

“The difference between just handing the victim resources and actually putting them on the phone with a domestic violence counselor is that you as a police officer are able to walk away knowing that the victim is one step closer to safety.”

*Police Department Detective,
Maryland
National LAP participant*

LAW ENFORCEMENT IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

Steps to Implement

**Develop Administrative
Procedures**

Train Your Officers

Collect and Report Data

Roles for Implementation

The **Team Coordinator** is responsible for communicating with MNADV, capturing and submitting data, monitoring progress of the LAP, and overall training procedures.

The law enforcement **agency representative** serves as the agency contact point for the Team Coordinator and MNADV. The agency representative should have some authority to make decisions and give input regarding training his or her agency and other LAP policy-related decisions. The agency representative should be prepared to attend all LAP meetings.

Call on MNADV for Assistance

MNADV will provide technical assistance, as capable, upon request. Additional, more detailed, and user-friendly documents are available upon request. You are welcome to contact us if you have difficulty with any of these steps.



**Maryland Network
Against Domestic Violence**

LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Develop Administrative Procedures

The law enforcement agency should develop procedures in the following areas:

Which phone should officers use? The protocol requires the officer to call the hotline from the scene of a domestic violence incident for every High-Danger victim, and to stay on scene until the call between the hotline advocate and the victim is completed. Determine whether there will be patrol phones issued and what the officers should do if the victim does not have a safe phone available (that is, should they call a supervisor, use the landline, or use their personal cell phone?). More information about which phone to use is in the **Lethality Assessment Program—Maryland Model Protocol**.

Will teens be screened? There may be a time when officers would want to screen a minor. Law enforcement agencies should make a policy regarding the screening of minors, taking into consideration mandatory reporting laws and whether the partner DVSP can provide services to minors.

What should a General Order announcing the LAP look like? We've provided the Team Coordinator with a **Sample General Order**.

How will Lethality Screens be collected and transmitted? All completed Lethality Screens should be gathered for data collection and filing, and all High-Danger Screens must be transmitted to the DVSP. Determine whether the officer will send the screen at the end of his/her shift or whether other staff will send all completed screens daily.

How should LAP materials be prepared, and how will officers access them? Prepare Lethality Screens with the local DVSP's hotline phone number at the bottom; reproduce the 3x5 protocol card; prepare a "victim information card" (with relevant contact information for law enforcement and the DVSP), and distribute sufficient copies of both to the officers. Determine whether these documents will be in hard copy or electronic.

Develop Administrative Procedures

Collaboration is Key

Know your partner DVSP agency representative.

A staple of the LAP is the level of cooperation, coordination, and communication—the 3 Cs—that is necessary to achieve the goal of getting victims into services. Agency representatives from law enforcement and the DVSP should introduce themselves to one another and keep open lines of communication.

Meet before you implement.

Although you will have had teleconferences, trainings, and meetings with the DVSP prior to implementation, it is important for law enforcement and the DVSP to meet to establish procedures and to ensure open lines of communication. Schedule at least one meeting prior to the implementation date, and consider instituting regular LAP meetings for all partners.

Resolve problems.

Any problems with communication or cooperation between law enforcement and DVSPs should be addressed immediately and systematically, and resolved to benefit the victim.

- For example, if a problem occurs during a phone conversation, the officer or advocate who experienced the problem should immediately contact his/her supervisor who, in turn, should immediately contact a supervisor from the partner agency to resolve the issue or at least to begin the process of addressing it.
- Additionally, the two supervisors should subsequently communicate with their respective LAP agency representatives so that the matter may be addressed at that level.
- Finally, the two agency representatives should communicate with one another for a final resolution.



Train Your Officers

FORMAT

Officers should be trained either through in-service (preferred) or roll call format.

LENGTH OF TRAINING

The **training time** is **about 2 hours**, including the 18-minute DVD. Refer to the **Law Enforcement Training Materials**.

TRAINING MATERIALS

Trainers are provided with a **Law Enforcement Agency Presentation, training handouts**, and the **Law Enforcement Communication Guidelines**.

PARTICIPANTS

To demonstrate the partnership and collaboration between your agency and the DVSP, representatives from your partner DVSP should be in attendance, if available.

PROVIDE LAW ENFORCEMENT STAFF WITH MATERIALS

Share the training, implementation and informational materials with staff. Include training materials in new staff orientation for entry-level personnel.

ONGOING TRAINING

We suggest you re-train staff every year and provide them with updated information and tools, as available.



**Best
Practices**

Data Collection

Five points of information should be captured and reported from the Lethality Screens:

- Number of High-Danger Screens.
- Number of non-High Danger Screens.
- Number of Screens where the victim answered none of the questions.
- Total number of Screens administered.
- Number of High-Danger victims who spoke on the phone with the hotline advocate.

Note: Law enforcement and DVSPs will provide some duplicate data to ensure that victims don't "fall through the cracks." Agency representatives from both the law enforcement agency and the DVSP should communicate with one another to ensure law enforcement and program data matches before reporting.