

Script for DV Pre-Screen Questions for RRH Prioritization

Overview

With several additional DV-RRH projects in the Balance of State, the Coordinated Entry-DV Subcommittee has approved this additional data point “how many times have you left or attempted to leave your abusive situation_____?” to be factored into someone’s place on the prioritization list who is designated as fleeing/attempting to flee DV.

This document was designed to provide guidance to SSOs who, moving forward, will be collecting information about the number of times a person who identifies as fleeing/attempting to DV has done so.

SSOs will also be reaching out retroactively to those currently on prioritization lists that are designated as fleeing/attempting to flee DV to collect this information.

SSOs are encouraged to consider feedback from local DV advocates and adapt this “script” to suit local needs.

Script

Script for collecting “How many times have you left or attempted to leave your abusive situation? _____” for DV RRH program prioritization.

Things to be mindful of:

- Please be aware that calling a household designated as fleeing or attempting to flee DV could potentially put the client at risk of more harm.
- Please ensure that you are looking on the pre-screen, HMIS and Non-HMIS notes for how the client designated they wanted to be contacted for follow up calls. If that information is missing, please ask if the client is in a safe place to have a conversation, and if not, attempt to arrange an alternative time, if possible.
- Do not indicate to anyone else who answers the call who you are or why you are calling and be aware of how you are leaving a message if that is required. Keep the message generic: “I am calling from_____, we’re looking to speak with_____. I have one quick question for_____. I will try calling back or they can call me back at this number_____.
- Consider using *67 to block your phone number. Keep in mind that some individuals do not answer blocked calls.
- If you make a call and are concerned that the person is unsafe or potentially could be, consider referencing your agencies “other resources” such as food pantry, school supplies, etc. as the reason for the call to protect the client’s safety and prevent escalation.
- If you suspect you have connected with the abuser, an option is to express that you have called the wrong number. If the abuser appears to be aggressive, intimidating or trying to get more information, do not engage; doing so can potentially put the client’s safety at risk. Respectfully end the conversation.

Script for DV Pre-Screen Questions for RRH Prioritization

Sample conversation with clients **already on the prioritization lists** designated as currently fleeing or attempting to flee DV:

Hello, we are calling to get more information on your homeless situation. Is now an ok time to ask you one more question that will help inform the way you are prioritized for housing opening?

- ***If no:** May we call you back at a designated time/Is there a time that works for you to give us a call back? Or – if they can't have that conversation, assure them that you will call back.*
- ***If yes:** You indicated you are currently fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault, or trafficking. We have housing projects in your area that are designated to specifically serve this population. A recent change to the program policy now requires us to collect "How many times have you left or attempted to leave your abusive situation? _____". Are you willing to share this information with me so that I can add it to your assessment for our housing programs?*

For collecting this information on households **new to Coordinated Entry** designated as currently fleeing or attempting to flee DV:

"How many times have you left or attempted to leave your abusive situation? _____"

Please keep in mind that attempting to leave an abusive situation is self-reported and defined by the client.

If the client expresses any self-deprecating thoughts, blaming themselves for going back to the abusive situation, you can say something like: "People in these types of situations often go back, and the reason for doing so is often complex and personal. Even though you went back, what you experienced was not your fault," or "You are making the choices that are best for you and your family's safety. I am here to support you in that."