

## ***Policy Update***

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*The purpose of this update is to share knowledge and to inform others on processes as they are designed to help in active situations of domestic violence (Crisis). This information will help AmeriCorp/Survivor Link members as well as Social Workers and other advocates in the field.*

### **Scenario:**

Many different phone #'s can be given to a domestic violence victim when they seek immediate shelter. The issue is that victims are not informed of process. It is NOT disclosed to the victim that by calling all of these different phone #'s, they will not experience a different result. The victim could then become frustrated and then give up on process. It is best that we inform these victims as best as possible of the process. This explanation and added support may help to avoid mental exhausting and frustration which could result in the victim returning to the very situation of which they wish to flee. A domestic violence victim who seeks shelter, needs to be informed of processes and have as much help as possible with the initial steps to flee the situation.

- 480-890-3039 is the Central Intake line for ALL Domestic Violence Shelters in Arizona. Despite the many different agencies in Arizona, this is the main phone # that must be called and an intake performed.
- Upon the time the original call is placed, the DV victim should assign many people that can be designated to call on her/his behalf. A release of information (ROI) must be given for these people by the DV client/victim. These people will continue to call on the clients behalf to seek shelter.
- The Central Intake unit does NOT make outbound calls. The only way the client will know if they have placement available to them is by calling the Central Intake line in 4 hour intervals. This 4 hour interval is when the Central Intake unit calls all available shelters to see if an open bed is available.

- The DV client/victim may have to travel to Pinal or Pima county
- The DV Client/Victim or persons they designate ROI will have to call every 4 hours to inquire about placement or open bed space. It is recommended to call at 9:30am, 1:30pm, 5:30pm, 9:30pm, 1:30am, 5:30am as the Central Intake phone unit is open 24 hours a day.
- Important that the advocate/Social Worker and client be aware that beds are available on a FIRST COME FIRST SERVE basis. Again, no outbound calls will be made to contact the client from the Central Intake unit. Once the DV client initiates the intake process, it will be very important that the client and all persons who have been added to the ROI begin calling in 4 hour increments. By doing so- increases the clients ability of getting in to the shelter ASAP.
- Lastly, having a conversation with the client to put them at ease while they are going through this process is very important. The discussion of what a domestic Violence shelter looks like and what they should expect when staying at a shelter is important. In my case, my client was comforted with just an explanation of a college "dorm" like living arrangement. Also, the type of services they should expect during their stay can be explained. This type of conversation is also very important and can be helpful. It should be explained to potential clients that by staying at these shelters they should expect to have to participate in services as a way to maximize the benefits of their shelter experience.