

Working with a Deaf Survivor: A Resource Guide



**Created in Collaboration with:
Deaf Vermonters' Advocacy Services
Battered Women's Services and Shelter
Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Vermont Center for Independent Living**

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Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services (DVAS)
Battered Women's Services and Shelter (BWSS)
Green Mountain Self Advocates (GMSA)
Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL)
Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (the Network)

Reproduction of this document, or any part therein, is encouraged. This guide is best used in tandem with a Deaf advocacy organization which understands the nuances, safety concerns and barriers unique to Deaf culture. To locate a Deaf advocacy group near you, contact:

Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services (DVAS)

<http://www.dvas.org>

PO Box 61, South Barre, VT 05670

Director: 802.661.4240 (Voice/TTY/Videophone, Fax)

Hotline/Advocate: 888.202.3827 (Voice/TTY)

Email: kdarling@dvas.org Pager: keri@sprint.blackberry.net

Reproduction of the collaboration model used to create this document is encouraged. For more information to start your own collaboration, contact:

Battered Women's Services and Shelter (BWSS)

PO Box 652, Barre VT 05641

Phone: 877.543.9498 (toll free hotline and office)

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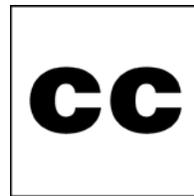
Interpreter Available



Assisted Listening



Assistive Devices Provided



Closed Captioning



TTY Available on Site

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Supporting Deaf or Hard of Hearing Victims
in DV/SV Programs & Shelters

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1. PREPARING TO WORK WITH SURVIVORS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

To achieve full accessibility to Deaf women in the community it is necessary to install appropriate equipment, make adjustments in budget and operating procedures, and establish a relationship with Vermont's Deaf DV/SV Advocacy Program, Deaf Vermonters' Advocacy Services (DVAS).

An abused Deaf woman may find any lower level of accessibility inadequate to meet her needs, and even see it as a barrier to seeking services. News about levels of accessibility travels rapidly on the "Deaf Grapevine".

A. Equipment

Evaluate the equipment you use every day for accessibility.

- For information about how to evaluate your equipment, contact the NW Office or DVAS.

Install and train staff on use of the following equipment:

OFFICES:

- TTY and/or Video Phone
- Fire alarm lights
- Accessible doorbell/entry system (audio intercoms are not accessible to deaf people)
- Communication Boards

SHELTER: All of the above, AND

- TTY and/or Video Phone for women to use
 - For information about Video Phone equipment and services, contact the NW Office
- Baby crier signal
- Doorbell lights
- Captioned TV

B. Operating Procedures

- Install and learn to use equipment listed above. Know how to set up the equipment, and have instructions available for setting up equipment and captioning.
- Keep the numbers for local interpreters, Vermont Interpreter Referral Service, and DVAS by the phone.
- Establish a protocol for receiving hotline calls from Deaf callers.

Some things to consider:

- It can be dangerous to publish your TTY # if it cannot be answered 24 hours a day just like your hotline.
- Some Deaf people may shy away from contacting a hotline if the only way to do so is through a *Telephone Relay* service (see Section 3A below).
 - For most deaf people, *Video Relay Services* are preferred to TTY (see Section 3A below).
 - If that is not available, most people prefer to call directly from their TTY to another TTY.

- Using a *Telephone Relay* service is often seen as the worst option.
- **Some local programs have addressed this problem by establishing a protocol with the National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH).** The NDVH's TTY and Video Phone numbers are answered 24 hours a day by trained deaf victims' advocates who can respond to a caller's immediate needs and make skillful referrals to local programs. Under these cooperative protocols,
 - The local program publicizes the NDVH #s instead of their own: *"Deaf callers use TTY: 1-800-787-3224 or D-Link VP Number: 206-787-3224"*;
 - The program's hotline calls from Deaf callers are funneled through the NDVH to ensure deaf callers are *always* able to reach an advocate directly;
 - The NDVH contacts a program's on-call advocate right away after getting a call from a Deaf woman in their area, to refer the caller and provide technical assistance to advocates regarding a caller's specific communication needs and preferences.
- Establish a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with DVAS regarding working together in different situations; this could include
 - shelter assessments
 - shelter advocacy
 - court advocacy
 - other advocacy
 - consultation, technical assistance and training
- * See appendix D for a sample MOU.

- Offer training for staff and volunteers twice a year.

- Add a line item in the annual budget for interpreting costs. Consider setting up a common fund with other organizations to even out the costs over a period of time.

- Keep and maintain an updated list of local interpreters
 - For an updated list, contact the NW Office

- Have all new staff and volunteers view “Ready for Anything”, a video produce by Abused Deaf Women’s Advocacy Services (ADWAS).

- FOR SHELTER: View DVAS’s videotape “Deaf victims guide to staying at a shelter”; make sure Deaf victims who arrive view it too.

C. Outreach

Look for opportunities to reach out to Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in your community.

- Include a link to DVAS on your program’s website.

- Ask DVAS to link to your website.

- Use “Access Symbols” on your outreach materials

- For more info, contact the NW Office

- Make sure your outreach materials are clear about how Deaf callers can access your hotline: *“Deaf callers use video or telephone relay”* OR *“Deaf callers use TTY: 1-800-787-3224 or D-Link VP Number: 206-787-3224”*; (See 1B: Operating Procedures – National DV Hotline)

- Ensure the National Domestic Violence Hotline is aware of your accessibility – they will give your program a special mark in their database for referrals.

- State on outreach materials *“We have culturally accessible equipment for Deaf people”*.

- Use accessible language on outreach materials (5th-grade level English).

- Send outreach materials to locations frequented by Deaf people:
 - Audiologists’ offices
 - Local organizations that work with Deaf people

2. WORKING WITH DVAS

Deaf Vermonters' Advocacy Services (DVAS) is a statewide program providing culturally specific advocacy to survivors of domestic and sexual violence with all types of hearing loss. DVAS is very similar to local Network programs in philosophy, structure and practice, providing confidential, voluntary services to support survivors' empowerment.

If you need a DEAF ADVOCATE for

A survivor who signs, please call the hotline

- From phone, dial the hotline: 888-202-3827
- From TTY: 888-202-3827
- An advocate should respond within an hour.

A survivor who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing and does not sign, please call the hotline

- From phone, call 888-202-3827; an operator will answer and take your contact information.
- An advocate should respond within an hour.

Non-emergency consultation, technical assistance or training contact Keri

- 1-802-661-4240
- Kdarling@dvas.org

3. COMMUNICATING WITH SURVIVORS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing can use special equipment, technology, interpreters and services to communicate with hearing people or with each other. For more information about Assistive Technology and Communication Services, see RESOURCE GUIDE which accompanies this protocol (Appendix A).

A. COMMUNICATING REMOTELY

1. USING Email or Text Messages

Some Deaf or Hard of Hearing people use email regularly throughout the day, through a computer or hand-held device like a Blackberry. For some, this is the most convenient way to communicate.

- Use accessible language (5th grade level English)
- Ensure the person knows how often you will be checking email and is aware of how to contact you in an emergency or if a response is urgently needed.
- **Always discuss safety issues.** *See safety protocol in Appendix A.*

2. PLACING CALLS USING ASSISTIVE EQUIPMENT, TECHNOLOGY & SERVICES

- **TTY to TTY:**

- DIRECT CONNECT (TTY plugs directly into phone line)
 - Dial directly: “CTRL” + “DIAL”, #
 - PHONE ON TTY (Telephone receiver plugs into TTY to transmit tones)
 - Dial phone # and immediately plug receiver into TTY
 - GA (Go Ahead) to take turns typing
 - SK (Stop Keying) to hang up
 - See Appendix B for other commonly used abbreviations and phrases
 - **Always discuss safety.** *See safety protocol in Appendix A.*
- **Phone to TTY:** dial 711 Relay (or 1-800-295-0195) and give Communication Assistant (CA) the person’s phone #
 - Talk normally and CA will translate.
 - Say “Go Ahead” when you are finished talking to signal that it is their turn.
 - **Always discuss safety.** *See safety protocol in Appendix A.*
- **Phone to Video Relay Service:** If a person has Video Phone equipment and prefers this method for communicating with you, get her #.
 - Dialed on a regular phone, her # will connect you with an operator who will contact her.
 - Talk normally and operator will interpret (translate).
 - **Always discuss safety.** *See safety protocol in Appendix A.*

3. RECEIVING CALLS USING ASSISTIVE EQUIPMENT, TECHNOLOGY & SERVICES

- **TTY to Phone:** Deaf person uses TTY to contact Telephone Relay Service.
 - A Communication Assistant (CA) calls you on your regular telephone, explains how Relay works, and facilitates communication between you and Deaf person.
 - As you speak, the CA types your responses which the Deaf person reads on their TTY screen.
 - Talk normally and CA will translate.
 - Say “Go Ahead” to take turns
 - If a Deaf caller calls the afterhours service, call them back at the given number and it will connect you through a relay service
 - **Always discuss safety.** *See safety protocol in Appendix A.*

- **Internet Relay (IR) to Phone:** *Same experience as telephone relay.*
 - Deaf or Hard of Hearing person uses a computer or Blackberry to contact the Relay Service Communication Assistant, who will call you on your regular phone.
 - As you speak, the Communication Assistant types your responses which the other person reads on her computer screen.
 - **Always discuss safety.** *See safety protocol in Appendix A.*

- **Video Relay (VRS) to Phone:** *Same experience as telephone relay.*
 - Deaf person uses video conferencing equipment to contact Video Relay Center operator, who will call you on your regular phone.
 - As you speak, the operator signs to the other person through video conferencing equipment.

- **Always discuss safety.** *See safety protocol in Appendix A.*

B. COMMUNICATING IN-PERSON

In general, and whenever possible, **let a woman determine how she prefers to communicate.**

1. Getting Started When an Interpreter is Not Present

- If at all possible, **give her her own pen and pad of paper.**
- **Use only for communicating simple information.**
- **Use 5th grade English** to make the communication as accessible as possible. Keep written communications short and simple.
- **Use pictures and Communication Boards.** Draw, gesture, point at objects and pictures to communicate.
- **Rephrase if the person seems not to understand.** Check regularly for understanding.
- **Destroy written notes** right away – so there will be no more record of your conversation than if it had been spoken.

See RESOURCE GUIDE for more information (Appendix A).

2. Using Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)

If a woman prefers ASL and cannot or does not want to wait for an interpreter, and if your program has the necessary equipment, you can use Video Remote Interpreting Services (VRI) to communicate.

See RESOURCE GUIDE for more information (Appendix A).

3. Accessing an ASL Interpreter

- **Identify preferred interpreters:**

- Show the person DVAS' **Interpreter Info Sheet (see printout in the back pocket)**. This document uses accessible language and images to ask people to identify the interpreters with whom they do and do not like to work.

OR

- **Ask if the person prefers a specific interpreter** or if there are any interpreters with whom she would not feel comfortable. If she is not sure, you can show her the list at www.virs.org and ask her to point to any with whom she knows she would or would not like to work.

- **Contact an Interpreter**

- **Vermont Interpreter Referral Service (VIRS)** will need the person's name, so **get a release** from her to share her name with VIRS. If she prefers, she can call them herself.
 - **Contact VIRS during business hours** to request a certified professional interpreter.
 - **VIRS: 1-800-639-1519**
- **Evenings and weekends you will need to contact an interpreter directly.** A **current list of interpreters** with their contact info can be found at: www.virs.org or contact DVAS.

- **Tell the person when the interpreter will arrive.** Depending on how far she needs to travel, an interpreter might arrive within 30 minutes to several hours.

See RESOURCE GUIDE for more information (Appendix A).

4. Increasing her Comfort

If at all possible while she's waiting, it can make a big difference if you make an effort toward her comfort by offering magazines, brochures, TV if available (Turn the closed captioning mode to ON or to CC1. You may need to access your TV's menu options to do this).

If in shelter, this could be a good opportunity to show the videotape "Deaf Victims Guide to Staying in a Shelter".

For most Deaf women, your efforts to communicate through gestures, written words and SMILES will be appreciated – don't be shy!

Appendix A

RESOURCE GUIDE

The information in this guide will help you to communicate with a Deaf person through a variety of assistive technology devices and interpreters. While you may be unfamiliar with these methods, using them is not difficult.

Section I. Communicating Remotely: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY - discusses some of the different types of devices that may be used, and some of the safety concerns and protocols that you should have with each.

Section II. Communication Services - details how to use the variety of relay services available.

Section III. Communicating in Person - gives information on how to communicate effectively face-to-face.

I. Communicating Remotely: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Video Phone	
WHAT IS IT?	<p>Video conferencing equipment, usually a webcam connected to a TV or computer screen, allows people who sign to communicate visually, using sign language, with other signers who also have the equipment.</p>  <p>Signers can also use the equipment to communicate with hearing non-signers through a Video Relay Service (VRS) or Video Remote Interpreter Service (VRI). See below for more info</p>
SAFETY ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If your program has a video phone: Make sure it is programmed to show NO NAME to people receiving VP to VP calls.• When using a relay service you can't use the person's voice/image to identify her, or to determine if you are talking to a man or a woman.• You can't hear/see what is happening out of the range of vision of the Video Phone or who else might be present.• A Video Phone display is visible and can be seen from several feet away.• Most Video Phones have a memory. Your number will be preserved in the machine and could be seen by anyone with access to the Video Phone.• When using a Relay service, you cannot identify the relay operator. The Relay service requires that their operators maintain strict confidentiality; however, some people may be hesitant to use Relay for fear the operator may know them or the person who abused or raped them.• There is the possibility of confusion due to translations. ASL is a unique

	<p>language, and some concepts are difficult to translate.</p>
<p><i>SAFETY PROTOCOL</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the person if she is in a private and safe place. • Ask the person to erase her Video Phone memory at the end of your call. • Establish a code name or word with the person at the earliest opportunity; use it to identify the caller each time she calls, and before any confidential information is transmitted. • Offer opportunities for face-to-face meetings with interpreters present. • If the person is fleeing, suggest she take the Video Phone with her if possible. • Suggest that she maintain a land phone line if possible, or explore other options for calling 911 in an emergency. Video Phones are dependent on internet connections. A land line can increase options for getting help.
<p><i>PLACING CALLS</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Phone to Video Phone:</u> If a person has Video Phone equipment and prefers this method for communicating with you, get her #. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dialed on a regular phone, her # will connect you with a Video Relay Service interpreter who will contact her. ○ Talk normally and interpreter will translate
<p><i>RECEIVING CALLS</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Video Phone to Phone:</u> Deaf person uses video conferencing equipment to contact Video Relay Service interpreter/operator. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interpreter / Operator will call you on your regular phone, explain how VR works, and facilitate communication between you and the Deaf person. ○ As you speak, the interpreter/operator signs to the other person through video conferencing equipment.

Computer

WHAT IS IT?

Computers allow people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing to communicate in a variety of ways including email, instant-messaging, or visually (sign language) using video conferencing equipment (usually a webcam) over a high-speed internet connection.



Computers can be used to call standard telephones (through a **Relay service**).

SAFETY ISSUES

- **You can't use the person's voice to identify her**, or to determine if you are communicating with a man or a woman.
- **You can't hear what is happening in the background** or who else might be present.
- **A computer display is visible and can be read from several feet away.**
- **Computers store emails and instant messages**, which sometimes can be accessed even after they have been "deleted".

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many Deaf people are not fluent in English or comfortable with complex English-based written conversations. • Some Deaf people use a wide variety of written abbreviations which can be confusing for people unfamiliar with them. • 911 calls placed from digital or computer-based phone systems will not automatically provide your location unless you have registered your address with your phone service provider. • Power OR internet outages disrupt digital phone/communication services.
<p>SAFETY PROTOCOL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask: “Is this a private email address? Does your [partner or the perpetrator] know about it?” Provide information about how to get a private and free email address and keep it confidential by accessing it only from safe computers. Contact the NW office for assistance. • Ask: “Is he/she good with computers?” “Do you think he/she might be using spyware* to spy on your computer use?” If so, it may not be safe to use a computer the perpetrator might be able to access. The perpetrator might be able to retrieve even deleted messages and track the caller’s internet usage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Spyware is computer software that is installed on a personal computer to intercept, monitor or take partial control over the user’s interaction with the computer, without the user’s informed consent. Spyware programs can collect various types of personal information, such as Internet surfing habits and sites that have been visited, and can also interfere with user control of the computer in other ways. • Suggest that the person may want to delete your emails, instant messages or numbers and “Empty Trash” as soon as possible. This is especially important if the discussion has included confidential information like where and when she will meet you or the location of your office or support

	<p>group. Make sure the caller knows that if the perpetrator is tech-savvy, he or she may still be able to get this information from the computer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the person what types of information are safe to send and whether and how it will be safe for her to receive your messages or pages. • Delete emails immediately so your program will have no more record of your communications than it would for any hotline call. • Establish a code name or word with the person at the earliest opportunity; use it to identify the person each time she contacts you, and before any confidential information is transmitted. • Offer opportunities for face-to-face meetings with interpreters present. • If the person is fleeing, suggest that she take the computer if possible. • Suggest that she maintain a land phone line if possible, or explore other options for calling 911 in an emergency.
PLACING CALLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ask the caller how to contact her.</u> Contact DVAS for more info or support.
RECEIVING CALLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Computer to Phone:</u> Deaf person uses Computer to contact Telephone Relay Service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For hearing person, the experience is just like any other Relay service. See Section II: Communication Services.

“2-Way Pager” or “Text Phone*”

***Often referred to as “Blackberry”**

WHAT IS IT?

Two–way text paging is a communication alternative that Deaf people use on a “Blackberry”, “Treo” or similar email based communication device with a small keyboard and screen. These small, light, hand-held devices are used to reach anyone, anytime, from almost anywhere. They communicate to other pagers or computers utilizing a vibrator to alert the user when a message arrives.

These devices can also be used to communicate with telephone users through a Relay service.



Some pagers have extra service features such as sending faxes, live TTY chat, instant message chat, voice to text or text to voice, browse on websites, or organizational tools (Calendar, Task List, Memo Pad, Calculator, and Address Book).

SAFETY ISSUES

- When sending email or text messages, you never know who may have gained access to the hand-held device, or who will gain access in the future.
- Suggest that the person may want to delete your messages or numbers as soon as possible. **It can be difficult to delete everything, especially sent messages.** DVAS can help with this.
- Ask the person what types of information are safe to send, and whether and how it will be safe for her to receive your messages or pages.
- Suggest the person put a “lock” on her device to prevent anyone from using it without her password.

RECEIVING CALLS

- For hearing person, the experience is just like any other Relay service. See Section II: Communication Services.

TTY

Or TeleTYpe-writer

WHAT IS IT?

The TTY enables people who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or speech impaired to converse on the telephone by typing messages that are sent through the telephone network. A TTY works by converting text messages into a sound-based code (loud beeps) that are transmitted through the telephone line. The person on the other end of the line must also use a TTY to decode the sounds back into text. Each party in the conversation takes a turn typing a message and then reads the response of the other person.

When a person who uses a TTY wants to converse on the phone with someone who does not have a TTY a **Relay Service** is used. *See Section II for more information.*



With a **Direct Connection**, the TTY is plugged directly into the phone line. Without a direct connection, the telephone receiver is plugged into the TTY to transmit tones (**Phone on TTY**).

Some people use TTY software which allows them to use a computer as a TTY.

For more information about TTY etiquette, abbreviations and tips for use, see Appendix B.

SAFETY

- **You can't use the person's voice to identify her**, or to determine if you are

<p>ISSUES</p>	<p>talking to a man or a woman.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can't hear what is happening in the background or who else might be present. • A TTY display is visible and can be read from several feet away. • Most TTY's have a memory. Your call will be preserved in the machine and could be replayed by anyone with access to the TTY. • Most TTY's have a printer that records your conversations. • Shelter screenings can take a long time. • Many Deaf people are not fluent in English or comfortable with complex English-based TTY conversations. • TTY users use a wide variety of abbreviations which can be confusing for people who rarely use the TTY.
<p>SAFETY PROTOCOL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the person if she is in a private and safe place. • Ask the person to erase her TTY memory at the end of your call. This is especially important if the discussion has included confidential information like where and when she will meet you or the location of your office or support group. • Erase the memory on your TTY at the end of your call. • Destroy the printed record of your call immediately. Suggest that she do the same. • Establish a code name or word with the person at the earliest opportunity; use it to identify the caller each time she calls, and before any confidential information is transmitted. • Offer opportunities for face-to-face meetings with interpreters present.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the person is fleeing, suggest she take the TTY with her if possible.
<p>PLACING CALLS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>TTY to TTY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DIRECT CONNECT (TTY plugs directly into phone line) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dial directly: “CTRL” + “DIAL”, # ○ PHONE ON TTY (Telephone receiver plugs into TTY to transmit tones) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dial phone # and immediately plug receiver into TTY ○ See Appendix B for commonly used abbreviations and phrases. • <u>Phone to TTY:</u> dial 711 Relay (or 1-800-295-0195) and give Communication Assistant (CA) the person’s phone # <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Talk normally and CA will translate. ○ Say “Go Ahead” to take turns
<p>RECEIVING CALLS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>TTY to Phone:</u> Deaf person uses TTY to contact Telephone Relay Service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Communication Assistant (CA) calls you on your regular telephone, explains how Relay works, and facilitates communication between you and Deaf person. ○ As you speak, the CA types your responses which the Deaf person reads on their TTY screen. ○ Talk normally and CA will translate. ○ Say “Go Ahead” to take turns
<p>Consider</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider combining questions and using abbreviations to make TTY calls go

	<p>faster. This can speed things up, but may make it more difficult for the caller to understand things. Check frequently for understanding.</p>
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- Consider having shelter staff listen in, with the caller's permission, during any hotline call whenever a situation is new for the person conducting the call.

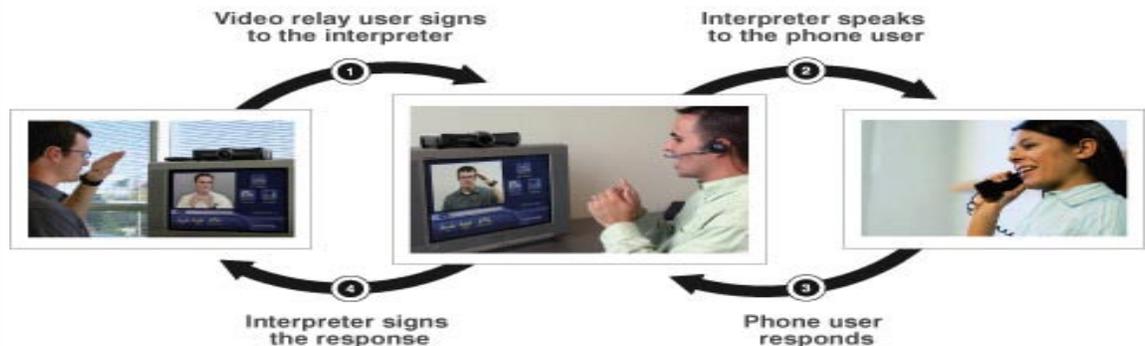
II. Communicating Remotely: COMMUNICATION SERVICES

Video Relay Service (VRS)

WHAT IS IT?

VRS is fast becoming the preferred alternative for Deaf callers who need to communicate with standard telephone users.

Video Relay Service, or VRS, allows a Deaf caller to communicate in American Sign Language (ASL), using video conferencing equipment, to a sign language interpreter who voices the signed message to a hearing telephone user. The interpreter then relays the voice message back to the Deaf caller using sign language.



	<p>VRS is faster than a traditional TTY relay call. A 15–minute TTY call can be shortened to 6.5 minutes using the VRS. For many Deaf or Hard of Hearing people, ASL is a more natural way to communicate than typing into a TTY. As more people obtain home computers with fast Internet connections, VRS is becoming much more popular for people who sign.</p> <p>VRS interpreter/operators follow the same strict Code of Ethics as other interpreters. All calls are confidential.</p>
<p><i>SAFETY ISSUES</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can't use a person's voice to identify the person. • Depending on their service provider, some users may not be able to call 911 through VRS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Through Sorenson, callers can call 911 using VRS ○ Through Sprint, they cannot.
<p><i>HOW TO ACCESS</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a person has Video Phone equipment and prefers this method for communicating with you, get her #. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dialed on a regular phone, her # will connect you with a Video Relay Service interpreter who will contact her.

Telephone Relay

24-hour toll-free service enabling communication between Vermonters who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or speech-impaired and hearing people with a voice-phone only.

Deaf or hearing people contact the Relay operator to initiate a phone call.



WHAT IS IT?

As the hearing person speaks, the Communication Assistant (CA or Relay operator) types the communication, which the other person reads on their TTY screen.

Relay interpreter/operators follow the same strict Code of Ethics as other interpreters. All calls are confidential and no records are kept. The state of Vermont contracts with Sprint Relay to provide this service.

SAFETY ISSUES

- You cannot identify the relay operator. The Relay service requires that their operators maintain strict confidentiality; however, some people may be

	<p>hesitant to use a relay service for fear their operator may know them or their perpetrator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety issues vary depending on whether the person is using a TTY, computer or Blackberry. See Safety Issues and Protocols for specific technologies above.
HOW TO ACCESS	Hearing people <u>dial 711 Relay or 1-800-295-0195</u> and give <i>Communication Assistant (CA) the person's phone #.</i>

Internet Relay

WHAT IS IT?

Sprint Relay Online (internet relay service) allows users to place relay calls to hearing people using a computer instead of a TTY.

As the hearing person speaks, the Communication Assistant (CA or Relay operator) types your responses which the Deaf person reads on her computer screen.

The image contains two screenshots. The left screenshot shows the IP-Relay.com website with a blue header and navigation menu. Below the header, there is a section titled "To use:" with two bullet points: "Go to: IP-Relay.com. Enter 10-digit phone # into 'Quick Connect Now' window. Click GO." and "Open AIM. Create 'MyIPRelay' AIM buddy. Then send an IM with the phone # to MyIPRelay." A red arrow points from the second bullet point to a screenshot of an AIM buddy list where "My IP Relay" is circled in red. The right screenshot shows the Sprint IP Relay website interface with a yellow header, navigation menu, and a form for "Number to dial". It also includes sections for "Product Information", "Announcements", and "Customer Care".

Relay interpreter/operators follow the same strict Code of Ethics as other interpreters. All calls are confidential and no records are kept.

SAFETY ISSUES

- Same as telephone relay
- It is more difficult to access a record of a conversation than with TTY.

HOW TO ACCESS

- Deaf callers connect to www.sprintip.com and input the number of the telephone user with whom they wish to connect.
- Hearing advocates should ask the Deaf person the best safe way to contact her.

III. Communicating In-Person

ASL Interpreter	
WHAT IS IT?	Sign Language Interpreters are hearing people who are fluent in both English and American Sign Language (ASL). Professionally trained and certified, interpreters are bound by a code of ethics which strictly defines and limits the interpreter's role and absolutely protects confidentiality and self-determination.
SAFETY ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some people may be hesitant to use an Interpreter who might know them or the person who abused or raped them.• Interpreters may not be immediately available.• There is the possibility of confusion due to translations. ASL is a unique language, and some concepts are difficult to translate. Take time to clarify complex statements/directions (an interpreter is still the best option for communicating).
HOW TO ACCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify preferred interpreters:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 1. Ask if the person prefers a specific interpreter or if there are any interpreters with whom she would not feel comfortable.○ 2. If s/he is not sure, you can show her a list (available from DVAS, the Network Office, or at www.virs.org) and ask her to point to any with whom she knows she would or would not like to work.• Vermont Interpreter Referral Service (VIRS) will need the person's name, so get a release from her to share her name with VIRS. If she prefers, she can call them herself.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BUSINESS HOURS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact VIRS to request a certified professional interpreter. Note that they will charge a fee for making the arrangements. VIRS: 1-800-639-1519 OR ○ Contact interpreters directly to avoid paying fee to VIRS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EVENINGS & WEEKENDS: you will need to contact an interpreter directly. A current list of interpreters with their contact info can be found at: www.virs.org or contact DVAS. • Tell the person when the interpreter will arrive. Depending on how far she needs to travel, an interpreter might arrive within 30 minutes to several hours.
CONSIDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlike other resources where you may encourage people to make calls themselves, interpreters are there <i>for you</i> too. It is appropriate, responsible and respectful to make this call yourself unless the person would prefer to do it. • While hearing people often think of <i>Deaf people</i> as needing interpreters, it can be more helpful to think of interpretation as a two-way street: the need for an interpreter is created as much by the hearing person's ignorance of sign language as by the Deaf person's deafness; both people need an interpreter in order to communicate with each other. • If the woman brought along a friend or family member to interpret, remember that this person may not be fluent in ASL or English and is probably not trained to interpret or to understand the role of an interpreter or the need for confidentiality. Intentionally or not, friends and family often

create more confusion by misinterpreting and/or interpreting only some of what is being communicated. They can also **increase the danger** a woman is facing by sharing information about her safety strategies or whereabouts.

Interpretation is a two-way street, and it's ok to tell a woman that YOU need an interpreter. As a hearing advocate, your task is to strike a delicate balance between your need for clear communication and respect for her wishes. You can offer that you can get started while you wait, using writing and/or her friend/family member to facilitate *simple communications only*.

Video Remote Interpreting Service (VRI)

WHAT IS IT?

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) uses video–conferencing equipment to provide sign language interpreting services 24/7. VRI is especially useful for rural areas or time-sensitive/emergency situations where a qualified interpreter is not available.

With VRI, both the Deaf and hearing person are in the same room. Video-conferencing equipment connects them to a call center in another city where an interpreter interprets their communication. The Deaf and hearing person talk back and forth, just as if the interpreter were in the same room.

SAFETY ISSUES

- None.

HOW TO ACCESS

- Setup:
 - TV
 - Video Phone box
 - High-speed internet connection
- Setup an account with a VRI service – contact DVAS for a recommendation. Follow their directions for how to place a call.

CONSIDER

- Most Deaf people who use sign language still prefer to use an in-person interpreter to communicate with non-signers whenever possible. **VRI is best used to complement local interpreter services rather than**

replace them.

- Because interpreters working in VRI settings are from all parts of the country, there may be some unfamiliarity among interpreters with local, regional or indigenous signs and acronyms.
- VRI will not be helpful for shelter tours or other situations requiring movement between rooms.
- VRI is not recommended for counseling or group settings.
- Some Deaf people may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable with this technology. A Deaf advocate may be able to help an individual understand and develop a sense of comfort with VRI, as well as empowering her to choose her preferred modes of communication in different situations.
- VRI can be very helpful when time is short and an interpreter is not available.
- VRI can be very helpful in a shelter setting, where many short and/or urgent communications are necessary throughout the day and interpreters cannot be present all the time.

Writing back and forth

WHAT IS IT?

If an ASL interpreter is not present, it's ok to start by writing notes asking a person how she would like to communicate: ASL, writing, lip-reading, etc. Some people would prefer typing on a computer to writing by hand, if one is available.

SAFETY ISSUES

- The person may not understand all of what you write.
- You may not understand all of what the person writes.
- You may not realize miscommunications have occurred. Depending on the information that was not communicated or miscommunicated, there could be significant safety implications.

HOW-TO

- Ask the person how she/he would like to communicate
- If a computer is available, offer that she can type if she prefers that to writing by hand.
- If at all possible, **give her her own pen and pad of paper.**
- **Use 5th grade English** to make the communication as accessible as possible. Keep written communications short and simple.
- **Use pictures and Communication Cards.** Draw, gesture, point at objects and pictures to communicate.
- **Rephrase if the person seems not to understand.**
- **Use only for communicating simple information.**
- **Destroy or delete notes** right away – so there will be no more record of your conversation than if it had been spoken.

CONSIDER

- **ASL is a visual language with no written form.**
- **ASL is a language unto itself, not just a visual form of English.** Many Deaf people are not fluent in English as either a first or a second language.
- **Do not assume that written forms and documents will be accessible** to a Deaf person – for many Deaf people, they are not.
- Even in the best of circumstances, this form of communication is extremely inefficient and only appropriate for communicating simple information.

Communication Cards

WHAT IS IT?

DVAS has created communication cards with commonly used words and phrases accompanied by pictorial representations of the corresponding ASL signs. Advocates can either point to the words/signs, or attempt to sign using the card as a guide.

SAFETY ISSUES

- The person may not understand all of what you are trying to communicate.
- You may not understand all of what the person is trying to communicate to you.
- You may not realize miscommunications have occurred. Depending on the information that was not communicated or miscommunicated, there could be significant safety implications.
- It is difficult to communicate nuances because of the limited number of signs available.

HOW-TO

- Allow the person to hold the communication board. When possible, have one for each of you.
- Point to the various signs/symbols to ask questions and have the person point to their communication board to answer.
- When possible, use with lip reading or writing as a way to check for understanding and facilitate a conversation.

CONSIDER

- **ASL is a visual language with no written form.** ASL sentence structure is different from English, so some signs may be pointed to in a different order than you expect.

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Even in the best of circumstances, this form of communication is extremely inefficient and only appropriate for communicating simple information. |
|--|---|

Lip-reading

WHAT IS IT?

Some people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing can understand some spoken English by watching the movements of a person's lips.

Especially for Hard of Hearing or Late-Deafened people who have some hearing, this may be an acceptable method of communicating with individuals in *some* situations.

SAFETY ISSUES

- The person *will not* understand all of what you say. Many words look exactly alike on the lips.
- You may not understand all of what the person says to you.
- You may not realize miscommunications have occurred. Depending on the information that was not communicated or miscommunicated, there could be significant safety implications.

HOW-TO

- Make sure you are in a quiet place.
- When communicating with someone who is lip-reading, look directly at them while speaking and make sure not to put your hand or anything else in front of your mouth.

CONSIDER

- Lip-reading can be tiring and frustrating, and can give the lip reader a headache.
- People who can lip-read may still prefer to use an interpreter as much as possible.
- Only about 30% of spoken language is visible on the mouth.

- **Lip-reading in conversations with more than one other person is impossible.**
- When working with a hard-of-hearing or Late-Deafened person in shelter, advocates need to be very sensitive to her communication needs, especially around communicating with other women and children in shelter. A woman who *can* sometimes communicate effectively through lip-reading should never be *expected* to communicate this way.
- DVAS has a special advocacy program for Hard of Hearing and Late-Deafened people who may use ASL. DVAS can support you and your staff *and/or* an individual with whom you are working.

Assisted Listening Device (ALD)

WHAT IS IT?

Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) are designed to improve communication for people with hearing loss in situations where hearing aids alone are inadequate.

In groups, or in noisy environments, sound is diffused, reverberates, and may be drowned out by other competing sounds. For people with a hearing loss, this makes listening almost impossible. Assistive listening devices carry the sound across distance and block out background sounds.

The desired sound is sent directly into the listener's ears. Instead of hearing from across the room, sound is heard as if the speaker were right next to the listener, while background sounds are silenced.

SAFETY ISSUES

- The person may not hear or understand all of what you are trying to communicate.
- Be careful not to assume that the person heard and understood everything. While ALDs amplify sounds, they may not be sufficient in all cases.
- You may not realize miscommunications have occurred. Depending on the information that was not communicated or miscommunicated, there could be significant safety implications.

HOW-TO

- ALDs could be helpful for a Hard-of-Hearing person in a support group or a shelter house meeting, at a court hearing, at a training or presentation, or anywhere there is background noise or more than one person is

	<p>talking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For situations where multiple speakers need to be heard and there is a single microphone, the microphone needs to be passed around. People should only speak when holding the microphone.
CONSIDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many types of ALDs which can be helpful in different settings. <i>Some Hard of Hearing and Late-Deafened people may not be aware of all the available resources.</i> DVAS can help people identify and access assistive devices that might be helpful for them. • DVAS has a special advocacy program for Hard of Hearing and Late-Deafened people who may use ASL. DVAS can support you and your staff <i>and/or</i> an individual with whom you are working.

Computer Aided Realtime Translation (CART)

Sometimes called **Communication Access Realtime Translation OR Realtime Captioning**

WHAT IS IT?

CART is a word-for-word speech-to-text interpreting service. A CART provider uses a court reporter's stenograph machine, special translation software and a notebook computer to render instant speech-to-text translation on a computer monitor or other display for the benefit of an individual or larger group in a variety of settings.

CART can allow people with hearing loss to fully participate in a variety of meetings, trainings or events by reading the computer screen as the session is occurring.

CART can be especially beneficial for people who are Late-Deafened, oral Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or who have cochlear implants.

SAFETY ISSUES

- Some people may be hesitant to use an Interpreter for fear the operator may know them or their perpetrator.
- CART providers may not be immediately available, causing delays in a crisis situation.

HOW-TO

- Ask the person what assistive services or devices would be helpful for her/him. Provide information about CART.

www.cartinfo.org

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CART providers must be scheduled in advance, and cost about the same per hour as interpreters. • Contact Green Mountain Captioners: Voice (802) 229-1545 TTY (802) 223-4716 • DVAS can help you determine when, where and how to use CART effectively
CONSIDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CART could be helpful, for a Late-Deafened person who speaks and does not use ASL, in a variety of settings including shelter house- or individual meetings, support group, court advocacy or hearings, meetings with other service providers, etc. • <i>Some Hard of Hearing and Late-Deafened people may not be aware of CART.</i> DVAS can help people identify and access assistive services that might be helpful for them. • DVAS has a special advocacy program for Hard of Hearing and Late-Deafened people who may use ASL. DVAS can support you and your staff <i>and/or</i> an individual with whom you are working.

Appendix B: TTY Protocols

Abbreviations:

GA Go Ahead	OPR Operator
SK Stop Keying	PLS Please
CD or CLD Could	Q Question Mark
CUL See you later	R Are
CUZ Because	SHD Should
HD or HLD Hold	THX Thanks
MTG Meeting	TMW Tomorrow
NBR Number	U You
OIC Oh, I see	UR Your

Etiquette

Greet a TTY caller the same as you would a voice caller; be sure to include your name. Answer the call with the same information you would a voice call. It is important not to modify and/or abbreviate your usual greeting even if you are uncomfortable with using TTYs and/or your typing may take longer.

Take turns and do not interrupt the other person (unless there is an emergency). Always let the other person complete what he or she would like to say, after which "GA" (which means "Go Ahead") will appear on the TTY display. To start typing or to interrupt before the person has typed "GA" is considered rude or disrespectful. When you see "GA," it is your turn to type. Remember to type "GA" when you're finished, so the other person knows to respond. This is similar to "over" when communicating by radio; it's a cue that it's the other person's turn.

If you are interrupted during your TTY conversation, type "pls hd" which means, "please hold."

While on a standard voice telephone call, the caller may hear the interruption taking place and your response to that interruption, or you might quickly say "just a minute." In hearing culture, this is acceptable etiquette. Via TTY, there is no way for the TTY user to know what's going on without you giving a cue. Don't just stop typing when interrupted, leaving the TTY caller wondering where you are. Type "Pls Hd" or "Please Hold" to let the other person know you need to take a break from the conversation. If you like, you may even type, "Pls Hd ... Someone in our office needs help." When you've completed the other business, simply resume typing since it is still your turn in the conversation.

You may prefer to tell the person who wants to interrupt that you are on a TTY call, and ask him/her to please wait until the call is finished. If you are interrupted while the caller is typing, hopefully you have a printer on the TTY and you may "catch up" on what was typed during the interruption.

When providing a lot of information, take breaks; allow the caller to ask questions or comment. Turn-taking is an important part of TTY calls. It can be frustrating in any conversation if one person goes on

and on. In hearing culture, it is acceptable to jump in and express your question or ask for clarification. Since one of the rules of TTY etiquette is to avoid interrupting, it is good practice to be brief and clear, breaking up information you are providing to allow for questions or comments by the caller along the way.

Don't worry about spelling errors if your meaning is clear within the context of the conversation. If your meaning is clear, e.g., typing "new yirk" rather than "new york," don't worry about making any correction. If you are relaying important detailed information (name, address, telephone number, etc.), then simply type "xx" then restart the word or phrase. Particularly for individuals who have visual disabilities in addition to being Deaf or speech-impaired, it can be difficult to "track" with the visual display. It is much simpler for you and easier for the other person to track if you continue typing, indicating an error with "xx" then restarting the word or phrase, etc.

Don't worry about punctuation. It is acceptable in TTY conversations to omit upper/lower case letters and to skip many types of punctuation. In part this is due to simple economy, ESL issues, and developed/accepted practices. If your TTY has a printout, you will notice that one person's text is in all lower case, and the other person's text is in all upper case. This makes it easier to follow the conversation on the resultant "tape."

When you've reached an ending point for the conversation, you may type "GA to SK" which indicates "you may Go Ahead, I'm ready to Stop Keying" (have nothing more to ask/say). At this point, the individual may say "Thanks for your help. Have a good day. SKSK" You may type, "Thank you. You too have a good day. SKSK" If the person has another question, the conversation will continue. You'll need to "play it by ear," just as you would a voice caller.

Depending on the caller, you may go back and forth a few times before you both finally type SKSK. This is an aspect of Deaf culture that needs to be recognized. Deaf callers are usually quite aware and respectful of hearing culture and they know offices can be busy places; in other words, often, they will modify their own TTY conversational practices to try to fit in with hearing culture/business world communication.

Lastly, relax and don't worry about making mistakes or not doing everything exactly perfect. Every individual who uses a TTY has different skills and a lot of experience communicating with hearing folks who are unaccustomed to using TTYs. As you would with anyone who contacts your office, do your best, be respectful and patient, and your TTY conversations will be effective.

Appendix C: Deaf Etiquette 101

Myths

- All Deaf and Hard of Hearing people wear hearing aids.
- Hearing aids restore hearing
- All Deaf and Hard of Hearing people read lips
- All Deaf and Hard of Hearing people use sign language
- All Deaf people are mute
- “Deaf and Dumb” is an acceptable term to describe deaf people who speak little or not at all
- Deaf people are less intelligent than hearing people
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing people share abilities, tastes, ideas and outlooks

Things to think about

When Writing

ASL is a language unto itself, and does not use the same grammar or sentence structure as English. When writing, try to keep sentences simple.

Miscommunications can be common due to the language barrier. For example, this sentence: “**YOU ME CROSS MISS ME KNOW SORRY**” is based on ASL grammatical structures. In English it translates to “**WE MUST HAVE JUST MISSED EACH OTHER. I AM SORRY.** “

With an Interpreter

- Communication is a two-way street
- Interpreting is a profession with national standards, a code of ethics and role guidelines
- The interpreter Code of Ethics prohibits sharing of work-related information
- The interpreter will interpret everything that is said
- The interpreter attempts to take on the persona of the person speaking
- The interpreter's responsibility is to transmit information accurately and clearly
- Background conversations such as phone calls or side conversations will be interpreted just as any hearing person would hear such conversation.

Do

- Speak at your natural pace.
- When talking, look at the deaf person, not at the interpreter, even when the Deaf person is looking at the interpreter.
- Position the interpreter next to you so that the Deaf/Hard of Hearing person can maintain eye contact with you and the interpreter.
- Position the interpreter away from shadows, bright lights or busy backdrops as they cause distortion
- Position yourself so that window light is not behind you
- Make sure there are no objects in your mouth when speaking (gum, food)

- To get the Deaf person's attention tap their shoulder, flash the lights, or tap on a surface they are touching
- Maintain eye contact with the Deaf person. If a friend or family member is present, be sure to talk to the Deaf person, not to the person accompanying her.
- Speak clearly and at a moderate pace
- Make sure there is as little background noise as possible
- If the phone rings or there is a knock on the door, tell the person if you need to answer it
- If there is difficulty getting an idea across, try different ways of phrasing things, or other ways of communicating
- Use body language and facial expressions
- Check to see if you are understood
- If you change the subject, make sure the person knows
- Use a computer or laptop for short conversations if there isn't an interpreter present
- Realize the person can't hear their own voice
- Be patient, positive, and relaxed

Appendix D: Sample MOU

There are many options for determining how you will work best with DVAS. The best option is to sit down and discuss the different scenarios where you can imagine working with a Deaf person, or with DVAS, and decide together how you want those interactions to occur. This process can then be detailed in a collaborative agreement, or a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This guide includes a MOU template for you to start thinking about how you would like to work together, but it should be customized for each organization.

Memorandum of Understanding between Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services and _____ (Program)

This Memorandum of Understanding defines the working relationship between Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services (DVAS), and _____ (Program). These organizations have come together to collaborate on cross-training, interagency referrals and advocacy, and regular communications.

DVAS provides comprehensive domestic and sexual violence services to Deaf and Hard of Hearing victims statewide, including:

- a. Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline (TTY: 24 hours a day; video phone: business hours)
- b. Court Advocacy
- c. Social services advocacy
- d. Hospital advocacy
- e. Peer support

DVAS also provides education and training statewide to improve communication accessibility for Deaf and Hard of Hearing victims and

promote awareness and prevention of domestic and sexual violence in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

_____ (**Program**) provides comprehensive domestic and sexual violence services to _____ (Service Area), including:

- a. 24-hour hotline
- b. ...

Both DVAS and _____ (Program) agree to:

1. Provide information to Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors in _____ (service area) about the services and resources available through MOU partner and facilitate referrals as appropriate.
2. Provide consultation, technical assistance and training as-needed to MOU partner, to support the delivery of accessible and culturally appropriate services.
 - a. **DVAS agrees** to provide training on culturally appropriate and accessible advocacy.
 - b. _____ (program) agrees to provide training on advocacy issues in _____ (service area).
3. Provide co-advocacy, with MOU partner, as desired by individual victims, including any of the following:
 - a. Court advocacy: (define)
 - b. Hospital Advocacy: ...
 - c. Social Services Advocacy:
 - d. Shelter Screening:
 - e. Shelter Advocacy:
 - f. ??
4. To meet at least annually to provide cross-training, share knowledge, skills and expertise, and to discuss the collaboration and address any issues that might arise;
5. That any concerns about _____(program's) or DVAS' individual or co- advocacy, systems advocacy, training or education should be addressed by directors and/or appropriate staff, directly and promptly.