

2020 – 2023 Transitional Housing Assistance Program Policy

The Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (WCADVSA) Transitional Housing Assistance Program is purposed to increase housing options, support service resources, and address barriers relevant to the delivery of transitional housing services to survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking in Wyoming rural communities and within the Wind River Indian Reservation. This program will primarily focus on supporting the needs of survivors who are Native American, older people, persons with disabilities, persons who are Limited-English-Proficient, persons who are immigrants, and/or survivors within extreme rural areas.

Requirements. As members of the WCADVSA, domestic violence sexual assault (DVSA) programs are eligible to participate in this Transitional Housing Assistance Program. Through its purpose, the WCADVSA will support DVSA member programs’ holistic and voluntary services approach to provide short-term transitional housing assistance¹ that support survivors moving into permanent housing with a continuation of working towards self-sustainability. Together, we agree to the following requirements:

- This program will be offered to survivors who are homeless², in need of transitional housing or other housing assistance as a result of being subjected to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking; and for whom emergency shelter services or other crisis intervention services are unavailable or insufficient. This does not include keeping survivors in their homes or prevent them from losing current housing.
- All services (support and follow-up) provided to short-term transitional housing participants, either while in transitional housing or when establishing permanent housing, will be voluntary. More specifically, mandates to participate in services will not be made for transitional housing participants for entry into or continuation in the program.
- Center and comply with all state and federal privacy and confidentiality provisions and best practices, beginning with providing survivors a Notice of Rights to Confidentiality.
- Programs must maintain and train advocates on a Language Access Policy, make visible an “I Speak” poster for survivors, and distribute “Know Your Rights” brochures to survivors who have Limited English Proficiency.
- Short-term transitional housing survivor assistance to Native Americans, older people, persons with disabilities, persons who are Limited-English-Proficient, and persons who are immigrants will be developed and implemented in partnership with people who represent them.
- Short-term transitional housing support services will be offered for a minimum of 6 months and not more than 24 months. It’s understood that we may waive the 24-month limitation for not more than an additional 6-month period if the transitional housing participant has made a good-

¹ Per *Revised OVW Fiscal Year 2020 Transitional Housing Assistance Grant Solicitation* p.2, “short-term housing assistance is rental assistance and/or other financial assistance (e.g. security deposits, utility assistance, relocation costs, etc.) offered for at least 6 months and no more than 24 months that help victims transition into permanent housing. Short-term housing assistance is not emergency shelter, rental assistance that is offered for less than six months, or financial assistance for victims not provided with transitional housing.”

² Per *Revised OVW Fiscal Year 2020 Transitional Housing Assistance Grant Solicitation* p.1, “‘homeless’ means an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes an individual who is sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason. An individual who is living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations is also considered to be homeless. Living in an emergency or transitional shelter are also examples of homelessness. Individuals who have been abandoned in a hospital or are awaiting foster care placement are also considered to be homeless. An individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, or migratory children (as defined in 20 U.S.C. § 6399) who qualify as homeless under 34 U.S.C. § 12473 because the children are living in circumstances described in this paragraph, are also considered to be homeless. (See 24 U.S.C. §§ 12291(a)(12), 12473(6).)”

faith effort to acquire permanent housing and has been unable to do so. They may also leave the program and then return to complete the 24-month maximum length of stay.

- Follow-up services will be offered to transitional housing participants for 6 months after they have secured permanent housing. Follow-up services may include support services, however, only minimal financial assistance reimbursement is available.
- Unless directly linked to the provision of short-term transitional housing assistance, funds will not be used for emergency shelter costs and/or services.
- Provide support and follow-up services by *offering* to develop a modifiable plan with survivors that may also include:
 - Creating education opportunities with survivors using The Allstate Foundation and National Network to End Domestic Violence Moving Ahead curriculum and help them develop a personal sustainability plan.
 - Developing financial sustainability goals.
 - Building a support network.
 - Connecting to available community resources, such as financial, medical, legal, transportation, language and job skills training, educational and scholarship programs.
 - Budgeting time and money.
 - Acclimating to the language, community, and social systems of which survivors engage.
- Increase advocacy and voluntary service advocates skills by participating in trainings that may include Transitional Housing procedures, voluntary services, safety planning, career empowerment, financial literacy, confidentiality, and/or outreach and services with specific populations.

Working with participants and providing services. DVSA program advocates provide advocacy from a philosophy they are continually trained in and is supported by the WCADVSA. As such, DVSA program advocates will:

- Respect survivors' right to self-determination and promote autonomy.
- Place the responsibility for the violence on the perpetrator and for ending the violence on the perpetrator and society.
- Acknowledge the impact that the violence has in the lives of survivors and their children.
- Maintain the highest ethics of advocacy and be aware of the special relationship between the advocate and survivor.
- Ensure that appropriate boundaries are adhered to.
- Create space for trust building with survivors and their children.
- Provide voluntary, unconditional, non-judgmental services in an atmosphere that allows survivors to affirm their own strengths, differences, choices, and courage.
- Create a physically and emotionally safe environment for the survivors and their children to share and receive support.
- Continuation of safety assessment and planning.

In building community environment to be as supportive as possible to survivors, DVSA programs will offer to help survivors identify, secure, and utilize personal and community resources. DVSA programs will continue development of local partnerships with agencies and organizations that will support transitional housing assistance for survivors in securing and sustaining permanent housing. These partnerships may include Workforce Development, employment service providers, CLIMB Wyoming, law enforcement, housing authorities, landlord associations, legal services, public transportation agencies, Department of Family Services, public health organizations, home healthcare, senior centers, Meals on Wheels, food banks, churches and civic organizations, and Latino resource centers.

Use of Short-term Transitional Housing Assistance with Survivor Participants

In supporting survivors to secure and sustain permanent housing, DVSA program advocates will provide voluntary support & follow-up services. Services may be part of the short-term transitional housing expense reimbursements for survivors they serve as indicated here.

Types of Voluntary Support Services³	Allowable Reimbursement
Accessibility/security (cell phone)	Yes
Case management	
Child care	Yes
Children's activities	Yes
Civil legal advocacy/court accompaniment	
Civil legal assistance	
Counseling/Support group	Yes
Criminal justice advocacy/court accompaniment	
Crisis intervention	
Education	Yes
Employment counseling	Yes
Financial counseling	Yes
Housing advocacy	
Housing assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household furnishings • Relocation (one-time) • Rental unit fees (e.g. one-time deposits, application fees, credit report fees, etc.)⁴ • Rent or lease payments (6 – 24 months) • Utilities (6 – 24 months) 	Yes
Job training	Yes
Leadership development opportunities	Yes
Material assistance	Yes
Translation & interpretation services	Yes
Transportation	Yes
Other survivor advocacy	
Vouchers	Yes
<p>Follow-up services are to be provided to transitional housing participants who secure permanent housing (see page 1). Minimal financial reimbursement is available for security deposits or first month's rent for permanent housing.</p> <p>Short-term transitional housing assistance (i.e. rent, lease, utilities, etc.) must be provided for other support services to be reimbursed.</p> <p>Unallowable expenses include purchase of real property; physical modifications to a building (including minor renovations like painting or carpeting); payment of mortgage, property taxes, or other expenses that would prevent foreclosure or eviction; payment of bills/utilities in arrears; and drug and/or alcohol testing.</p>	

³ Please reference "Attachment A" for types of voluntary support services definitions.

⁴ DVSA programs will make very attempt to return deposits to the WCADVSA Transitional Housing Program when applicable.



DVSA Programs Accessing and Utilizing WCADVSA Short-term Transitional Housing Assistance.

Based on full agreement of the requirements, working with participants and providing services; use of assistance; and other guidance provided by WCADVSA staff, DVSA member programs can access and utilize assistance by:

1. Verifying this WCADVSA Transitional Housing Assistance Program Policy is understood by reading, signing, dating, and submitting it in WCADVSA’s Coalition Manager platform.
2. Determining if a survivor’s situation meets the policy requirements.
3. Supporting survivors in making an informed decision to participate in this program by providing them enough information on this assistance including purpose, applicable requirements, and use of short-term transitional housing assistance.
4. Accessing funds through WCADVSA’s Coalition Manager
 - a. Complete and submit WCADVSA’s Transitional Housing Pledge Request form based on survivor needs.
 - b. Upon receiving WCADVSA staff approval of a pledge request, pay approved pledge amounts and submit a Request for Reimbursement by the 10th of each month. Please scan and attach all applicable receipts within the Request for Reimbursement form.
5. If applicable, providing on-going voluntary services and modifying co-developed plan to support transitional housing participants towards sustainability and permanent housing.

The Executive Director is required to verify they have read and understand this policy on behalf of their program. Advocates that will be accessing and utilizing the transitional housing assistance (as described above) are also required to verify they have read and understand this policy.

By signing and dating, I verify that I have read and understand this policy.

Executive Director:

_____ Printed Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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Advocates:

_____ Printed Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Printed Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Printed Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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If you have questions, please contact the WCADVSA Economic Justice Specialist, Trish Worley:
307-755-5481 tworley@wyomingdvsa.org.

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Attachment A: Types of Voluntary Support Services Definitions

Case management: A collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation and advocacy for options and services to meet an individual's needs through communication and available resources to promote desired outcomes.

Child care: Group or individual child care for persons under age 18, in conjunction with Wyoming child care licensing guidelines.

Children's activities: Age appropriate activities for children of survivors. This may include, but is not limited to, age appropriate books, art, play and learning activities.

Civil legal advocacy/court accompaniment: Assisting a survivor with civil legal issues including, but not limited to, preparing paperwork for protection orders; accompanying survivors to court; providing information on the civil legal systems; and all other advocacy within the civil legal system.

Civil legal assistance: Civil legal services provided by an attorney.

Counseling/support groups: Individual or group counseling or support provided by a volunteer, peer, or professional. May include, but not limited to, mental health, employment, re-entry into the workforce, job retention, etc.

Criminal justice advocacy/court accompaniment: Assisting a survivor with criminal legal issues including, but not limited to preparing paperwork such as victim impact statements, accompanying a survivor to a criminal court, providing information on the criminal legal system, and all other advocacy within the criminal justice system.

Crisis intervention: Process by which a person identifies, assesses, and intervenes with an individual in crisis to restore balance and reduce the effects of the crisis in her/his life.

Leadership development opportunities: Opportunities for survivors to learn or enhance their leadership skills by serving on a resident advisory committee, peer mentorship, or volunteering in the community.

Material assistance: Providing survivors with clothing, food or personal items.

Translation and interpretation services: Providing translation and interpretation services to assist survivors to participate in and/or access services.

Transportation: Direct provisions of transportation, including vehicle maintenance, auto insurance premiums, license and registration.

Other survivor advocacy: Actions designed to help survivors obtain needed resources or services and/or through support information, referrals and possible intervention. These may include employment, creditors, disabilities, health care, immigration, spiritual, schools, victim's compensation, etc. Advocacy would also include accompanying a survivor to an administrative hearing, such as unemployment, Social Security, TANF, or food stamp hearing.

Vouchers: Designated services or items purchased by the survivor by a coupon or other means in which the survivor had the ability to independently choose the service/item (e.g. child care, clothing, counseling/support group, food, household furnishings, telephone, transportation.)