

# Nebraska's Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) Standards

Revised October, 2023



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**NEBRASKA COALITION**  
TO END SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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# Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) Standards and Review Committee for their work in revising Nebraska’s DVIP Standards.

The individuals listed below worked together to identify and recommend revisions included in this document. Membership included individuals who work in a statewide capacity as well as representatives of local programs in communities across the state.

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# Fundamentals

## Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) Standards

People who commit acts of intimate partner and domestic violence vary in many ways such as age, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender, mental health condition, profession, financial status, cultural background, religious beliefs, strengths and vulnerabilities, and levels of risk and treatment needs. People who commit abuse may engage in more than one pattern of abuse and may have multiple victims.

Responsibility for change rests with the perpetrator. Individuals are responsible for their attitudes and behaviors and can eliminate or modify abusive behavior through personal ownership of a change process. Treatment enhances the opportunity for perpetrator change. Change is based on the perpetrator's motivational levels and acceptance of responsibility. Motivation for change can be strengthened by effective treatment and supervision. Domestic Violence Intervention Programs or DVIPs that comply with these standards are charged with teaching skills that assist participants to change their abusive responses and adopt prosocial responses.

The safety of the victim(s) supersedes the interests of the perpetrator and the intervention program. DVIPs will clearly state that the programs aim to change abusive behaviors, not salvage marriages or relationships.

## Definition of Domestic Violence

The terms domestic violence and intimate partner violence are often used interchangeably. For these standards, and as a reference for those who provide intervention services to perpetrators of domestic violence, the term domestic violence is used as follows:

Domestic violence is an attempt to control another person's behavioral, emotional, and/or intellectual life and diminish or prevent that person's free choice. Domestic Violence can include physical harm, arousing fear or preventing a victim from doing what they wish. Domestic violence can be found among current and former intimate partners who are married or unmarried, irrespective of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Not all forms of domestic violence are criminal.

It is a myth that perpetrators resort to violence when they lose control. Domestic violence is deliberate. Primary risk factors for domestic violence include desire for control/domination, hostility, beliefs that support violence, poor impulse control, emotional dysregulation, and emotional insecurity. Domestic violence may consist of one, or a combination of two or more of the following behavioral elements:

- Physical assault against a current or former intimate partner, children, pets, or other people close to the victim.
- Threats, including threats:
  - Of bodily harm or to well-being,
  - To privacy such as regarding sexual orientation or immigration status, or
  - To children, pets, or other people close to the victim.
- Verbal and emotional abuse such as intimidation, coercion, isolation, or degradation.
- Economic forms of control such as withholding or denying access to money or other basic resources, sabotaging employment, housing, or educational opportunities.
- Sexual assault or sexual abuse, including sexual coercion and/or reproductive coercion or control.
- Social isolation such as possessiveness, jealousy, denying communication with friends and family, inhibiting access to transportation and telephone.
- Stalking, harassing, and ongoing monitoring and pursuit of the victim.
- Damaging the victim's property.

## Purpose of Standards

The purposes of creating these standards are to:

- Establish a minimum level of responsibility, service and accountability expected from community based DVIPs in Nebraska.
- Promote consistency of services statewide and provide a process to review and approve those services.
- Inform courts and State agencies that community based DVIPs exist for services to perpetrators of domestic violence.
- Remind providers that DVIP services are an important part of community strategies to end domestic violence.

## Purpose of Intervention Programs

The purposes of the programs are to:

- Hold perpetrators accountable, challenge their beliefs, and teach new skills to help perpetrators change their behavior.
- Provide role models while educating perpetrators about non-controlling behaviors.
- Confront collusion and victim-blaming by perpetrators.
- Challenge myths about domestic violence.
- Provide referrals to other agencies for needed services.
- Report compliance and noncompliance to the courts or other referral sources.

# Collaboration Standards

DVIPs must establish cooperative, collaborative relationships with criminal and juvenile justice systems, including probation and Children and Family Services. Aspects of collaborations could include referral protocols with courts, client reporting procedures, and victim safety procedure protocols with domestic violence/sexual assault programs.

DVIPs must establish procedures for safeguarding victims of abuse, understand laws on domestic violence, and the operation of the justice system.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) for a new DVIP shall not exceed one year. Subsequent MOUs can be signed for a two-year duration.

## MOU with Probation/Courts

To work toward increased accountability, programs must communicate with Probation/Courts regarding participants who are court-directed/mandated to attend.

An MOU must be signed between the Adult Probation District in the program's service area and the person responsible for ensuring the program complies with these standards. This MOU must be signed by both parties prior to the program initiating service and remain in effect for the program to remain in compliance with state standards. A sample MOU is included in Appendix D.

At a minimum, programs should provide the following information to Adult Probation:

### Monthly Contact:

- Each program must complete an individual monthly report on all program participants who are on probation. This report must be submitted to the identified probation officer by a date decided upon by both the program and probation.
- Monthly Reports must be completed using the Standardized form (see appendix E – use revised form)
- Programs must participate in a monthly meeting to staff cases.

### Change in Status or Non-Compliance Contact:

- Programs must inform probation/court if the participant is terminated from the program within 48 hours of termination.
- Each program must contact the individual probation officer within 24 hours of discovery of any new violence on behalf of the participant.

### Involvement With and Referrals From Other Sources

Providers may choose to accept referrals from non-judicial sources. While it is good practice to have an MOU with other referral sources, it is not a requirement of these Standards.

## Transfer Policy

- Any individual transferring from one approved Nebraska DVIP to another approved Nebraska DVIP because of a termination must start over with the second DVIP.
- Any individual in good standing in an approved Nebraska DVIP who seeks to transfer to another approved Nebraska DVIP may do so without losing time in the program.
- Any individual transferring into an approved Nebraska DVIP from an out-of-state DVIP must start over unless the participant is in good standing in the out of state DVIP and the approved Nebraska DVIP agrees to the transfer of time into the program.
  - DVIP participants who want to transfer to a different program must sign a release of information so that the two DVIPs may contact each other to establish the status of the participant in the new program and share any other relevant information about that participant.
  - A program participant is considered in good standing if all program contract requirements have been met.
  - Verification of standing must be made by the staff of the DVIP receiving the transfer.

## Advertising/Public Information Policy

Programs will establish a media policy addressing advertising and public information. Elements of this policy will include:

- Advertising should not link DVIPs with any couples counseling, marriage counseling or other form of family counseling.
- Advertising should not predict DVIP participant's success or success rates.
- Advertising should not present DVIP participation and/or completion as a guarantee of behavior change and/or victim safety.

# Structural Components

## Program Content

### *Length*

The minimum length of the DVIP should not be less than 30 nor more than 36 weekly group sessions lasting for 90 minutes per session, excluding breaks. This does not include intake, orientation, and exit sessions.

### *Appropriate Intervention Approaches*

- The preferred model for DVIPs are group sessions co-facilitated by one man and one woman to model healthy egalitarian relationships.
- **Groups that include more than five participants must consist of a co-facilitator.**



- The DVIP model should be educational. It addresses abuse in both personal and social contexts, beliefs, and attitudes. The model acknowledges that violence is a learned behavior, so perpetrators can learn to behave differently.
- Providers may decide whether groups are open (accepting new members on an ongoing basis) or closed.
- Groups must be of the same gender.
- Programs must have policies that address same-sex offenders participating in the group. Participation in the program may be on a case-by-case basis and should address the safety of the individual.
- Individual intervention is strongly discouraged; however, it may be provided when an individual is unable to participate in a group setting at the discretion of the program coordinator, no qualified group program is available, if the individual's participation would be too disruptive for other group members, or the individual's safety would be compromised by participating in a group program. Individual intervention must be documented by the provider in the individual's case file and must be limited to domestic violence issues.
- Individual intervention must be provided under the same requirements of these standards, including cost per session, as if they were attending a group.
- Individual programming should not be used as an occasional substitute for missing groups.

The following interventions may occur concurrently with the DVIP if the DVIP provider deems it appropriate:

- Treatment for mental or substance abuse problems.
- Individual counseling to address other issues the perpetrator may have, such as overcoming childhood trauma.

### *The Use of Technology to Facilitate a Remote Group*

Electronic Communication to provide these groups is not the preferred method for DVIP. Any program desiring to provide remote access using an electronic communications device must develop policies and procedures specific to this practice. These policies and written procedures must be submitted to the State Standards and Review Committee for approval prior to providing such access to a group. Failure to comply may cause a program to lose the ability to provide programming in a traditional setting.

### *Inappropriate Intervention Approaches*

Victim safety is a primary consideration in any DVIP and the following approaches should not be used:

- Any approach that blames or intimidates the victim or places the victim in any danger.

- Any approach that coerces, mandates, or otherwise requires victim participation (i.e., couples counseling, marriage or family therapy is prohibited).
- Any approach which excuses violence due to mental health diagnoses.
- Any approach which identifies addiction as the primary cause of violence.
- Communication enhancement or anger management programming which blames primary causality of violent behavior on anger or provocation.
- Any approach that settles for less than abuse-free behavior.
- Treatment for mental health or substance abuse problems can't be substituted for DVIP.

### *Fees*

- A fee for services will be paid by the participant. It is recommended that the participant pays on a regular, consistent basis. Participant fees may be based on a sliding scale and based on the program's determination of the participant's ability to pay; fees may be waived if necessary. Programs must accept indigent participants.

### *Attendance Policy*

- The program participant must complete all group sessions as outlined in the DVIP contract. Participants cannot begin group sessions until intake and orientation are completed.
- Notice of this policy must be signed by the participant and placed in their file.

### *Curriculum Content*

DVIPs must provide information on each of the following content areas in the intervention sessions:

- The definition of domestic violence.
- The perpetrator's responsibility for the violent and abusive behavior.
- Healthy sexual relationships.
- The myths and beliefs about domestic violence, including myths about provocation.
- Listening and communication skills and listening with empathy.
- Problem solving skills.
- Stereotypical gender role and societal expectations, including power and privilege.
- The effects of domestic violence on victim, children, self, and others.
- Dispelling myths about substance use/abuse causing domestic violence.
- The role of religion, ethnicity, and/or culture in domestic violence.

### *Intake and Orientation Procedures*

DVIPs have the authority to accept or reject referrals and therefore, programs will develop and use criteria for acceptance or rejection for intervention services. Some perpetrators are not ready or are not appropriate for DVIP. For example, some perpetrators may have behaviors or medical conditions that would make a group process inappropriate or ineffective. If a program does not have the capacity to make an adequate assessment for compounding problems, such

as substance abuse or mental illness, referrals for assessments, in collaboration with probation officers, should be done by the appropriate agency with follow-up to the DVIP. The program's policies and procedures should include the criteria for accepting/rejecting clients. Suppose the DVIP rejects an applicant for intervention services. In that case, it must advise the court or referring agency, or the individual if the individual is a self-referral, of the basis for rejection. The DVIP should provide referrals if appropriate.

### *Intake*

Programs should have a standard intake assessment which includes:

- Demographic Information
- History of violence
- Substance abuse
- Mental health history
- Arrest history
- Adverse childhood experiences
- Relationship history
- Description of referring incident
- Victim and current partner name and contact information.
- Releases of information for victim, current partner, probation, or referring agency

### *Orientation*

All clients should receive an orientation prior to beginning group sessions. An orientation outline and a statement acknowledging the need to attend must be in each participant's file. Orientation may be provided individually or with a group of program participants. Orientation must include:

- The definition of domestic violence;
- An overview of the program's rules and regulations;
- An overview of effects of domestic violence on children; and
- An outline of program content.

## **Notification and Contact of Victims, Current or Former Partners Including Those with Whom the Perpetrator Shares a Child**

Programs must make reasonable attempts to notify victims, current or former partners, including those with whom the perpetrator shares a child in common, about the perpetrator's participation in the program.

This notification is required to enhance the safety of victims and children and provide information about the intervention services, the importance of safety planning and the availability of services from local domestic violence/sexual assault programs.

DVIPs shall have written policies and procedures that govern victim notification and contact. These written policies and procedures must effectively address victim safety. DVIPs are required to notify participants that the program will make victim contacts.

### *Victim Notification Documentation:*

Programs shall have policies to address contact and documentation that will include:

- The program shall keep victim contacts or attempted contacts in a victim file, separate from a participant's file.
- The program shall make reasonable efforts to determine the correct address for correspondence including at least 2 reference sources and will include documentation of such efforts.
- The program shall have a policy regarding returned mailings to a victim.

### *Notification of Participant Enrollment in DVIP:*

The DVIP shall notify the victim, in writing or by phone if appropriate, within 5 business days of receiving the participant's signed program contract. Victim notification shall include:

- Information about the DVIP including program structure, content, and philosophy.
- The limitations of the program, including a statement that participation in a DVIP does not ensure the participant will stop any or all abusive behaviors.
- Contact information for the local domestic violence/sexual assault program.
- Name and contact information for probation office if probation is involved.
- A clear statement that the victim is not expected in any way to help the participant complete any DVIP requirements and that the participant's eligibility for the DVIP's services is not contingent in any way on victims participating in the intervention.
- Provision for further contacts.
- The "Questions about DVIP" document found in Appendix C.

### *Notification of Participant Completion*

The DVIP shall notify the victim, in writing or by phone if appropriate, within 5 business days of the participant's completion of the program. Victim notification shall include:

- Notification that the participant has completed the program.
- Contact information for the local domestic violence/sexual assault programs.
- Name and contact information for adult probation office if probation is involved.
- A clear statement that completion of the program does not ensure the participant will stop any or all abusive behaviors.

### *Notification of Participant Rejection or Termination*

The DVIP shall have a policy to notify the victim of the participant's rejection or termination from the program. The program must attempt to contact the victim within the first 24 hours

after the participant's rejection or termination from the program. Victim notification shall include:

- Notification that the participant has been rejected from or been terminated from the program;
- Contact information for the local domestic violence/sexual assault programs; and
- Name and contact information for adult probation office if probation is involved.

### *Notification of Imminent Threat to Health or Safety (Duty to Warn)*

The program shall have written policies to address mandatory reporting requirements which include a duty to warn when the program believes, in good faith, there is a threat of harm to another person, the public, or a threat of suicide. These policies shall address:

- Immediate notification of the intended victim
- That authorization of releases of information are not required
- Staff responsibilities
- Documentation protocols
- If probation is involved, notification to the supervising officer

### *Victim Initiated Contact*

DVIPs are not an advocacy resource for victims. Referrals to a local domestic violence/sexual assault program that is a member of the Coalition should be made for victim advocacy. Such referrals are essential to avoid conflict of interest and because of the expertise of the advocacy program in safety planning and related issues. If a victim initiates contact with any DVIP staff, **DVIP staff shall not inform the program participant about the contact.** However, upon victim-initiated contact, the program can provide the following information to the victim: client attendance and status in the group.

## Confidentiality

### *Victims*

DVIPs shall maintain the confidentiality of victims, unless communications are specifically waived by the victim in writing.

- Intervention programs shall not persuade or coerce victims to waive confidentiality and shall inform victims of the limits to confidentiality.
- Such limits include child abuse, vulnerable adult abuse, or a threat to themselves or others. Programs have the obligation to report all such instances.

### *Program Participants*

Program participants in intervention programs are to be notified in writing about the limits to confidentiality. (See Program Participant Contract Components)

### *Other Persons Attending DVIP Groups*

Appropriate notice should be given to the coordinator or facilitator of the DVIP before an outside person attends the group. A valid purpose to visit a program may include a facilitator from another DVIP group to observe how it functions or the Standards and Review Committee members. Generally, attendance of Probation or other relevant case (or court) personnel is discouraged unless for purposes of collaboration or training. Attendance of others including students, advocates, etc. is deemed allowable by the individual programs. The program should consider the effect on the program participants and their confidentiality. Under no circumstances should the media or reporters be allowed to attend.

## Program Participant Contracts and Rules

### *Contract Components*

The contract for services must clearly outline participant's obligations in the program and the nature of the intervention program. Program participants should receive a copy of the signed contract and the participant rules. To ensure informed consent, the following issues must be addressed in participant contracts for intervention programs:

- Length of program;
- Criteria for termination, including a clause noting that failure to comply with terms of the contract, including group rules, could lead to being terminated, and should at a minimum address the following:
  - Attendance policies and consequences of inadequate attendance;
  - The expectation of active participation, including sharing personal experiences, values and attitudes and completing group activities and assignments;
  - An agreement to stop violent and threatening behaviors, to be non-abusive and non-controlling in relationships, to comply with all court orders, and to cooperate with the rules for group participation;
  - Other program expectations, such as written exams, concurrent treatment requirements, rules regarding possession of weapons, and any other conditions on participation in the intervention program;
  - Fees/methods of payment;
  - Drug and alcohol policy, including the requirement that the participant attend sessions free of drugs or alcohol;
- Note that groups may have visitors from time to time who have an appropriate purpose for attending, such as Adult Probation officers; and
- Each program participant must have validly executed written waivers of confidentiality upon entering the program and must update waivers that expire during the duration of the program. These waivers are related to:
  - Contact with any victim for information sharing about acceptance, rejection, change of program participation or termination of the participant;

- Duty to warn and protect victims, law enforcement and third parties related to any risk of serious harm posed by the participant;
- Compliance with any court orders including reporting to probation offices, the courts, and appropriate Justice system requirements.
- The right to confidentiality within the specified limits, and the requirement that participants safeguard the confidentiality of other group members;
- The program should provide a specific date when the waiver expires.
- Requirement that the program participant provide important, relevant documents such as documents related to prior violence, prior or concurrent treatment services, or execute appropriate releases of information to obtain the privileged information.
- Allowing a current DVIP to obtain information from any prior DVIP that the participant has attended.

### *Participant Rules*

Every DVIP shall have written participant rules and guidelines. These rules should be distributed to participants upon completion of intake. The rules will be included or referred to in the participant contract and must require the participant conform to the rules as a condition of participation. The rules shall include specific guidelines about:

- attendance,
- fees,
- appropriate clothing,
- assignments,
- smoking/food or drink consumption,
- alcohol/drug use,
- group structure and rules,
- termination,
- re-admission, and
- confidentiality.

## Termination

### *Termination for Noncompliance*

The program shall develop guidelines for termination so that decisions are uniform and predictable, and to prevent discrimination against any participant. Guidelines must include decisions regarding participant termination after committing an act of violence or violating a protection order.

At a minimum, any information provided by a participant about a violent shall be provided to the appropriate probation officer.

Consideration for termination may include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to maintain regular attendance;
- Failure to actively participate;
- Repeated lateness to group meetings;
- Failure to admit any abusive behavior;
- Disruptive behavior in group;
- Failure to make appropriate use of the intervention program;
- Failure to comply with other intervention conditions which are part of the participant's contract;
- Failure to pay fees;
- Violation of any provisions of a court order, particularly when the offender is court-mandated to the program;
- An inability to function in a group.

Noncompliance with the contract, with a court order, or with group rules shall be documented in writing in the participant's file.

The program shall have an established procedure for written notification about termination for noncompliance. This procedure must include written notification to participants, victims, current partners and/or partners with whom the participant has a child, and others as needed, such as the court and/or adult probation when the participant is court-mandated to participate.

### *Completion*

The program shall have established criteria for program completion including, but not limited to, meeting all financial obligations and compliance with the contract and group rules.

Communications with the participant, the victim, and the court specify only that the participant has completed the program based on adequate compliance with the contract and any court order. The DVIP will not refer to completion of the program as "graduation" or "successfully completing the program." The program shall not provide a certificate of completion. The program will not express to anyone the prediction of any offender's future behaviors.

The program shall have an established procedure to notify victims about program completion.

The program shall have an established procedure that notifies the court of the program completion of court-mandated offenders.

## Staff/Program Ethics & Accountability

### Program

At the time of their annual review, programs must complete a Program Review Form that identifies program staff, whether they have completed required training, and whether they have met annual training standards and submit it to the Standards and Review Committee.



Failure to meet these standards will result in the program not being identified as an approved provider according to these standards. Providers previously approved may be removed from referral lists for noncompliance with these standards.

## Program Personnel

Programs shall develop written employment policies and codes for personnel conduct including policies regarding retention and termination.

- Prior to hiring, programs must complete a criminal background check and a Nebraska child/adult abuse central registry check for an applicant.
- Prior to hiring, programs will ask applicants about abusive and controlling behaviors they have used in their relationships. Program staff will be held to the same definition of abuse as program participants. It is recommended that applicants are asked to review a comprehensive list of abusive behaviors. Program staff must be violence and abuse free in their own lives for the past two years.
- Program staff must disclose any incident of abuse they commit to their program supervisor within 24 hours of the occurrence. These program staff shall not continue involvement with the DVIP.
- Program staff shall not engage in problematic consumption of legal drugs, alcohol, or other substances.
- Program staff shall not use illegal drugs.
- Program staff shall not communicate or act in ways in the DVIP that perpetuate attitudes of victim-blaming, sexism, or misogyny.
- Program staff shall not harass or exploit participants; program staff shall not engage in any type of romantic or sexual activity with any participant in the intervention program.
- Program staff shall immediately report suspected child abuse by a program participant pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. section 28-711 (Reissue 1998).
- Volunteers and intern staff must be supervised on site at all times by a paid staff member.
- Participants who complete the program and are invited to serve as mentors or facilitators in the program will always be supervised by paid staff members on site.

## Conflicts of Interest

People working for DVIPs – either paid or as volunteers – should not have conflicts of interest with the program. Conflicts of interest include:

- Receiving gifts, compensation, or other consideration of value from any participant; receiving gifts, compensation, or other consideration of value from any other party that might give the appearance of being designed to influence assessment of a participant.
- Being employed by another agency/organization in a manner that is deemed to be a conflict of interest by the Standards and Review Committee.

- Being employed by another agency/organization where disclosure by the participant of their actions might create confidentiality breaches.
- Facilitators who are also in private practice as counselors or therapists shall refrain from recruiting clients from the DVIP. This applies to current and former participants of the DVIP with which they are affiliated. If a participant requests a referral for counseling or therapy, facilitators should provide a list of potential providers or direct the participant to probation, parole, or other court-related monitors for appropriate referrals.
- The program shall not receive any financial consideration from a referral organization for making a referral to a participant.
- Program facilitators should refrain from providing couples counseling to current DVIP participants as it may impact victim safety.

## Research

Research must protect the confidentiality of DVIP participants and victims.

## Violations

Violations of these standards should be reported to the Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence ([DVIP@nebraskacoalition.org](mailto:DVIP@nebraskacoalition.org)) within 7 days of the program learning of the violation.

# Personnel Qualifications and Training

## Trainers and Trainings

The following list of trainers qualify for education and continuing education training requirements below. This list was created with input provided by the Standards and Review Committee.

Approved Trainers:

- Nebraska Coalition
- Nebraska Domestic Violence State Standards Annual Meeting
- Nebraska Victims Assistance Academy
- End Violence Against Women International
- Batterer Intervention Services Michigan
- House of Ruth Maryland Training Institute
- Praxis International

## Staff Training

### *Facilitators and Co-Facilitators*

Facilitators, Co-Facilitators must have the following qualifications and training:

- Bachelor's degree in a human service-related area OR 2 years of equivalent combination of college courses and/or applied experience.
- Completed structured training specific to Nebraska on the basics of domestic violence at annual Nebraska Domestic Violence State Standards Annual Meeting and additionally complete an offenders' education curriculum training. One facilitator must have completed the training requirements before the program begins and the other facilitator must have completed training within six (6) months of the program beginning.
- Continuing education is required. All facilitators and co-facilitators must complete 12 hours of continuing education training annually. A variety of topics relevant to improving skills and enhancing the development of the program through in-person and virtual workshops and/or seminars/webinars from the approved list of trainers (see above) will be accepted as part of the requirement. The provider must document dates of attendance and relevance of the training to remain in compliance with these Standards.
- Facilitators and co-facilitators will receive supervision at a minimum of once per quarter.

Supervisors must have the following minimum qualifications and training:

- Bachelor's degree in a human service-related area OR 4 years of an equivalent combination of college courses and/or applied experience of direct service in domestic violence advocacy or group work with perpetrators of domestic violence.
- Completed structured training specific to Nebraska on the basics of domestic violence at the Nebraska Domestic Violence State Standards Annual Meeting and additionally complete an offenders' education curriculum training.
- Continuing education is required. All supervisors must complete 12 hours of continuing education training annually. A variety of topics relevant to improving skills and enhancing the development of the program through in-person and virtual workshops and/or seminars/webinars from the approved list of trainers (see above) will be accepted as part of the requirement. The provider must document dates of attendance and relevance of the training to remain in compliance with these Standards.
- Supervisors will provide supervision to facilitators and co-facilitators a minimum of once per quarter.
- Programs in which individuals both supervise and facilitate may attend monthly, virtual, peer support/supervision offered by the Standards and Review Committee to meet this requirement.

### *Victim Contact/Services Representative*

Staff having regular victim contacts who are not Facilitators, Co-Facilitators, or Supervisors must have completed the Coalition's victim advocacy training.

## Program Review and Listing

## List of Approved Providers

Programs that have been reviewed and meet the minimum standards outlined in this document will be listed as an approved DVIP provider. The Coalition will forward this list to the Nebraska Probation Administration and may post the list of approved providers on its website. The DVIP provider agrees to participate in a full review at least once every three years and a desk review of documentation in the alternate years. The Standards and Review Committee approval is required to remain on the list of approved DVIP providers. The Standards and Review Committee may request additional reviews with a DVIP provider for any reason and at any time.

## Application Process

Programs wishing to receive initial approval must:

- Complete the application form;
- Supply needed information and documentation as requested.

Once an initial review occurs, the program will receive a letter from the Standards and Review Committee with its findings regarding program approval. If the program is not approved, the Standards and Review Committee will provide suggested changes to the DVIP provider along with a timeline for making necessary changes. The DVIP provider will not be identified as an approved provider until the Standards and Review Committee finds that the minimum standards have been met.

## Annual Renewal of an Approved DVIP provider

Programs must undergo annual reviews to remain on the list of approved DVIP providers. DVIP providers will meet with Standards and Review Committee members at least once every three years. These meetings will be similar to the Application Process outlined above. If a DVIP is not required to participate in a meeting with the Standards and Review Committee, it will need to participate in a desk review of its documentation. Programs participating in a desk review must:

- Complete a Program Review Form and submit to the Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence ([DVIP@nebraskacoalition.org](mailto:DVIP@nebraskacoalition.org));
- Provide updated staff information and evidence of the staff's compliance with continuing education requirements;
- Provide copies of current MOUs if applicable; and
- Provide other documentation requested at the time of the review.

The Standards and Review Committee may contact the local Adult Probation offices to ensure that MOUs are being followed. The Standards and Review Committee will review documentation provided during the review and through contacts with Adult Probation. If it is determined that a DVIP provider needs to make changes to remain in compliance, the Standards and Review Committee will notify the provider of these changes and the program will be given a period of time to comply with the request.

The Standards and Review Committee may temporarily remove a DVIP provider from the list of approved providers during this period if it is believed the non-compliance could have a negative impact on victim safety.

The DVIP provider will also be removed from the list of approved providers if the Standards and Review Committee believes the provider has failed to make requested changes following a review. Nebraska Probation Administration will be notified of any changes in the status of a program on the list of approved DVIP providers.

The Standards and Review Committee may request additional reviews with a DVIP provider for any reason and at any time.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: New DVIP Application and Renew Information

### *Application for Certified Compliance with Nebraska's Domestic Violence Intervention Programs Standards*

#### **General Instructions**

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- The Nebraska Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) Certification Process is intended to certify DVIPs for inclusion in the Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence's approved list of DVIPs. This application is used by The Standards and Review Committee to identify appropriate intervention programs. Appropriate programs will be listed on the Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence's web site.

Programs that do not meet the qualifications for certification will not be listed on the Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence's website as an approved provider and will not be utilized by Nebraska's Courts, Nebraska Probation Administration, or Nebraska Board of Parole.

The following application outlines the requirements for DVIP certification, as described by Nebraska's state standards for Domestic Violence Intervention Programs. Applications and supporting documents ***must be submitted electronically*** to the Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence at [DVIP@nebraskacoalition.org](mailto:DVIP@nebraskacoalition.org).

## Please do not mail applications.

#### **Certification Timeline**

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Once documentation is submitted to the Standards and Review Committee, the committee will review and provide the applicant with feedback within 60 days.

#### **Audit Process**

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During the three-year period after certification, the Standards and Review Committee may audit a certified program to ensure compliance with the Guidelines. At any time during normal business hours, and as deemed necessary by the State Standards and Review Committee, the certified DVIP shall make available to the Standards and Review Committee or any of their authorized representatives, any of the program's records for inspection and audit.

**Please be sure to attach all specified documents listed in this application or your application will be considered incomplete.**

*Application for Certified Compliance with Nebraska's Domestic Violence Intervention Programs Standards*

**Complete this sheet and submit it with the application.**

2023-2026

---

Application Period

Date

---

Name of Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP)

---

DVIP Director

---

DVIP Address

---

Name of Parent Organization

---

Executive Director

Name of Contact to appear on Coalition Website

---

Address if different from above DVIP Address

---

DVIP Phone

---

Program Website

Email

---

Fee for your program:

Program Hours of Operation

What type of organization is your parent organization?

\_\_\_\_\_ For profit

\_\_\_\_\_ Not for profit

\_\_\_\_\_ Government agency

How many sessions is your program?

\_\_\_\_\_

Counties (City) Served<sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

Name of who will supervise DVIP programming: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Credentials: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Years of experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of DVIP Facilitator #1: \_\_\_\_\_

DVIP Facilitator #1 Credentials: \_\_\_\_\_

DVIP Facilitator #1 Years of experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of DVIP Facilitator #2: \_\_\_\_\_

DVIP Facilitator #2 Credentials: \_\_\_\_\_

DVIP Facilitator #2 Years of experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of DVIP Facilitator #3: \_\_\_\_\_

DVIP Facilitator #3 Credentials: \_\_\_\_\_

DVIP Facilitator #3 Years of experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of DVIP Facilitator #4: \_\_\_\_\_

DVIP Facilitator #4 Credentials: \_\_\_\_\_

DVIP Facilitator #4 Years of experience: \_\_\_\_\_

---

<sup>1</sup> Programs serving multiple counties with the same staff may submit a single application but programs operating in multiple counties with different sites and staff must complete different applications for each site.



The following criteria are directly related to Nebraska’s DVIP State Standards and are required for certification. In areas where supporting documentation is requested, but not provided, it will be determined that the program does not meet the requirement. **Please note:** When program policies and forms are requested, please only submit those pages pertinent to the policy requested. Do not send copies of entire policy manuals with your application. If a policy or form addresses multiple guidelines, **only submit one copy.**

## 1.0 OPERATING STANDARDS

### *1.1 Intake Process*

Include the policy/procedure, **and** any relevant forms or supporting documentation for client intake and assessment with the application.

### *1.2 Program Format*

Include the policy/procedure, **and** any relevant forms or supporting documentation for program format.

### *1.3 Victim Confidentiality*

Include the policy/procedure, **and** any relevant forms or supporting documentation for victim confidentiality and reporting with the application.

### *1.4 Victim Safety*

Include the policy/procedure, **and** any relevant forms or supporting documentation for victim safety with the application.

## 2.0 DISCHARGE CRITERIA

### *2.1 Program Completion*

Include the policy/procedure, **and** any relevant forms or supporting documentation for program completion with the application.

### *2.2 Program Reporting Responsibilities*

Include the policy/procedure, **and** any relevant forms or supporting documentation for program reporting with the application.

## 3.0 PROGRAM STAFFING

Include the policy/procedure, **and** any relevant forms or supporting documentation for program staffing with the application.

Include the policy/procedure, **and** any relevant forms or supporting documentation (e.g., job descriptions, organizational charts, etc.) with the application.

**\*\*Please include confirmation of registration for any pending training.\*\***

## 4.0 COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

All programs will make reasonable and prudent attempts to create working relationships with the following community resources.

### *MOU with Probation District*

Please describe below your relationship with the local victim services provider. How do you intend to continue collaborating?

---

---

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## ANNUAL RENEWS ONLY - STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Information requested in this section is for state data gathering purposes only. The answers to these questions have no bearing on program certification but must be completed annually.

### Organizational Structure

1. Do you have a parent organization? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes or \_\_\_\_\_ No
2. If yes, what is the name of your parent organization?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the primary mission/purpose of your parent organization?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### DVIP Information

1. How long has your DVIP been in operation?
  - a. Less than 1 year
  - b. 1-3 years
  - c. 3-5 years
  - d. More than 5 years
2. Which curriculum or curriculums does your DVIP use?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you offer the following interventions?
  - a. Group
  - b. Individual
  - c. Both
4. How many total DVIP groups does your program run per week?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How many **total** participants has your program served during the past year?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - a. For individual sessions?  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. For group sessions?

---

6. How many **total** participants have completed your program during the past year?

---

7. How many **total** participants have been terminated from your program during the past year?

---

## Appendix B: Sample Victim Contact Letters

### *Announcing enrollment in class*

DATE

Dear (Victim or current Partner Name),

This letter is to inform you that (Participant's Name) has been court ordered to attend Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP). (Participant's Name) gave us your name as a victim of their abusive behavior. They have been informed that you will receive the information in this packet, and will also be contacted when they complete DVIP, if they are terminated from DVIP, or if the DVIP facilitators feel you may be in danger of imminent harm.

DVIP works to increase the safety of victims of domestic violence by holding abusers accountable and teaching non-violent relationship skills. (Participant's Name) is required to attend these classes with the goal of stopping their abusive behavior. However, attending these classes does not guarantee (Participant's Name)'s behavior will change, either while they are attending or after completing the program.

Your safety is our priority throughout this program and there are many resources available to help you. Most survivors find it to be very helpful to work with an advocate from their local domestic violence program. Advocates believe survivors have the right to make informed decisions about their own lives, meaning an advocate will never tell you what you "should" do. Instead, an advocate will provide information about options and resources available to you.

**All contact with domestic violence programs is completely confidential. No information shared with the domestic violence program will ever be shared without your written consent.**

Your local domestic violence program is (name and phone number of local DV program).

You may also find it helpful to speak with a member of the DVIP team. We can answer questions about the program and what material is being shared with the participants. You may also choose to share information about the abuse you have experienced or are experiencing. People who are abusive minimize their behavior often, so these contacts also help us understand how honest they are while in the program. It is important for us to know what your feelings and concerns are so we can offer you support and referrals. You are under no obligation to help (Participant's Name) complete any DVIP requirements. In addition, their eligibility or continued participation in DVIP is not contingent on your participation or contact with the DVIP team.

**All contact with DVIP team members is completely confidential. No information about you, including whether you have contacted the program, will ever be shared with the participant.**

You can contact us at (name and phone number).

The program is XX weeks and (Participant's Name) is required to attend class on (day of the week) from (beginning to end time).

Probation Officers are another important part of the team and may be able to provide immediate accountability should (Participant's Name) continue to use abusive behavior. The Probation Officer assigned to (Participant's Name) is (Probation Officer's Name and phone number). The DVIP Team will communicate with the Probation Officer on an ongoing basis with the goal of increased accountability.

All of these individuals are united in believing that the abuse is not your fault and healing is possible.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Contact number

## *Announcing termination from class*

DATE

Dear (Victim or Partner Name),

This letter is to inform you that (Participant's Name) was terminated on (date) from the Domestic Violence Intervention Program which they began attending on (date). (Participant's Name) was terminated because they failed to comply with program rules that they agreed to abide by as a condition of participation in the program. The referral source (probation officer) has also been notified of their termination.

Your safety remains our priority and there are many resources available to help you. Most survivors find it to be very helpful to work with an advocate from their local domestic violence program. An advocate will provide information about options and resources available to you. Some of these resources include:

### 24 Hour Crisis Line

Confidential support, information and access to services are available 24 hours a day by calling the program in your area.

### Legal Referrals & Assistance with Protection Orders

Although programs cannot give legal advice, they can provide assistance with obtaining a domestic abuse protection order, emotional support through court proceedings, and referrals to local attorneys.

### Emergency Shelter

Providing a safe place to stay is an important service of the programs. Using a combination of shelters and hotels, programs offer people a place to escape further violence.

### Ongoing Support and Information

Individual ongoing support is provided to survivors and their children. Support groups for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault are available in many communities. Some programs offer groups for teens experiencing violence, children's groups, and educational groups for men who batter.

### Transportation

Emergency transportation to a safe place is available 24 hours a day. Programs may also provide transportation to court proceedings, medical services or to other community agencies.

### Education & Prevention Programs

Prevention programs are provided for children and young adults on topics such as child sexual abuse, sexual assault, dating violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence. Staff and volunteers are also available for presentations to church and civic groups, and for training and presentations to other area agencies who work with survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Medical Advocacy & Referrals

Staff and volunteers are available upon request to accompany survivors to hospital emergency rooms and local medical offices for treatment of injuries or an exam after a sexual assault.

**All contact with domestic violence programs is completely confidential. No information shared with the domestic violence program will ever be shared without your written consent.**

Your local domestic violence program is (name and phone number of local DV program).

You may also find it helpful to contact the Domestic Violence Intervention Program for additional information. We can be reached at (phone number). (Participant's name) remains on probation. Their probation officer is (officer name) and they can be reached at (phone number).

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Contact number

## *Announcing completion of class*

DATE

Dear (Victim or Partner Name),

This letter is to inform you that (Participant's Name) completed Domestic Violence Intervention Program on (date). This means they have attended all required classes. DVIP works to increase the safety of victims of domestic violence by holding abusers accountable and teaching non-violent relationship skills. (Participant's Name) was required to attend these classes with the goal of stopping their abusive behavior. However, completing these classes does not guarantee (Participant's Name)'s behavior has changed.

Your local domestic violence/sexual assault program has resources available to help you if (participant's name) continues or resumes utilizing abuse, or if you need additional support in your healing process. These resources include:

### 24 Hour Crisis Line

Confidential support, information and access to services are available 24 hours a day by calling the program in your area.

### Legal Referrals & Assistance with Protection Orders

Although programs cannot give legal advice, they can provide assistance with obtaining a domestic abuse protection order, emotional support through court proceedings, and referrals to local attorneys.

### Emergency Shelter

Providing a safe place to stay is an important service of the programs. Using a combination of shelters and hotels, programs offer people a place to escape further violence.

### Ongoing Support and Information

Individual ongoing support is provided to survivors and their children. Support groups for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault are available in many communities. Some programs offer groups for teens experiencing violence, children's groups, and educational groups for men who batter.

### Transportation

Emergency transportation to a safe place is available 24 hours a day. Programs may also provide transportation to court proceedings, medical services or to other community agencies.



### Education & Prevention Programs

Prevention programs are provided for children and young adults on topics such as child sexual abuse, sexual assault, dating violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence. Staff and volunteers are also available for presentations to church and civic groups, and for training and presentations to other area agencies who work with survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

### Medical Advocacy & Referrals

Staff and volunteers are available upon request to accompany survivors to hospital emergency rooms and local medical offices for treatment of injuries or an exam after a sexual assault.

Your local domestic violence program is (name and phone number of local DV program).

You may also find it helpful to contact the Domestic Violence Intervention Program for additional information. We can be reached at (phone number). (Participant's name)'s probation officer is (officer name) and they can be reached at (phone number).

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Contact number

## Appendix C: Common Questions About Domestic Violence Intervention Programs

### *What is domestic violence?*

Domestic violence or intimate partner violence is establishing and maintaining power and control over one's current or former intimate partner. The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) defines it as "a pattern of coercive and assaultive behaviors that one former or current partner uses against the other." These behaviors can include:

- Isolation from friends and family
- Emotional abuse
- Monitoring
- Controlling the finances
- Physical and sexual assault

None of us ever deserves to be harmed. Domestic violence is traumatic and interrupts our lives and our relationships with other people. Because these experiences happen more than once, and often get worse over time, it can be confusing to know what to do. You may be feeling out of control and overwhelmed by your feelings and experiences. You may even blame yourself or feel like you have lost your worth, your strength, and your power. You need to understand and believe that **the abuse is not your fault and healing is possible.**

### *What type of help is available if I've experienced domestic violence?*

The letter you received with this document contains information about the domestic violence/sexual assault program in your area. These programs offer a range of services for both adults in children, including the following core services:

#### 24 Hour Crisis Line

Confidential support, information and access to services are available 24 hours a day by calling the program in your area.

#### Legal Referrals & Assistance with Protection Orders

Although programs cannot give legal advice, they can provide assistance with obtaining a domestic abuse protection order, emotional support through court proceedings, and referrals to local attorneys.

#### Emergency Shelter

Providing a safe place to stay is an important service of the programs. Using a combination of shelters and hotels, programs offer people a place to escape further violence.

### Ongoing Support and Information

Individual ongoing support is provided to survivors and their children. Support groups for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault are available in many communities. Some programs offer groups for teens experiencing violence, children's groups, and educational groups for men who batter.

### Transportation

Emergency transportation to a safe place is available 24 hours a day. Programs may also provide transportation to court proceedings, medical services or to other community agencies.

### Education & Prevention Programs

Prevention programs are provided for children and young adults on topics such as child sexual abuse, sexual assault, dating violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence. Staff and volunteers are also available for presentations to church and civic groups, and for training and presentations to other area agencies who work with survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

### Medical Advocacy & Referrals

Staff and volunteers are available upon request to accompany survivors to hospital emergency rooms and local medical offices for treatment of injuries or an exam after a sexual assault.

### *What is a Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP)?*

DVIP works to increase the safety of victims of intimate partner violence by holding abusers accountable and teaching non-violent relationship skills. These classes are educational rather than therapeutic. They focus on the participant taking responsibility for their own behavior.

**DVIPs are designed to teach non-abusive behaviors. They are not designed to save marriages or fix relationships.**

### *Why is someone abusive?*

Being abusive is a choice by an individual, and a different choice can be made. Nothing "makes" an abusive person be abusive. It is not caused by lack of money, alcohol, drugs, unemployment, stress, or mental illness. When a person abuses his/her intimate partner, it is a choice.

### *Does completing DVIP guarantee the person will change?*

No. The program will provide tools to make changes, but it's up to them to use the tools. Some people continue to be abusive while in the program and afterwards. Others stop or diminish their physical violence while increasing emotional abuse or other threatening behaviors.

### *Is my partner changing?*

This is a really tough question to answer. We believe that if someone who uses abuse genuinely wants to change, they need to do four things:

- Express a willingness to give up control in their relationship.
- Take responsibility for their behavior.
- Work cooperatively with their partner to settle differences and resolve disagreements respectfully.
- De-emphasize their self-centered goals, and instead develop goals with their partner and others that reflect more than their own needs and desires.

Some things to think about are:

- Do you feel you can truly say what you want without fear of “punishment” or being yelled at?
- Do you feel you can do things that your abusive partner has not “allowed” in the past and he/she will be ok with it?
- What does your “gut” instinct tell you?
- Think of the abusive behaviors and tactics that your abusive partner has used against you. Do you see those same behaviors and tactics? Has your abusive partner started using new tactics and behaviors against you that might not seem as bad as the other ones, but are still abusive?
- Look over the power and control wheel, are any of those tactics/behaviors taking place? For example, does he/she blame you for making him/her mad? Does he/she try to determine what you can and can’t do?

### *Will couples counseling help?*

Couples counseling is not a safe option due to the fact that a survivor, more often than not, will not be able to share how she/he truly feels. At the same time, the abuser will most likely dominate the conversation in a manner that will not hold him/her accountable for being abusive. If the victim does share information in the session, the abuser may “punish” the partner for this at a later time or use the information against the partner. You may find individual therapy to be a helpful resource and your local domestic violence program will be able to assist you with a referral.

### *What about our kids?*

Exposure to domestic violence can have a significant effect on children and youth, with short- and long-term impacts on physical, social, and emotional well-being. However, you can be a strong and loving connection for your children to help them heal and stay safe. Forming a support system for yourself and your children will be an important part of the healing process. This may include interacting with educators, a child advocate, a therapist, coaches, or other supportive adults.

## Appendix D: Sample MOU with Probation

### *Memorandum of Understanding between [DVIP Program] and District [#] Probation*

This is an agreement between [DVIP Program] hereinafter called the Program and District [#] Probation, hereinafter called Probation.

- I. Purpose and Scope
  - a. The purpose of this MOU is to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each party as they related to the effective and efficient communication around probationers involved in the Program’s services.
- II. Responsibilities of the Program
  - a. The Program shall contact Probation when an individual has completed the orientation/intake process.
  - b. The Program shall complete written monthly reports on each probationer involved in the Program’s services and will submit these by an agreed upon date to Probation.
  - c. The Program shall participate in monthly staffing, via phone or in person, to discuss probationer cases and participate in planning around individual probationers.
  - d. The Program shall contact probation within 48 hours of termination.
  - e. The Program shall contact probation within 24 hours of new violence.
- III. Responsibilities of Probation
  - a. Probation shall contact the Program when an individual is placed on probation and has been referred to the Program for services.
  - b. Probation shall participate in monthly staffing, via phone or in person, to discuss probationer cases and participate in planning around individual probationers.
  - c. Probation shall contact the Program within 48 hours of filing a motion to revoke probation and/or if the probationer absconds.
- IV. It is mutually understood and agreed by and between the parties that:
  - a. Any modification to this agreement must be agreed upon by both parties.
  - b. This agreement can be terminated by one or both parties, in writing, and will become effective within 30 days of notice by the terminating party to the other.
- V. Funding
  - a. This MOU does not include the reimbursement of funds between the two parties.
- VI. Effective date and Signature
  - a. This MOU shall be effective upon the signature of both parties’ authorized officials. It shall be in force from [date] to [date]. The Program and Probation indicate agreement with this MOU by their signatures.

---

Probation Authorizing Official Signature

---

Program Authorizing Official Signature

---

Date

---

Date

## Appendix E: Probation Report Form

[PROGRAM NAME]

[PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION]

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of weeks completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Probation Officer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Facilitator's Evaluation of Client's Overall Participation (as observed in group)

**A:** Acceptable. Client can continue in program.

**NI:** Needs Improvement. Client must improve behavior or face termination from program.

Items Evaluated (circle appropriate column at right)

Cooperation	<b>A</b>	<b>NI</b>
Attentiveness	<b>A</b>	<b>NI</b>
Not being argumentative	<b>A</b>	<b>NI</b>
Not being disruptive	<b>A</b>	<b>NI</b>
Participation in group discussion	<b>A</b>	<b>NI</b>
Completes homework assignments	<b>A</b>	<b>NI</b>

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Evaluator/Facilitator/Coordinator)

Facilitator Names: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Please note, compliance with group requirements is not proof that the individual has stopped battering/abusing behaviors. It is simply a report on the individual's behavior while in this controlled setting.**