

Survivor Survey/Focus Group Questions Draft

Purpose: In 2019(?), Fairfax County created the Council to End Domestic Violence. The Council created an Accountability work group to explore ways the community can support accountability for those who cause harm through domestic violence. One of the goals of this work group is to center survivor voices. We will use the words “survivors”, “victims”, and “thrivers” interchangeably to refer to persons who have experienced domestic violence. Survivors are the most valuable source of information on what need from their community. This survey/focus group questionnaire was created to gather input from survivors.

Considerations: This survey/focus group questionnaire will ask a variety of questions and cover several topics. Not all topics will apply to all survivors. We encourage participants to answer as many questions as apply to them, and that they feel comfortable answering. Participants may leave questions blank if they choose, and this will not impact the validity of their other answers. Participants may mark “N/A” on questions that do not apply to their situation or which they do not want to answer at this time. If there are additional questions that participants think should have been asked, there will be a space for that detail at the end.

Victim Services Questions: These questions are designed to gather information about survivor interaction with victim services. This will include victim services offered through the court system as well as direct services. (We will be serving both those who have and have not been served directly (break out each section)).




- 1) What have been the most beneficial resources provided by victim services?
- 2) At what point during your interaction with victim services have you felt the most heard?
- 3) On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied have you been with your support through victim services?
- 4) What, if anything, did you need that victim services was unable to provide?
- 5) In your opinion, what does comprehensive victim services include?
- 6) Were you given the opportunity to express if you wanted to receive support to leave the relationship or to stay in the relationship?
 - a. If the answer is yes, can you describe how the services offered to you for both options were the same? How were they different?
 - b. If the answer is no, can you give an opinion of when/how you think this question should be asked?
- 7) What could be improved about the victim interview process?
- 8) If there have been any points in your interaction with victim services where you have not felt heard, what were they?
- 9) Is there anything you want to add about your experience with victim services?
- 10) What services would need to be in place for you to feel safe and in what ways?
- 11) If you have not been involved in victim services, what were the barriers that prevented you?


Partner Services Questions: These questions are designed to gather information about survivor interaction with services or programs offered to their partner/ex-partner. These services may have been court-ordered or received directly from the community. Some questions are targeted at survivors who have interacted with such a program, and other questions are about what such a program should/could look like, regardless of prior experience.

- 1) What services, that you are aware of, have been offered to your partner/ex-partner?
- 2) If your partner/ex-partner **was previously** enrolled into a Partner Abuse Intervention Program (sometimes referred to as a Batterer's Intervention Program):
 - a. How would you describe your interactions with program staff?
 - b. What information did you receive about their program progress?
 - c. What other information would you have liked to receive, if any?
 - d. Would you have preferred to receive the information in a different way or from a different source than you did?
 - e. What do you think was best about the program?
 - f. What could have been better about the program?
 - g. What were the barriers to getting help?
 - h. What were the barriers to interventions actually leading to accountability?
 - i. If you are still interacting with your partner/ex-partner, what changes have you seen in their behavior, if any, since graduating from the program?
 - j. If there have been any points in your interaction with partner services where you have not felt heard, what were they?
 - k. Is there anything you want to add about your experience with partner services?
- 3) If your partner/ex-partner **could be or should have been enrolled** into a Partner Abuse Intervention Program (sometimes referred to as a Batterer's Intervention Program):
 - a. What do you think are the most important topics to cover in such a program?
 - b. What about your partner/ex-partner's progress in the program would you want to know?
 - c. What would you want to know about the program in general?
 - d. What do you want your partner/ex-partner to get out of the program?
 - e. What would you want to know about their ongoing participation in the programming?
 - f. How can that information be shared with you and other survivors safely?
 - g. Who should be making contact with you to let you know?
 - h. Is there anything you want to add about what you would want from partner services?

Criminal Justice Systems Questions: These questions are designed to gather information about survivor interaction with the police/court/magistrate systems. Some questions are directed at survivors who have interacted with the legal system regarding their abuse, and some are directed at what systems could/should look like, regardless of prior interaction.

- 1) If you **have interacted** with the police/court/magistrate systems about your abuse:

- a. At what points during your interaction with police have you felt heard?
 - b. At what points during your interaction with police have you not felt heard?
 - c. At what points during your interaction with court personnel (legal staff representing you, legal staff representing your partner, judges)* **should we split these up differently?** have you felt heard?
 - d. At what points during your interaction with court personnel (legal staff representing you, legal staff representing your partner, judges) have you not felt heard?
 - e. At what points during your interaction with magistrates have you felt heard?
 - f. At what points during your interaction with magistrates have you not felt heard?
 - g.  What type of information did you receive about your case? From who?
 - h. What type of information did you not receive about your case, that you wish you had?
 - i. If you did not feel safe during this process, can you explain when and why?
 - j. Is there anything you would like to add about your experience with the legal system?
 - k. In what ways did criminal justice systems  pressure on you or put you in a more vulnerable position?
- 2) If you were **going to interact** with the police/court/magistrate systems about your abuse:
- a. What are some processes you believe that police should follow after a 911 call or a police report filed about abuse?
 - b. What are some processes you believe court personnel should follow during a court case related to abuse?
 - c. What are some processes you believe magistrates should follow during a court case related to abuse?
 -  d. What are some steps that could be taken by the legal system for you to feel heard?
 - e. What are some steps that could be taken by the legal system for you to feel safe?
 - f. What type of information would you want to receive about your case? From who?
 - g. What could be done to center survivor voices during the criminal justice system process?
 - h. What are some ways you believe survivors should be invited to participate in policy changes that impact survivors?
 - i. Is there anything you would like to add about what you would prefer to experience if/when interacting with the legal system?

 **Community Accountability Questions:** These questions are designed to gather information about how survivors view community accountability. For the purpose of this survey, “community accountability” refers to the way that the entire community (not just social services, law

enforcement, and the legal system) is responsible for taking an active role in ending domestic violence.

- 1) Who do you think should be involved in holding abusive partners accountable?
- 2) What does holding an abuser accountable look like?
- 3) What are some ways you believe survivors should be invited to participate in policy changes that impact survivors?
- 4) What do you need from your community in order to heal from past abuse?
- 5) What is the community's role in preventing domestic violence?
- 6) What is the community's role in intervening when domestic violence occurs?
- 7) What, if any, role should survivors play in holding their own partner/ex-partner accountable? In holding other survivors' partners/ex-partners accountable?
- 8) If you called the police regarding your abuse, would a community response option have been preferable? Would there have been any differences in how/when you reached out to a community response option compared to a criminal/legal response option?
- 9) In what ways did community systems put pressure on you or put you in a more vulnerable position?
- 10) What are the things about your situation that are unique, and what suggestions do you have to address those issues?

General: These questions are designed to get feedback about our survey/focus group process.

- 1) Are there any changes you suggest to the way we locate survivors/invite survivors to participate in answering these questions?
- 2) Are there any changes you suggest to the way that we ask these questions?
- 3) Are there any changes you suggest to the timing, location (forums) or the submission process (surveys) to participate in answering these questions?
- 4) Are there any questions that you feel we should ask in the future?

