**Domestic Violence Advocacy Resources Template**



If you are not already connected to a free, community-based domestic violence advocate, we encourage you to contact your local domestic violence program. Domestic violence hotlines (see options in the box on page 3) can connect you to programs in your area. Some have a primarily geographic focus while others have a primarily cultural focus. You do not have to reside in a shelter to get domestic violence advocacy assistance. Edit this paragraph if circumstances are different in your area.

Community-based domestic violence programs typically offer a range of free, confidential services including safety planning, legal advocacy, and emotional support. An advocate may be able to connect you with free legal advice or even free legal representation.

An advocate can help you explore the risks and benefits of filing for dissolution and/or a parenting plan, and can help you maximize your safety during the process. Talking with a domestic violence advocate can be a great first step.

*“I was so overwhelmed and scared until I met with my Community Advocate. She was able to guide me and refer me to the right programs to help me through the legal issues I was facing because of domestic violence. I have a protection order, got a divorce, and have custody of my children. Thank God for my advocate.”*

- A domestic violence survivor

Due to the volume of calls some domestic violence programs receive, you may reach voicemail. If so, be sure to say your phone number *slowly* and clearly and to let them know if/when it is safe to call you back or to leave you a message. You may have to call more than once in order to reach someone. Do not give up. They do want to help.

There are different types of a domestic violence advocates. The table on the next page explains how they differ. **This handout focuses on community-based advocacy resources.**

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| --- | --- |
| Types of Domestic Violence Advocacy Services | |
| Type | **Description** |
| Community- Based Advocacy | Community-Based Advocates work for nonprofit organizations and provide free, confidential services. Community-Based Advocates can help you navigate the legal system, explore your options, connect you to resources, and plan for your safety. They may also be able to accompany you to court.  Community-Based Advocates provide services to people who have experienced domestic violence, regardless of what their status is in a legal case (i.e. victim or defendant, petitioner or respondent). |
| Systems- Based Advocacy | System-Based Advocates are advocates who work for the courts, law enforcement, or prosecutors. They can provide helpful information and advocacy with legal system matters. They are employed by the government to provide free services to people while they are involved with a particular legal matter. For example, a prosecutor-based advocate would provide advocacy to a victim of a crime while the criminal case is active.  The scope of services they provide is more limited than a community-based advocate and they are not able to provide the confidentiality protections of a community-based advocate. For example, a systems-based advocate may need to share information with prosecution or law enforcement. |

You can access services from more than one type of advocate, if you wish.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Domestic Violence Hotlines Include | | |
| Hotline | **Contact Info** | **Additional Info** |
| Insert your state State  Domestic Violence Hotline | Insert phone numbers | Insert info such as hours available Interpreters available |
| National Domestic Violence Hotline | 1.800.799.7233 🎗  1.800.787.3224 (TTY) | Available 24 hours daily  Bilingual advocates &  interpreters available |
| Videophone: 1.855.812.1001  AIM: DeafHotline  [Deafhelp@thehotline.org](mailto:Deafhelp@thehotline.org) | Answered M-F 9am-5pm PST  by people who are Deaf |
| Insert additional hotlines, if any | Insert contact info including accessible info such as TTY or videophone options; include symbol for 24-hour hotline if applicable 🎗 | Insert details such as hours available and interpreters provided |

🎗 Indicates a 24-hour hotline

🏠 Indicates an emergency shelter provider

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Community-Based Domestic Violence Advocacy Services - Insert your county | | |
| Organization | **Contact Info** | **Service Focus** |
| Insert program name; include emergency shelter symbol if applicable 🏠 | Insert contact info including website and accessible info such as TTY or videophone options; include symbol for 24-hour hotline if applicable | Indicate cultural or geographic service focus |
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🎗 Indicates a 24-hour hotline

🏠 Indicates an emergency shelter provider

Inclusion in this handout is not an endorsement. We encourage you to evaluate if the services and the provider are the right fit for you and to verify that the information listed is still accurate. The content of this handout is current as of the time of publication, but may have since changed.

This tool was adapted from the Domestic Violence and Mental Health Collaboration Project’s Family Law Toolkit for Survivors.

The original version of this tool can be found at

<http://endgv.org/toolkits/family-law-toolkit-for-domestic-violence-survivors/>.



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