

**HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS, & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: UNDERSTANDING THE INTERSECTIONS**

MOLLY VOYLES & MONA MURO

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Who We Are

<b>Molly Voyles</b>	<b>Mona Muro</b>
<b>Public Policy Manager</b>	<b>Public Policy Coordinator</b>

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Where We Work:

- **Mission** – The Texas Council on Family Violence promotes safe and healthy relationships by supporting service providers, facilitating strategic prevention efforts, and creating opportunities for freedom from domestic violence.
- Focus on Policy, Prevention, and Supporting Service Providers




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Why should ESG providers focus on supporting survivors of domestic violence?

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### Framework for ESG Providers Supporting Survivors



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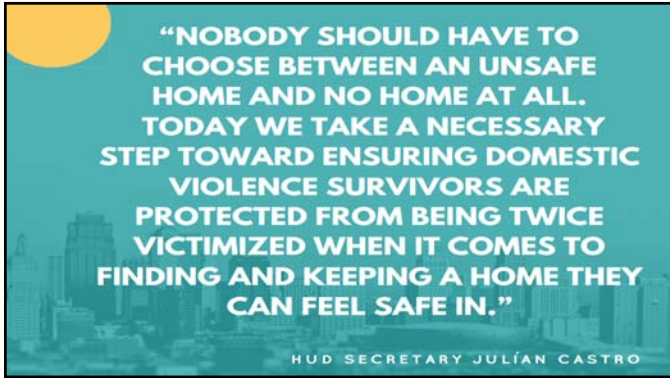
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**The Link: Domestic Violence & Homelessness**

- Between 22-57% of all homeless women report that domestic violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness.
- ~63% of homeless women have experienced domestic violence in their adult lives.
- A report by the U.S. Conference of Mayors found that 44% of the cities surveyed identified domestic violence as the primary cause of homelessness.

And...

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# In Texas

THE 2015 POINT IN TIME COUNT, APPROXIMATELY 21% OF ALL HOUSEHOLDS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS WERE IMPACTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

THAT SAME YEAR ~70,000 SURVIVORS USED SHELTER OR SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FROM A FAMILY VIOLENCE PROGRAM.

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## The Link: Domestic Violence & Homelessness

In a one day count of services provided to victims of family violence there were 10,871 unmet needs reported; 56% were for housing.

*"Housing is a constant need for domestic violence survivors. We get calls and walk-ins almost every day from women, most with children, who are fleeing abusive situations and are in desperate need of housing. We always have a waiting list."*

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## The Link: Domestic Violence & Homelessness

- 80% of women who experienced rape, stalking, or physical violence by an intimate partner reported significant short or long-term effects including PTSD



"Exposure to ongoing abuse can exacerbate symptoms and precipitate mental health crises, making it more difficult to access resources and increasing abusers' control over their lives."

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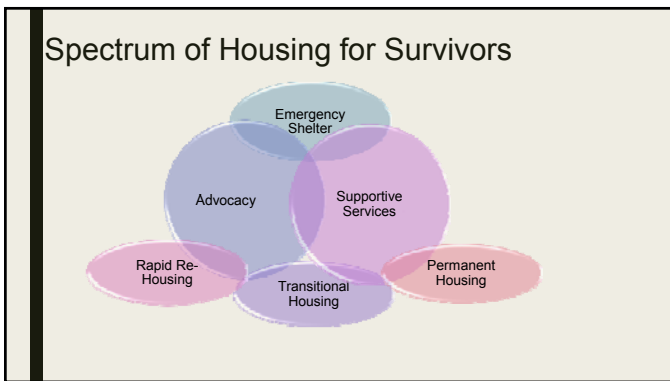
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Texas Pathways Home Excerpt:

**"...prioritizes affordable permanent supportive housing.yet it also recognizes that transitional housing & domestic violence shelters are vital resources in regions of texas where family violence is prevalent among persons experiencing homelessness."**

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### EXHIBIT D: Domestic Violence Beds

by Program Type, Household Type and CoC Type, HIC 2015

Type	DV Beds	Total Beds	% DV Beds
Total	55,686	830,120	6.7
Total - ES, TH, SH	50,562	426,267	11.9

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### Reciprocal Relationship of Abuse and Economic Hardship



Women living in poverty experience violence at twice the rate of those who do not

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## HOUSING Protections

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### Lease termination



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### Lease termination Sexual Abuse & Stalking

**WHO**

- A victim or parent/guardian of a victim of stalking sexual assault, sexual abuse, or attempted assault or abuse that occurred at home or on the premises in the last 6 months may terminate once:

**Documentation**

- Delivers documentation of a final sexual assault or stalking PO
- Delivers documentation of the assault or abuse from:
  - Licensed health care service provider
  - Licensed mental health service provider
  - Victim advocate authorized under Gov. code
- Vacates the premises and 30 days expire

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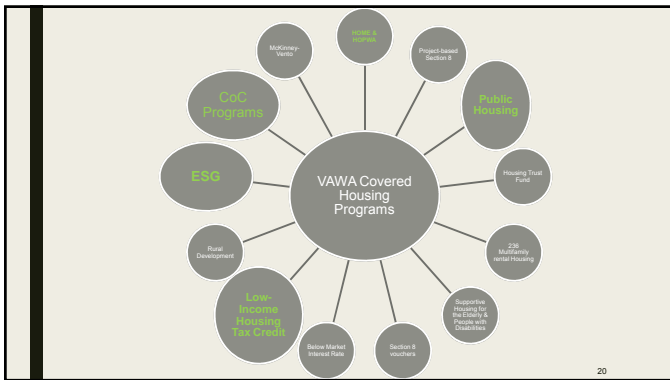
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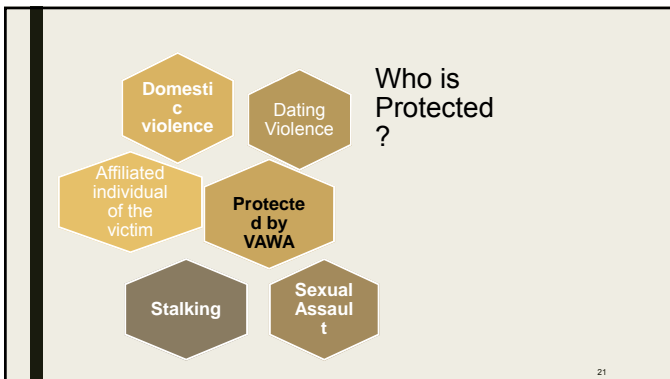
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**An applicant or tenant may NOT be denied :**

- Admission**
  - From participation in housing on the basis is or has been a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking
- Denial**
  - Assistance
- Termination**
  - Eviction

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### Consistency with Court Order Provisions

- Must Honor** PHAs, owners, and managers of covered housing programs
- Must Honor** Civil Protective Orders
- Must Honor** Court orders from dv and family court judges
  - Address the rights of access to or control of the property and distribution or possession of property among household members in a case

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### Housing Protections: Federal

- **Portability**
  - Section 8: Victims of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking using the Section 8 Voucher may:
    - transfer their voucher to another jurisdiction if safety is a concern
    - even if moving would otherwise terminate their lease
  - Public housing: Victims can request an emergency transfer to another PHA not within the same jurisdiction. The PHA may permit the family to move even if the family's lease term has not yet expired

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**• Bifurcation**

- Covered housing programs may:

- Evict, remove, or terminate the assistance of the offender
- Allow the victim, who is the tenant or lawful occupant, to remain without penalty

**90 days**  
To establish eligibility for a covered housing program

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### Housing Protections: Federal

➤ **Emergency Transfers**

- Each federal agency must:
  - adopt a model emergency transfer plan to be used by PHAs, owners, or managers of housing assisted under the "covered housing programs"
- This transfer plan must:
  - allow survivor tenants to transfer to another available and safe dwelling unit assisted under a "covered housing program" under certain circumstances
  - must describe policies for assisting tenants to make emergency transfers when a safe unit is not immediately available

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**victims are more likely to have a problem finding housing because of their unique & often urgent situation, poor credit, rental & employment histories, & limited income due to inability to collect and/or enforce child support & alimony payment -reif**

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**Protections from Adverse Factors**

- Applicant or tenant may **not** be denied:
  - admission to, denied assistance, terminated from participation, or evicted
  - On the basis of OR as a direct result of victimization

• Amended §5.2005(b)

- Poor credit or rental history
- Criminal record

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**Domestic Violence is Linked to a Range of Negative Economic Outcomes, Including**

- Decreased safety options
- Increased risk of future violence

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**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Coordinated Access/Entry & Comparable Databases

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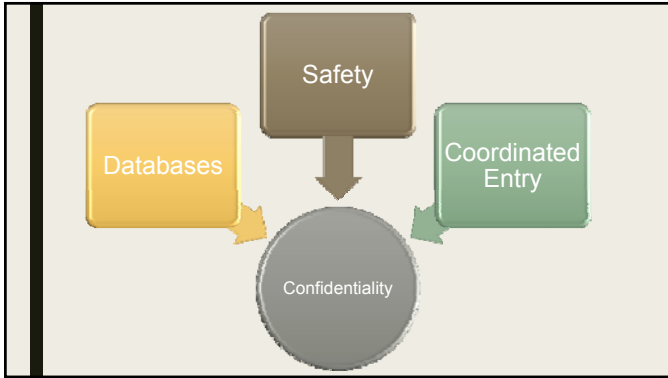
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Why is confidentiality of information important for survivors?

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What does your family/partner know about you?

- Name?
- Mother's maiden name?
- DOB?
- SS?
- Others?

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**Confidentiality  
=  
Enhanced Safety**

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### VAWA/FVPSA Confidentiality

*"...confidentiality of records pertaining to any individual provided domestic violence services by any FVPSA-supported program..."*

*"No client-level data may be shared with a third party, regardless of encryption, hashing or other data security measures, without a written, time-limited release as described in section 40002(b)(2) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 13925(b)(2))."*

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### HMIS & Comparable Databases

- Federal law dictates that Victim Service Providers (VSP's) are prohibited from entering information into an HMIS.
  - *Victim Service Providers include domestic violence programs and sexual assault programs*
- VSP's must maintain data, but in a Comparable Database that they maintain. This includes items for the ESG Capex and other required data elements per HUD.

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### HMIS & Comparable Databases

3. **Participation in HMIS 24 CFR §576.400(f)**  
 Subrecipients will be required to ensure that data on all persons served and all activities provided under ESG are entered into the community-wide HMIS system designated by the CoC for the area in which those persons and activities are located, or a comparable database, in accordance with HUD's standards on participation, data collection, and reporting under a local HMIS. Subrecipients are required to enter into an agreement with the local HMIS Administrator for reporting.

**If the Subrecipient is a victim service provider or a legal services provider, it may use a comparable database that collects client-level data over time (i.e, longitudinal data) and generates unduplicated aggregate reports based on the data. Information entered into a comparable database must not be entered directly into HMIS or provided to an HMIS administrator.**

The comparable database must comply with all current HMIS standards including data information, security, data quality, and processing standards, as established by HUD in its latest HMIS Data Standards guide. Victim Service Providers or Legal Services Providers that are awarded ESG funds must consult with the CoC and the HMIS administrator for the continuum of care area to ensure that the comparable database uses all the HMIS standards.

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### Texas Comparable Database

- Vast majority of VSP's in Texas use Osnium.
- Osnium is:
  - *Developed to track all major anti-violence funders as well as HUD*
  - *Is localized*
  - *Maintained at each agency and not in the cloud*
- A handful of other databases are in use in Texas for VSP's

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The image shows a complex web form for client information. It is divided into several sections:
 

- Primary Contact:** Fields for First Name, Middle Name, Last Name, Preferred Name, and Previous Last Name.
- Demographics:** Fields for Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Date of Birth. Includes checkboxes for 'DOB Marked Unknown', 'Estimated Date of Birth', and 'Survivor Identified Qualifier' (with sub-options for Limited English Proficiency and Decree Annul, Immigration, Refugee Information).
- Education:** Fields for Highest Education Completed, TAMP/SSBC English, and TAMP/SSBC Date.
- DAK Friends and Family:** Fields for Number of Friends/Family with Client, Number of Hours spent with Friends/Family, and DAK Hours spent with Client.
- Partially Not Served - Support Only Once Per Fiscal Year:** Fields for Partially Not Served Status, Reason, and Other Reason.
- Employment, Income, Family Info and Attachments:** A large section with sub-tabs for 'Non-HUD related', 'Current or PI', and 'Attachments'. It includes fields for Referral Source, Employment Status, Primary Income Source, Individual Income, Head of Household, Household Size, and Household Income.

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**Safer is on all of us!**

- The first question we ask in any situation should always be about the safety of those involved.
- Survivors are experts at navigating their own safety.
- Safer includes more than absence of physical violence. It includes:
  - Health and Well-Being
  - Free from ongoing stalking and harassment
  - Financial Stability
  - Children
  - Advocacy & Support
- Housing that supports the survivors agency and safety

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"A VICTIM WHO IS NO LONGER HIT BY A PARTNER BUT HAS NO WAY TO FEED HER CHILDREN OR PAY THE RENT IS NOT SAFE. VICTIMS ARE SAFE WHEN THERE IS NO VIOLENCE, THEIR BASIC HUMAN NEEDS ARE MET, & THEY EXPERIENCE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING."

**DAVIES & LYONS**

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**Coordinated Entry/Access & Domestic Violence Survivors**



**INTENT IS TO SWITCH FROM BEING PROGRAM-FOCUSED TO CLIENT-CENTERED, BUT WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE FOR POPULATIONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS SUCH AS SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?**

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**HUD Guidance on CA/E**

“Victim service providers play an integral part in their community’s housing and homeless response system by providing permanent housing—including rapid rehousing, shelter, transitional housing, advocacy, and supportive services for victims of domestic violence. Therefore, it is critical that these providers be included as full partners in the community’s coordinated entry process. This will ensure that regardless of where an individual or family presents for assistance, they will be able to access housing and services tailored to their unique circumstances and needs.”

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**Coordinated Entry/Access & Domestic Violence Survivors**

- First think about safe assessment options
  - *When, where, & with who present?*
  - *Use a tool that assesses safety FIRST and get input from the local domestic violence agency on the tool*
    - Tools that work well for some communities may not for survivors
    - Be prepared with appropriate referral:

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### Know your Experts! Family Violence Programs!

➤ Do you know where your local family violence program is in your community? Their hotline number? Who is the 'full partner' in your CA/E process?

❖ <http://tcfv.org/service-directory/>

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### Coordinated Entry/Access & Domestic Violence Survivors

- The process for survivors is only as good as the training the assessor has received on domestic violence.
- Offer CE/A sites training on:
  - Basic safety questions to ask PRIOR to other tools and ways in which to ask to promote a safer environment
  - Awareness of local family violence information for emergency situations
  - Confidentiality under VAWA & FVPSA
  - Certifications differences; survivors can self-certify

&  
*Basic Dynamics of Domestic Violence*

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### Coordinated Entry/Access & Domestic Violence Survivors

**Should prioritize domestic violence survivors and their housing needs**  
**&**  
**Be designed by the local domestic violence experts**

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