- / +</b>	<b>Notes/Next Steps:</b>
	Our staffing pattern allows for advocates to leave the office/shelter and provide advocacy services in other community settings.		
	Advocates are expected to spend time in the community providing services wherever it is safe and convenient for survivors.		
	We use home visiting as a tool to lower barriers to services, and we have home visiting safety protocols and policies.		
	Advocates receive mileage and travel reimbursement in a timely manner.		
	We have adopted new supervision practices to ensure advocates are supported when working away from our offices.		
	<b>Staff:</b>	<b>- / +</b>	<b>Notes/Next Steps:</b>
	Advocates accompany survivors to court hearings, housing appointments, child welfare appointments, etc., providing support and intervention as requested by the survivor.		
	Advocates offer to meet survivors at their location of choice, including in settings other than the office or shelter.		

	Advocates have access to transportation that enables them to provide mobile services.		
	Advocates have the technology needed to work with survivors out of the office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Agency-issued cell phone</li> <li>○ Tablet, smart phone or computer</li> </ul>		
	Advocates are trusted to make schedule adjustments that allow them to meet survivors outside normal business hours when necessary.		
	Advocates are attuned to the changing circumstances of survivors they may work with longer-term, and have the skills to engage in ongoing safety planning.		
<b>Community Engagement</b>			
<b>Required</b>	<b>Organization:</b>	<b>- / +</b>	<b>Notes/Next Steps:</b>
	Advocates are encouraged to spend work time deepening their familiarity with and connections to community resources, service providers, and organizations with which survivors interact.		
	Resources are allocated to support staff time making community partnerships.		
	Our program is visible, known, and respected in the community.		
	Our organization has a current and updated directory of the resources available in the community.		
	Community members are aware of what our program does and what services are available to survivors.		

	Advocates have relationships with staff of key partner organizations and are familiar with the services they provide.		
	Concerted efforts are made to develop and sustain relationships across organizations based in underserved, marginalized, and historically oppressed communities.		
<b>Rec</b>	Management and leadership actively participating in their community's homeless planning process.		
<b>Required</b>	<b>Staff:</b>	<b>- / +</b>	<b>Notes/Next Steps:</b>
	Advocates are eager to spend time out in the community building relationships.		
	Advocates are aware of the service gaps in the community's DV response.		
	Advocates proactively cultivate relationships with non-traditional partners and community members, such as car mechanics, small businesses, consumer credit agencies, and employers.		
	Advocates have established relationships and access to organizations that provide the following services and support. They understand the ins and outs of these systems, how they work, eligibility criteria, etc.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Employment</li> <li>○ Culturally specific organizations</li> <li>○ Health</li> <li>○ Public Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ TANF</li> <li>▪ SSI/SSDI</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Food Stamps</li> </ul>		

	<p>Advocates receive training to develop their knowledge base and relationships in the following housing-related areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Permanent Supportive Housing</li> <li>○ Homelessness prevention</li> <li>○ Rapid Re-Housing</li> <li>○ Subsidized housing</li> <li>○ Local housing authorities</li> <li>○ Property management companies</li> <li>○ Private landlords</li> </ul>		
	Advocates know local, state, and federal housing rights for survivors living in both private and public housing.		
	Advocates know how to read, interpret, and negotiate lease agreements.		
<b>Flexible Financial Assistance:</b>			
<b>Required</b>	<b>Organization:</b>	<b>- / +</b>	<b>Notes/Next Steps:</b>
	We have discretionary funds in our budget that can be used to help survivors address barriers to safety and stabilization.		
	Within the constraints of available funds, there is no standard or pre-established maximum to the amount of funding that can be provided.		
	Flexible financial assistance may be provided to survivors regardless of their income.		
	Our organization has policies and procedures for requesting flex funding.		
	There are no service or goal plan requirements in order for a survivor to receive funding.		

	Survivors may access funds multiple times.		
Rec	Funds can be disbursed directly to survivors as a cash grant or on behalf of a survivor (to landlords, etc.).		
	All of our advocates know how to access flex funding.		
	In most circumstances, we are able to disburse flexible financial assistance within 24 hours of the request.		
	Limited documentation and paperwork is required to request flex funding.		
Required	<b>Staff:</b>	- / +	<b>Notes/Next Steps:</b>
	Advocates work collaboratively with survivors to determine the appropriate amount of flex funding needed.		
	Advocates disburse flexible financial assistance to address a survivor's immediate needs.		
	Advocates facilitate the use of flex funding to support survivors' stability.		