

Working to ensure victims are safe



STANDARD 3

Engagement	Compliance with this standard	Evidence standard has been put into practice
Assess victims' safety, requirements, identifying risks and providing advice to victims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work out a risk assessment for victims to identify risks. Build a network to refer victims to, if necessary. Include risk assessment in training and intake process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk assessment. Training on risk assessment. Network agreements.
Put into place safety and security measures, including basic standards of safety for victims within the premises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take certain measures to make your premises safe and secure. Inform victims about the steps taken to make the premises safe and secure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pictures of premises Safety plan Escape plan
Protect victims' data and ensure confidentiality, while respecting the requirements of national legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be clear and transparent about the fact that services are confidential. Ensure information on client victims is recorded and can be shared in an easy and safe way within the organization and with partner organizations. Work out data protection protocols conform national and international law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Service procedures

Assess victims' safety, requirements, identifying risks and providing advice to victims

- *Work out a risk assessment for victims to identify risks.*

In the first contact with a victim, it is important to identify any ongoing risks for the victim. This can be done within the intake process by asking a few questions e.g. Is there still a threat? Is there ongoing victimisation? Is the victim fearful of anything. A risk assessment can be put in place to identify the nature of the risk, the extent of the risk and the likelihood of the risk to happen. If a victim is still at risk it will be very important to work out an action plan to stop the ongoing victimization. Referral can be part of this action plan including contacting the police.

- *Build a network to refer victims to, if necessary.*

Depending on the nature of the risk, your organisation may not be equipped to deal with it. In these circumstances, it may be necessary to refer the victim to another organisation. It is therefore very important to build in advance a network with different organisations and to develop relations with those organisations for example by meeting on a regular basis. Experience shows that it's much easier to refer victims to a certain organisation if you know the people working there.

- *Include risk assessment in training and intake process.*

To make this risk assessment part of the basic service procedure it is advised to include this into the intake procedure and victim's needs assessment. It will be important to train staff on risks and dangers and the assessment process. The risk assessment process should be included in internal procedures when taking on new clients.

Put into place safety and security measures, including basic standards of safety for victims within the premises

- *Take certain measures to make your premises safe and secure.*

It is advisable to begin with a security assessment by reviewing the security of your premises and procedures. Is there a locked door? Can only those people come in who have an appointment? Could those people, their acquaintances or the offender pose a risk? Does the organisation operate an open office/ walk-in facility and what are the implications of this? What measures are in place to deal with a dangerous situation? Have staff trained for or practiced such situations? Where do you keep confidential information? Do you have an escape plan e.g. by fire?

- *Inform victims about the steps taken to make the premises safe and secure.*

Give victims clear and transparent information about safety and security at your premises, whilst being careful not to reveal confidential information which could be helpful to a criminal.

Protect victims' data and ensure confidentiality, while respecting the requirements of national legislation

- *Be clear and transparent about the fact that services are confidential.*

Confidentiality of services is always very important. With victims still at risk, it is very important to make clear what the confidentiality principles of the service are, and what victims can expect. There is a difference between confidentiality and keeping a secret to yourself, for victims this is not always clear. Be clear how information is kept confidential and any circumstances where information would need to be passed on. Victims should know this from the outset, not after they have given the information.

- *Ensure information on client victims is recorded and can be shared in an easy and safe way within the organization and with partner organizations.*


For every victim, there needs to be a case file with their information. The file is confidential, the victim has the right to see the file if wanted, and it should be possible to share necessary information with other organizations in the case of referral. This sharing of information has to happen in a safe and confidential way and according to national and international law. The way of working has to be worked out in the service procedures and victims have to be informed about it. This means in particular that information is only shared for the purposes for which it was provided and that consent has been obtained in line with national laws.

- *Work out data protection protocols conform national and international law.*

Have a look at data protection protocols in your own country and make them part of your own service procedure. Make this clear to victims and partner organisations.

Evidence standard has been put into practice:

- Risk assessment
- Training on risk assessment
- Network agreements
- Pictures of premises
- Safety plan
- Escape plan
- Service procedures

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