



# ***Working with Survivors of Domestic Violence: A Training Resource Guide***

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**Boston College Center for Human Rights &  
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Migration and Human Rights Project**

**In collaboration with:  
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# **A Training Guide for Community Workers Who Work with Survivors of Domestic Violence**

## **Goals of the Training**

- ❖ To provide information on how Domestic Violence is understood by participants and defined from a U.S legal point of view, and also how this affects undocumented women and asylum seekers
- ❖ To help develop guidelines for making referrals to women affected by Domestic Violence to local community agencies.
- ❖ To identify, analyze, and reflect on personal resources for managing one's own anxieties/difficulties when a woman who suffers from Domestic Violence approaches someone in the organization either in the context of other programs and services or in seeking help.

### **Materials Needed:**

- Newsprint or Chalkboard
- Markers or chalk
- Name Tags
- Pens (one per participant)
- Note pads (one per participant)
- Blind folds (Scarves, t-shirts, bandanas)
- Wheel of Power and Control (one per participant) - Appendix A
- Legal Information about Domestic Violence and Immigration Relief - Appendix B
- Case scenario to review legal aspects – Appendix C
- Women's Groups DV Scenarios - Appendix D
- Crisis Response Role Play Scenarios - Appendix E
- An sample Agenda for the day - Appendix F
- Charts on mandated reporting in Massachusetts and Rhode Island – Appendix G
- Links to other useful resources – Appendix H

**Note:** This document is for training staff and volunteers from organizations that work with migrants and other populations that may be affected by domestic violence. **It is not a resource to work with the victims of domestic violence.** The training described in the following pages has been designed to work with groups of approximately 20 people. It is not appropriate for working with larger groups.

**Welcome and Introduction of Participants**  
**(10-15 Minutes)**

*Materials: Name tags*

***Facilitator welcomes the participants to the workshop by describing the goals of the workshop and providing an overview of the day's agenda.***

- The facilitators introduce themselves and allow each participant to introduce themselves to the entire group. Introductions may be done with a fun and easy icebreaker to help participants relax and get to know one another before entering into the intensity of the workshop.

**Example of an Icebreaker:** Each participant can introduce himself or herself with an adjective or noun that begins with the first letter of their name, e.g. Kevin is Kind. (Be creative and change it up. Remember to keep it easy enough to remember!)

**Ground Rules**  
**(15 Minutes)**

***This activity allows participants to collectively define their ground rules to assure a sense of safety and security throughout the workshop.***

*Materials: Newsprint and Markers or a Chalk/Dry-Erase Board*

- The group facilitators will engage the participants in a group discussion to develop a list of *Ground Rules* for everyone to follow and respect that are sensitive to topics relative to Domestic Violence.
- Facilitators should allow each participant the opportunity to contribute to the list to help create a collective sense of safety and respect for the participants.
- This list should be reflective of the group's comfort and need for safety and openness for the discussion.
- The final list may be referred to as the *Ground Rules* and may vary depending on each group. The Ground Rules should be posted somewhere on a wall or board in front of the participants throughout the duration of the workshop as a respectful reminder.

An example of some common Ground Rules:

- Put phone on vibrate; take calls outside of the room
- Pay full attention to the person speaking
- Respect (Allow for further discussion on what respect is for the entire group; ask for examples)
- Step Up & Step Back (Being aware of your participation and knowing when you should contribute more -or less- to the discussion)
- Confidentiality

**A Power Exercise**  
**(30 Minutes)**

***This activity is designed to allow participants to experience the ways in which someone can feel vulnerable when there are power differentials within a relationship.***

*Materials: Blindfolds*

- Participants should be divided into pairs. Each member will take a turn guiding his or her partner blindfolded around the room by placing a guiding hand on the shoulder of the blindfolded partner and providing verbal cues.
- At the end of the activity, each member will be asked to reflect on their experiences of:
  - (1) The feeling of being blindfolded and being led by their partner, that is, being vulnerable;
  - (2) The feeling of leading their partner who is blindfolded and having control over him or her.
- Facilitators should allow time to discuss and reflect on the experiences of the participants.
- Facilitators can link similar participant experiences to the potential experience of an abused person who feels vulnerable and is dependent on their abuser.

NB: Facilitators may want to rethink this exercise if there is a blind person within the group and/or give particular time and space to reflect on her or his experiences within the context of this exercise.

**Defining Domestic Violence**  
**(60 Minutes)**

***This activity is designed to allow participants to explore their understandings of the multiple meanings of Domestic Violence by drawing from personal and/or professional experiences.***

*Materials: Newsprint, markers, Wheel of Power and Control (Appendix A)*

**Part 1: Building Group Definitions (30 Minutes)**

- Split participants into groups of 4-5 to create their own definition of domestic violence. Definitions may be pulled from personal, professional and/or academic experiences and resources. The groups are asked to also provide examples to support their definition.
- Each group should write their definition and examples on newsprint. Each group may have a different approach and style in creating their definition.

## Part 2: Presenting Group Definitions (30 Minutes)

- Each group presents their definition to the larger group along with a short description of the group's process in developing their definition of Domestic Violence.

*Facilitators: Post and highlight the common themes generated from the group's definitions on the newsprint or board.*

- Once all of the groups have presented, distribute the Wheel of Power and Control and introduce a definition of Domestic Violence that has been used frequently but advocates for survivors of domestic violence to the large group, underscoring the similarities and/or any differences with the aspects pointed out in the groups' definitions.

### **Domestic Violence Definition:**

***Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviors used by one person over another to gain power and control. This may include verbal abuse, financial abuse, emotional, sexual and physical abuse.<sup>1</sup>***

### **Legal Aspects of Domestic Violence** **(45 Minutes)**

***This section is designed to provide basic legal information about the definition of Domestic Violence (DV) in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and to discuss how immigration status of the victim or abuser can come into play in DV situations, including how survivors of DV may qualify for immigration status.***

*Materials: Legal Information about Domestic Violence and Immigration Relief  
(Appendix B)*

- If possible, it would be best to invite an immigration lawyer to facilitate this portion of the training. **NOTE: Individuals who are not lawyers should not provide legal advice.** Facilitators may provide basic information as provided in the resource factsheets. However, it is important to explain to participants that facilitators are only providing basic information and are **not** providing legal advice. Because participants are very likely to ask legal questions, facilitators should practice responding to these questions by explaining that they are not in a position to provide legal information and are limited to providing the information in the

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<sup>1</sup> From the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Safety (2014). <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/crime-prev-personal-sfty/personal-sfty/sexual-and-dom-viol/overview/definition-of-domestic-violence.html>.

factsheets. Facilitators should also be prepared to make referrals to legal organizations as needed.

- Facilitators can present informational resources about the definition of Domestic Violence in Massachusetts and Rhode Island as well as basic information on restraining and protection orders (Appendix B). The facilitator can also present information on some forms of relief available to survivors of DV, such as U visas, VAWA status, and asylum (also in Appendix B).
- Facilitators may also choose to present the case scenario set out in Appendix C. The scenario can be read out loud to the group, and the facilitator can then elicit responses and reflections. Some of the important “take-away points” from the scenario are listed as bullet points under the scenario in Appendix C. **It may be best to only include this activity if an immigration lawyer will be present to answer the many questions that are likely to be asked in follow-up to the scenario.**

### **Emotional Connections with Domestic Violence for Men and Women** **(60 Minutes)**

*This activity is designed to allow participants to reflect on their own opinions and feelings regarding Domestic Violence. This activity invites participants to reflect and discuss the ways in which their own opinions and feelings with DV may impact the effectiveness of interventions made while making referrals for survivors of DV.*

**Facilitators:** Separate groups by gender (Men and Women). If applicable, separate the groups of men and women into smaller groups of 4 or 5.

- It is important that each group have their own space to discuss sensitive topics reflective of their group’s personal experiences. (Ex: Men and women in separate rooms or in far enough apart spaces so that they do not distract each other).

#### **The Men’s Group**

*Materials: newsprints and markers*

#### **Part 1: Discussion (45 Minutes)**

- The men meet in a separate room to discuss issues of masculinity, culture and the abuse of power. This is a space where men can speak separately from the women about domestic violence and their role in helping to create a culture that does and/or does not support DV.

To engage in this discussion facilitators may propose questions such as:

- What roles do men play that foster or support DV? And which roles do not?

- What are some cultural expectations of masculinity that contribute to a culture of DV?
- What is the distinction between emotional and psychological abuse? How may the understanding of these distinctions impact how one adjusts to a new culture and new social norms?
- What does it look like when a man is a victim of DV?

## **Part 2: Brainstorm (15 Minutes)**

- Facilitator invites the group to brainstorm different strategies in which men can be supportive to victims of domestic violence in their communities. The facilitator can write down these ideas on newsprint.

Some example of ways to be supportive to victims of DV in their community:

- Be a constant support and do not blame the victim
- Find resources in the area that can be shared
- Get to know the person; be non-judgmental
- Be open to talking and becoming more knowledgeable about DV
- Connect the person to trainings (and/or support groups) with other victims of DV so that they can hear someone else's story.

### **The Women's Group**

*Materials: Pen and Notepad for participants, Scenarios of DV (Appendix D), Newsprints/ Board with questions listed for facilitators*

**Facilitators:** First provide the instructions of the activity to the group.

- Facilitator will read aloud the series of five scenarios that depicts the life of a woman experiencing the escalation of an abusive relationship with her husband over the span of two years. Each scenario depicts a more severe form of abuse.
- Facilitators will prompt the female participants to close their eyes and imagine themselves as the woman depicted within each scenario.
- Facilitators should give about a minute at the end of each scenario to allow participants to reflect and jot down short answers to any of the following questions:
  - How would you feel?
  - How would you feel about yourself? Your family? Your children? Your husband? Your relationship?
  - How would you feel about your safety?
  - What would you do? What would be your next steps?
  - Who would you turn to for support?
  - If this were happening to a friend, family member or a community member, what advice would you give them?

- Once all of the scenarios are read, invite the participants to share their experiences of doing the activity. Ask participants to share any of their reflections and answers to the questions that they jotted down.

*The discussion may lead participants to share their own personal experiences with domestic violence. Use these examples to highlight the variability of a survivor's needs when seeking support.*

**Important points to highlight:**

- Survivors will have varying levels of readiness to ask for support
- Community workers may carry their own experiences with DV that may affect their approach in helping those from their community seeking help.
- The best ways to support a survivor depends on that particular survivor's history and her relationship to the history of her abuse and to the abuser.
- Every survivor will perceive her experience differently depending on her life story and previous exposure to trauma, abuse or previous experiences with the loss of a secure attachment.
- The risks involved vary greatly depending on the types of support to which the victim has access.

**Attention!** This exercise may cause emotional responses that require additional support. In case of a severe emotional response, invite participant(s) to take time away from the group. If trained staff is not available to accompany these participants, it may be helpful to have a list of supportive services to which to refer some who may need further support.

**Emotional and Psychological Consequences of Domestic Violence**  
**(30-45 Minutes)**

*This presentation is designed to inform the community workers or volunteers about some of the various ways survivors of Domestic Violence are emotionally and psychologically impacted by DV and how this may affect the perpetuation of abuse within their lives. The presentation is also structured to identify the ways in which those who work with victims/survivors of DV can be aware of how they are emotionally and psychologically impacted by their work and to provide healthy ways to manage their own feelings with DV.*

**Facilitators:** Present the following information to participants providing examples to differentiate emotional and psychological effects and other risk factors.



- Invite group participants to link the concepts by providing examples and engaging in a discussion on the *additional risks due to poverty* and *the effects on those who work with victims of DV*.

### **Emotional and Psychological Effects of Domestic Violence**

- Sometimes there is no recognition of DV
- There may be feelings of guilt due to DV
- Victims/survivors can function with a sense of numbness
- Every case is unique
- There are cultural differences in how women experience DV
- Undocumented immigration status and low socio-economic status/poverty leads to an increase in barriers for women seeking support due to DV which can also cause additional distress. For example: the lack of financial resources to leave the abuser; dependence on abuser's employment for economic well-being and/or health insurance; risk of deportation; lack of access to transportation and/or community-based and/or linguistically or culturally relevant shelters.

### **Individual Risk Factors for Victims/Survivors of Domestic Violence**

- Low self esteem
- Being emotionally dependent and/or insecure
- Depression
- Suffering from anger and isolation
- Suffering from hostility
- History of physical abuse
- History of experience of poor parenting (including possible history of being physically abused as a child)

### **Additional Risk Factors due to Poverty**

- Low income
- Low academic achievement
- Chronic unemployment

### **Effects on those who work with Victims/Survivors of Domestic Violence**

- If we work with people affected by violence we will also be emotionally impacted
- We can feel anger, frustration and hopelessness.
- Getting stuck in their own emotions may prevent workers from helping the victim/survivor
- As workers, we must check in with ourselves constantly

### **What to do when a woman comes asking for supportive resources for Domestic Violence**

- Listen without judgment

- Don't try to "fix it"
- Have in mind:
  - The victim is not responsible
  - It takes time to talk about these issues
  - The healing process is different for each person

**Lunch 30-45 Minutes (Be flexible to group time variability)**

**Crisis Response: Role Plays**  
**(65 Minutes)**

*The purpose of this activity is to allow participants to role-play an organizational response to an incident involving a community member in need of support with issues around Domestic Violence. The collection of scenarios was created to elicit a variety of organizational responses depending on the survivor's experience and readiness to receive support. Participants will be able to analyze each group's response and provide feedback as a whole group.*

*Materials: Newsprints, markers and Role Play Scenarios (Appendix D)*

**Part 1: Development of Role Plays (15 Minutes)**

- Split participants into groups of 4-5. Each group receives a scenario with three different scenes reflecting how that scenario might occur in a community. They must select one of the three scenes in their scenario and prepare a role-play depicting their version of the most appropriate response to a community member who has experienced Domestic Violence and needs support.

**Part 2: Presentation of Role Plays and Discussion (35 Minutes)**

- Allow each group 5-7 minutes to act out their role-plays. Ask participants to take notes on any positive points and/or important red flags to mention in the group discussion later.

**Part 3: Group Discussion (20 Minutes)**

- Allow the group to ask questions and engage in discussions sharing reactions and feedback for the role-plays that have been presented.
- Ask participants to reflect on the role-plays as a group and develop a list of important issues to take into considerations when working with victims/survivors of DV.

Some important issues to consider:

- Don't push victims/survivors to seek help/ leave the abusive relationship
- Ask if it is safe to talk before engaging in a conversation about abuse
- Do not intervene in aggressive situations

- Engage in team consultations for additional support
- Document the situation
- Seek education, health, legal, and interpretation services
- Safety of person/child is most important
- Make referrals when necessary

### **Elaboration of Protocols** **(45 Minutes)**

***This activity is designed to allow participants to work collectively in groups to develop a draft of an organizational protocol to work with victims/survivors of Domestic Violence.***

*Materials: Newsprint, Markers*

**Facilitators:** Divide participants into groups by organizations to discuss and develop a protocol (a plan or steps to follow in certain situations) that their organization can work with in cases where members seek help for issues involving Domestic Violence.

#### **Part 1: Development of Protocol (20 Minutes)**

- Allow each group to develop a protocol. Encourage participants to consider their organization's capacity to provide crisis interventions involving DV.

#### **Part 2: Presentation of Protocols (15 Minutes)**

- Allow each group to present their version of an appropriate protocol for their organization for the entire group to review.

#### **Part 3: Discussion (10 Minutes)**

- Allow participants to discuss their experiences making a protocol for an entire agency.
- Engage participants in a dialogue regarding the various protocols including giving feedback and discussing alternative strategies.

### **How to Make a Referral** **(30 Minutes)**

***This presentation is designed to provide community workers with a set of guidelines and specific considerations when making referrals to other organizations that specialize in support for victims/survivors of DV.***

*Materials: Prepared news print with the “General Guidelines for Referral Process” (see below)*

- Facilitators will connect the common themes developed throughout the workshop to provide advice on how to proceed with referrals considering the sensitivity of DV situations.
- Present the “General Guidelines for a Referral Process” listed below. These guidelines provide helpful tips and guidelines for community workers working with survivors of domestic violence.

### **General Guidelines for Referral Process**

#### **Things to Have in Mind When Making a Referral:**

- Consider your organization’s policy and standard level of involvement, and follow up activity to be completed with a survivor. Every organization will have different policies and there is no right way to do it.
- Determine the needs of the person (i.e. language, gender of available providers, location/transportation)
- Help the person make their own decisions
- Express your concern about their safety

#### **Steps to Creating a Community Based Referral Resource List:**

- 1) Know the needs of the victims in your community in order to make effective referrals. Think about whether they have children, if they speak English, work part/full-time jobs, if they have extended family members, and if they are affiliated with any religious groups
- 2) Contact local organizations before making referrals to know if: an appointment is required and if they are taking new clients. Be sure to update contact information and include which languages are spoken in the organization to which you are planning to refer someone.
- 3) Share information you know from experiences working with other organizations.
- 4) Categorize the organizations that you’ve contacted according to the services they provide, the languages spoken, etc.
- 5) After elaborating a Referral List, be sure to have it accessible to all the staff in the organization in case they need it “on the spot”.

### **Conclusion of Workshop & Wrap-up Activity “Italian Rain”** **(30 minutes)**

#### **Conclusion**

To conclude the workshop, be sure to thank everyone for their hard work, active participation and dedication to working with victims/survivors of DV. Add any additional parting messages for future reflection.

**A “Warm Down”/Wrap up Activity**  
**“Italian Rain”**

*As the day may have been filled with intense emotions and active participation from the participants, the “Italian Rain” activity is an example of a “warm down” activity to allow room for relaxation and decomposition from the day’s work. The activity encourages a sense of unity while highlighting difference and individuality. The acoustic effect of the activity resembles the sound of rain on rooftops giving a calming effect.*

- Facilitator will instruct participants to stand in a circle without holding hands.
- Participants are then instructed to place the left hand palm side up, and to begin clapping with the right hand on top of the left hand while decreasing the number of fingers used to clap from 5 to 1 on their own time.
- Allow clapping to go on until one person is left clapping on their last finger.
- Ask participants to quietly listen and embrace the sense of calm by hearing the echoing sound of the applause.

**Appendix A  
Wheel of power and control**



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Abilene Rob

## Appendix B

### Legal Information about Domestic Violence and Immigration Relief

#### Massachusetts

A victim of domestic violence can seek an **Abuse Prevention Order** (also known as a 209A Protective Order) or a Harassment Prevention Order against the abuser. Each has different requirements and different benefits.

An abuser can also be prosecuted for various crimes relating to domestic violence. The victim can report the activity to the police, but the decision of whether to prosecute is ultimately up to the prosecutor's office. Some examples of domestic violence related crimes in Massachusetts are:

- Rape
- Assault and battery
- Assault with intent to commit rape
- Assault of child
- Kidnapping of minor or incompetent by relative
- Stalking
- Criminal harassment
- Drugging persons for sexual intercourse.
- Indecent assault and battery

For more information about Massachusetts domestic violence law see [www.masslegalhelp.org/domestic-violence](http://www.masslegalhelp.org/domestic-violence).

#### Rhode Island

A victim of domestic violence can seek a **Restraining Order** against the abuser.

An abuser can also be prosecuted for various crimes relating to domestic violence. The victim can report the activity to the police, but the decision of whether to prosecute is ultimately up to the prosecutor's office. Some examples of domestic violence related crimes in Rhode Island are:

- Assault and battery
- Kidnapping
- Child snatching
- Crank or obscene telephone calls
- Possession of arms by person convicted of crime of violence
- Cyber stalking and cyber harassment
- Stalking

For more information about Rhode Island domestic violence law see [www.womenslaw.org](http://www.womenslaw.org)

### **A few notes about immigration related issues:**

- The following three pages provide basic information about three forms of relief that are sometimes available to survivors of domestic violence who are undocumented and living in the U.S.: the U visa, relief under VAWA, and asylum (based on surviving domestic violence in the country of origin). These information sheets were created by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center and are reproduced here.
- Perpetrators of domestic violence who are not U.S. citizens can be deported if they are convicted of a domestic violence crime or if they violate a protection order.
- When in doubt, it is best to refer questions to attorneys or DV advocates!

Legal information should not be considered current. Refer to legal organizations such as the ILRC ([www.ilrc.org](http://www.ilrc.org)) for updated guidance.



## U NONIMMIGRANT STATUS

*U nonimmigrant status (the "U Visa") is for noncitizens who are victims of serious crimes and can be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of those crimes.*

### **What are the benefits of U nonimmigrant status (also known as a "U visa")?**

- The U visa begins as a temporary visa that allows the noncitizen to remain legally in the United States for four years. After three years in this status, the U visa-holder can apply to obtain lawful permanent residency (a "green card").
- Provides employment authorization to allow the noncitizen to work.
- The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) can issue a U visa to the eligible noncitizen and to certain other family members.
- In some states, allows the noncitizen to receive some public benefits (in California this includes Medi-Cal, food stamps, CalWorks, etc.)

### **What are the requirements for the U visa?**

1. The noncitizen must have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of having been the victim of one of the following crimes: rape, torture, trafficking, incest, domestic violence, sexual assault, abusive sexual contact, prostitution, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, being held hostage, peonage, involuntary servitude, slave trade, kidnapping, abduction, unlawful criminal restraint, false imprisonment, blackmail, extortion, manslaughter, murder, felonious assault, witness tampering, obstruction of justice, perjury, stalking or fraud in foreign labor contracting or attempt, conspiracy, or solicitation to commit these or similar offenses in violation of federal, state or local criminal law. In certain cases, where the direct victim is deceased due to murder or manslaughter or is incompetent or incapacitated, certain family members (if the direct victim is under 21 years of age) may also qualify for U nonimmigrant status.
2. The noncitizen has information about the criminal activity and has been helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of the crime. If the child is under 16 years of age, a parent, guardian or next friend of the child may fill this role.
3. The noncitizen must obtain certification from a federal, state or local law enforcement official, prosecutor, judge, or other authority investigating criminal activity, or from a USCIS official that shows that he or she has been helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of the crime. A Child Protective Services (CPS) agency may also certify the noncitizen's helpfulness if it has criminal investigative jurisdiction.

*For more information, order the ILRC's publication  
"The U Visa: Obtaining Status for Immigrant Victims of Crime."*

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

*The Violence Against Women Act permits certain abused family members of U.S. citizens or permanent residents to self-petition for a green card without the cooperation of the abuser.*

### What are the benefits of VAWA?

- Allows the abused family member to remain in the United States and eventually obtain lawful permanent residency (a “green card”).
- Provides an employment authorization document that allows the abused family member to work and serves as a government-issued identification card.
- Allows the abused family member to receive some public benefits (in California this includes Medi-Cal, food stamps, CalWorks, etc.)

### Who is eligible?

- An abused noncitizen child or spouse of a U.S. citizen or permanent resident parent.
- An abused noncitizen parent of a U.S. citizen.
- A child (whether abused or not) of a parent who was abused by a U.S. citizen or permanent resident spouse. In other words, a child can receive VAWA benefits even if he or she was not abused, as long as the child’s parent qualifies for VAWA due to abuse.

*NOTE:* Both male and female abused children (or spouses) are eligible to apply.

### What are the requirements for VAWA?

1. The abusive family member is or was a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident.
2. The abused family member resided at some point in time with the abusive U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident parent in or out of the United States.
3. The child or spouse qualifies as a “child” or “spouse” under immigration law.
  - For children, the child must be unmarried and under the age of 21. Includes step-children if the relationship was established before the child’s 18th birthday and adopted children if the adoption was finalized before the child’s 16th birthday and the child has been in the adoptive parent’s physical and legal custody for two years.
  - For spouses, the marriage must have been legal and valid in the location in which it took place. There are some exceptions to these requirements.
4. The abused family member must be a person of “good moral character.”
5. The abuse must constitute battery or “extreme cruelty” which can include psychological or emotional abuse – the abused family member need not suffer *physical* abuse to be eligible.

*For more information, order the ILRC’s publication  
“[The VAWA Manual: Immigration Relief for Abused Immigrants.](#)”*

## ASYLUM

*Asylum is for noncitizens who fear persecution in their home country because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.*

### What are the benefits of asylum?

- Allows the noncitizen to remain in the United States and eventually obtain lawful permanent residency (a “green card”).
- Provides an employment authorization document that allows the noncitizen to work and serves as a government-issued identification card.
- Allows the noncitizen to travel outside the United States with a refugee travel document, but generally one cannot return to their home country.
- A person granted asylum can petition for spouse and children to enter as asylees.
- Allows the noncitizen to receive some public benefits (in California this includes Medi-Cal, food stamps, CalWorks, etc.)

### What are the requirements for asylum?

1. Generally, a noncitizen must apply within one year of arriving in the United States unless he or she was prevented from applying by changed or extraordinary circumstances. Changes in home country conditions may constitute changed circumstances. Some forms of family abuse and domestic violence might be considered extraordinary circumstances. Status as a minor may also be considered a legal disability so as to qualify as an extraordinary circumstance. In addition, unaccompanied minors are exempt from the one-year bar. An unaccompanied minor is defined as an undocumented person under the age of 18 who does not have a parent or legal guardian who is willing or able to provide care and physical custody.

2. The noncitizen must have suffered persecution or fear persecution from the government of his or her home country or from a group or individual that the government is unwilling or unable to control (for example, guerrillas or death squads).

3. The persecution must be on account of the noncitizen’s race, religion, political opinion, nationality or membership in a social group.

4. The noncitizen must not be subject to certain mandatory bars to asylum. These include persecution of others, conviction of a particularly serious crime, commission of a serious non-political crime before coming to the U.S., posing a risk to U.S. security, engaging in terrorist activity, firm resettlement in a third country, or removal to a safe third country.

→ In some cases, asylum has been granted based on severe domestic violence or issues involving gender (such as threat of female genital mutilation in the home country), even if the persecution and abuse was committed by family members.

*Note: This form of relief is very complicated. Noncitizens who may qualify for asylum must consult with an expert immigration practitioner before applying.*

*For more information, order the ILRC’s publication,  
“Essentials of Asylum Law.”*

*Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
www.ilrc.org  
July 2013*

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## Appendix C

### Case Scenario to Review Legal Aspects

You are the mother of two young children who were born in the U.S. You have no legal immigration status, but your husband has his green card (permanent residency) and has promised to help you get a green card too. Every time you ask him about it, though, he becomes angry and refuses to answer your questions, so you've stopped asking. You try to avoid making him angry, because when he's angry he hits you, calls you names, and threatens to call immigration and take the children away from you. You feel stuck and wonder whether there's anything that you can do.

### Some Important Take-Away Points

- Domestic violence can take many forms, including physical abuse and emotional abuse (See the Power and Control Wheel for more examples of abusive behavior).
- The husband can use the fact that the woman has no immigration status or depends on him to get legal immigration status to control her.
- It can sometimes be possible for undocumented individuals who are abused to get legal immigration status. For example, individuals who are abused by their spouses who are U.S. citizens or are green card holders can apply for immigration status in some circumstances. Even where the abuser is not a U.S. citizen or green card holder, a victim of domestic violence may be able to get a visa if she cooperates with the police. There is more information about these forms of relief in Appendix B. Survivors of domestic violence who are undocumented should consult with an immigration attorney to discuss their options.
- The abuser can use the children to control the other person. For example, he can threaten to take the children away.
- The woman can request a Protection Order from the court to keep the abuser away from her and from the children. This is not the same as getting custody of the children and does not end the father's parental rights.
- A conviction for a crime of domestic violence or a violation of a protective order can lead to deportation, even if the person has a green card. If you are worried about what effects reporting the abuser to the police will have on his immigration status, you can consult an immigration lawyer.

## Appendix D

### **If the Roles Were Reversed** (Facilitator Prompt for the Women's Group)

Ask participants to close their eyes and listen to the facilitator read each scenario. Guide them to imagine themselves as the main character. Ask participants to concentrate, not to look around the room or at each other but to really tune into the moment. After each scenario is read aloud, allow participants to reflect on their own emotions as if they were in the scenario. Ask participants to jot down their thoughts (can be one word or bullet points).

#### **Questions to think about after each scenario:**

- How would you feel?
- How would you feel about yourself? Your family? Your children? Your husband? Your relationship?
- How would feel about your safety?
- What would you do? What would be your next steps?
- Who would you turn to for support?
- If this was happening to a friend, family member or a community member, what advice would you give them?

#### Scenario 1:

It is January, you and your spouse have been together for 7 years. You have two small children together. You have always been happy in the relationship and there have never been any moments of physical abuse. As a couple, you've had regular disputes over finances, the usage of the family car, disciplining the children and spending time together when the family has free time. A few weeks before Christmas your spouse lost his job and has become more sensitive and easily provoked when talking about the family finances, particularly when you encourage him to apply for another job. At a Christmas gathering you mentioned to a cousin who owns a company that your husband needs a job. He became furious and reprimanded you in front of the family for what he says is speaking out of place. Later in the week he apologized for lashing out and admits he is feeling the pressure of needing to find a job. (Pause and reflect)

#### Scenario 2:

It is now July and it is a very hot day. Since Christmas, your husband has not found steady work except for odd jobs here and there with a friend who could use an extra hand. On your day off, you decide to bring the kids to the park to enjoy some ice cream. When you return home, your husband is upset that you spent the money on ice cream. He yells at you and accuses you of being irresponsible with the family finances. He grabs and empties out your purse on the floor. He then demands that you report every dollar spent for the week and from now on. (Pause and reflect)

### Scenario 3:

It is now October and the kids are asking for Halloween costumes to go to Halloween festivities. Because of the incident in July, you have been extremely careful to not spend extra money to avoid any more heated arguments with your spouse. Instead of buying costumes, you bought fabrics and supplies from the arts and crafts store to make costumes with your kids. When you came home from the Halloween party your husband was enraged, you tried to explain that you did not spend as much money as it may seem. But he smacks you, grabs you by the hair, takes your wallet and threatens not to give it back until you have learned your lesson. You yell back not to ever hit you again, when you then realize the children are still there and have seen the whole incident. Later they ask if it is their fault you got in trouble with “Papi”. (Pause and reflect)

### Scenario 4:

It is a few months later and things have not gotten better. You have noticed that you and your husband have had much more hard times than fun the past year. Communication has been strained and almost every conversation turns into an argument. You’ve noticed that you avoid conversations with him and only talk about matters regarding the children. Although he has not found a job, you’ve noticed that he has been keeping busy around the home completing unfinished projects, doing repairs, helping with groceries and other errands. He has even become more involved in the children’s day-to-day care by picking them up and dropping them off at school, making their lunch and managing their afterschool routine. You are very grateful for this shift in behavior that this new free time has created. One night you find your husband yelling and beating your oldest child. You attempt to intervene and mediate the situation to protect your oldest child. Instead he turns on you for undermining his authority in front of the children and beats you worse than he was beating your child. You run to put your kids to bed in the room, they are afraid he will come in and beat all of them again. You see yourself in the reflection and see blood running from your nose and other areas of your face. You immediately recognize your sore arms, stomach, back and neck. It’s painful to get up off of your child’s bed. The next morning, he gets the kids ready and takes them to school with your wallet. He returns with aromatherapy bath salt to soak and apologizes for the night before. He promises he will never hurt you again, and asks if he can set you a hot bath to relax and make all the pain go away. (Pause and reflect)

### Scenario 5:

It has been two years since the first time he has become violent with you and the children. Since then has found a job working nights, which has changed daily routine. He now leaves the home at 9:30pm after the children are in bed and comes home at 6:30am when it is time to get them up and ready for school. He continues to be very involved in the children’s day-to-day care. Since he started this new job,

you notice that he has become more rigid in his expectations. Certain things must be done before he leaves for work or by the time he gets home after his shift or he will get upset. You do most things to prevent him from getting upset. Since the first time he became violent there have been a number of other physical fights. After every fight he has apologized and has even been romantic by hiring a babysitter and taking night beach trip. With every apology he assures her how important his family is and how much he loves and will do anything for his children. One incident became so bad that the oldest child reported it to his teacher. The school then sent a social worker to the home to check for the safety of the children. They informed you that if there are any signs of abuse or risk of danger to the safety of the children, they are obligated by law to take and protect them until further notice. (Pause and reflect).

### **Group Discussion Questions**

1. What did you notice about your answers after each scenario? Was there a shift in how you would respond?
2. If there was a shift in response, when did it take place?
3. What, if anything, have you learned about yourself?
4. Has this caused you to think differently about Domestic Violence?
5. Did anyone write down advice they'd give to a friend or family member that they wouldn't take themselves if they were in the same situation? (Not sure about this one)
6. What are some of the supports that you would utilize? Think of another woman in the same scenario that does not have access to this type of support, how would her experience differ?
7. What lessons can we take from this exercise?

### **Key Take Away Points**

- Every woman will perceive her experience differently depending on her life story and previous exposure to trauma, abuse or previous experience with the loss of a secure attachment.
- The risks involved vary greatly depending on the types of support the victim has access to.

## Appendix E

### DV Scenarios – Response Exercise

Facilitator: Divide the large group into smaller groups with 4-5 persons each. Provide each small group with a different scenario from the 5 provided below. The group should pick sub-topic A, B, or C which are three alternative scenes within the same scenario, that is, #1-5. The group's choice might be based on the type of situation that they think their organization might encounter – or based on other criteria they identify. Each group must then develop a role-play which **RESPONDS** to the specific scene they have chosen within the scenario that they were given. Allow each group time to develop its role-play response. Each group is thus given the opportunity to organize a strategy to manage the crisis envisioning themselves in the role of community workers. If time permits, and the group would like to continue this exercise, the group may select a second scene, develop a second role-play, act them out, etc.

#### **Scenario 1**

A) Your agency receives a call from a woman asking to speak with another woman. When the staff person picks up the phone, they notice the woman sounds anxious. The staff person asks the woman a few questions and discovers that she is having trouble at home with her husband. She conveys her embarrassment and hesitancy in asking for help. She would like to get more information on how to get support for domestic violence. **She is not sure if it is domestic violence and is not ready to go to a support group.**

B) Your agency receives a call from a woman asking to speak with another woman. There are no female staff persons currently available. When the staff person picks up the phone, they notice the woman sounds anxious. The staff person asks the woman a few questions and discovers that she is having trouble at home with her husband. She would like to get more information on domestic violence support.

C) Your organization receives a call from woman who says she needs help but did not know where to go. She has a lot of problems in her life and her friend told her she should call this number to get more help. She was told that you can help because she is undocumented. In the phone call you find that the woman is homeless with 3 small children and is currently staying with her friend. She has not received medical care since the birth of her last child 1 year ago because she is afraid to leave a record that will lead her ex-husband to her. She has had to move with her children because of noise complaints in her previous apartment, her ex found her at the home of a friend from church, he beat her for leaving and threatened her friends family. She is now currently at another's friend's house where he has arrived drunk looking for her but she was not home. Now she is looking for help for a safe place to stay that is close to her friends.



## **Scenario 2**

- A) Your organization is conducting an ESOL class and discussing issues of domestic violence and rights for domestic violence survivors. A student asks 3 questions through out the class referring to a friend's experience and what types of help she can get for her.
- B) Your organization is conducting an ESOL class and is discussing issues of domestic violence and rights for domestic violence survivors. One student becomes emotional and asks how she can protect her kids from her husband if they have shared custody.
- C) Your organization is conducting an ESOL class and discussing issues of domestic violence and rights for domestic violence survivors. One student discovers that she is a victim of emotional and economic abuse. She initially responds in the class with an example of what her husband did within in the past 3 months to ask if it was considered DV. Her husband checks all of her receipts and gives an allowance to spend for household items and she is the only one working. She believes it is his way of being the man of the house because he has been unemployed.

## **Scenario 3**

- A) After the last class/ workshop of the day, a student comes up to a staff person and asks if they can speak about private matters. The woman conveys that she is having trouble at home. You notice that the woman is anxious and has become tearful. She shares that she is afraid to go home and does not know where else to go. She will only go to a shelter that has Spanish speaking staff and no curfew so that she may continue to work her night shift.
- B) After the last class/workshop of the day, a student approaches a staff person and asks about DV resources for women and children.
- C) After the last class of the day, a member is waiting to speak with the first available staff person. Upon meeting the staff person recognizes she's been hurt and asks her if she needs a shelter. She admits to getting hurt and wants help to deal with her husband when she gets home again. She does not want to go to a shelter.

## **Scenario 4**

- A) Your organization is conducting an ESOL class and the husband of one of the students enters the classroom. He curses at her and yells telling her its time to go. The student packs up to leave, as she passes him to leave he pushes

her through the door. The next day she calls saying he beat her when she got home in front of the kids. She is asking for your advice on what to do.

- B) Your organization is hosting an event with food and music. Some members are volunteering. During the event a husband shows up upset demanding that his wife stop participating because she is not there to have fun she is there to learn. He calls her names and throws her belongings at her to get ready to leave. This member returns to classes about twice a month when her husband happens to work on the same day. She is not ready to leave him but is willing to get help.
- C) The organization is hosting a table at a health fair that is conducting rapid HIV testing. A student is volunteering at the health fair at a time other than when the class meets. The husband picks her up and accuses her of cheating and being at the health fair to secretly get tested. He calls her names, accuses her of cheating and demands to look at the confidential files of the test takers to check her status.

### **Scenario 5**

- A) Student who usually comes to class regularly has begun to arrive less frequently. When she comes to class she does not participate and wears baggy clothing. An event that she usually volunteers for is coming up and you approach to ask for her interest. You notice she has a bruise under her eye as she responds that she cannot volunteer the event this year.
- B) Student comes to class with a black eye.
- C) A student leaves for class a bit later than usual. You recognize that she is anxious and is no longer in a happy mood. When asked what's wrong she says she must return home before her husband gets upset. She normalizes his behavior by saying you know men when they don't get what they want. She returns to class later in the week with bruising on her face.

## Appendix F

### A Sample Agenda for the Training Workshop

#### Domestic Violence Workshop Spring 2014

##### Program

Time	Activities	Materials	Facilitators
9 – 9:30am	Welcome: Introduction of the participants, discussing expectations for the workshop, explaining the goals.	Newsprint with the goals.	
9:30 – 10:00	Set ground rules to create a safe space and write them down on Newsprint. Suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidentiality (explain it)</li> <li>• Respect each other’s opinions, feelings, beliefs while being open for discussion and learning.</li> <li>• Creates a space for everyone’s opinions and beliefs, despite the differences among them.</li> <li>• Listen while others speak</li> <li>• Asks for more ground rules from the participants</li> </ul>	Newsprints and markers	
10:00 am- 10:30	Power exercise: ice breaker activity to think about how power works in a relationship. Discussion about the exercise.	Newsprint and markers	
10:30- 11:15	Defining DV: Split up in groups of 4 people to brainstorm ideas of what DV is. Also each member of the group should give an example from what they have seen or experienced, that illustrates these ideas. At the end each group will present their definition of DV choosing one of their examples to support it. Final discussion: Clarification of DV’s definition and also mention other aspect that the groups didn’t mention. Use the wheel of power and control.		
11:15 – 12:00	a. Legal information on DV: Provide Handouts on what each state (MA and RI) considers DV, how this applies to legal immigrants, undocumented women and asylum seekers. b. Analysis of DV scenarios on hand outs: scenarios where participants can identify the type of DV and why it is DV and also some legal aspects and client rights for the victim.	Handouts of case # 1	

12:00-12:10	Break		
12:10 – 12:35	For women: Emotional aspects of DV. (English, Spanish)	Prepared newsprints and materials	
12:10 – 12:35	For men: what do men have to do with this? In a discussion exercise we will discuss what role do men play and how they can increase the problem or contribute to the solution of DV in their organizations and the communities they work with.	Handout about healthy masculinity.	
12:35-12:55	Provide general information about the emotional and psychological aspects of DV. The idea is to provide general information about the emotional consequences and the emotional state of a person that is in a DV situation to better understand how to support them. The discussion should also cover how DV develops under different socioeconomic conditions, and particularly how it intersects with poverty.		
12:55 1:30	LUNCH		
1:30 – 2:30	<i>Role play: How to respond to a person asking for help on a DV matter.</i> Discussion	Handout of scenarios for role play.	
2:15-3:15	Elaboration of protocol: based on the outline provided and the discussions in previous activities, each organization will elaborate a draft protocol on what steps they could follow when a victim of DV approaches them.	Newsprints and markers	
3:15 - 3:30	Coffee break		
3:30-4:30	How to make a referral: Analysis of the referral process. Guidelines for the elaboration of resource lists catered to each organization's needs. Role play: referral process.	Prepared newsprints, newsprints and markers	
4:30 – 5:00	Conclusion and Wrap-up Activity		

## Appendix G

### Mandated Reporting

#### MANDATED REPORTING IN MASSACHUSETTS

Who?	Mandated to Report Abuse?	
	Child Abuse & Neglect	Domestic Abuse – adult victims
Physicians and hospital personnel	<p>YES – must make immediate oral report to DCF and written report (51A report) within 48 hours when, in professional capacity, have reasonable cause to believe child is suffering from abuse and/or neglect (including malnutrition).</p> <p>MAY notify law enforcement.</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>Mandated Reporters are encouraged to review family’s situation and identify impact on children when considering when to file a report. In some cases a report may create greater risk for children.</p>
EMTs, dentists, and other medical professionals		
Public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance counselors		
Early education, childcare, or after school program staff		
Child care licensors		
Social workers & foster parents		
Probation officers, clerks magistrate of the district courts		
Firefighters and police officers		
School attendance officers, allied mental health and licensed human services professionals		
Psychiatrists, psychologists and clinical social workers, drug and alcohol counselors		
Clergy (except if information gained through confession or equivalent), persons performing official duties on behalf of church or religious body, persons employed by religious body to supervise, educate, coach, train or counsel child on regular basis		
Child Advocate		

## **KEY DEFINITIONS**

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**Child Abuse:** any act by a caretaker on a child (under 18) which causes or creates a substantial risk of physical or emotional injury; or any sexual contact between a caretaker and a child.

**Child Neglect:** failure by caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability (as long as not due solely to lack of economic resources), to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth, or other essential care.

**Abuse:** Abuse occurring between family or household members that is:

- (a) attempting to cause or causing physical harm;
- (b) placing another in fear of imminent serious physical harm;
- (c) causing another to engage involuntarily in sexual relations by force, threat or duress.

## **RELEVANT LAWS**

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- Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, § 21 (definition of mandated reporter)
- Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, § 51A (standards for making report)
- Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 209A (abuse prevention orders)

**MANDATED REPORTING IN RHODE ISLAND**

Who?	Mandated to Report Abuse?	
	Child Abuse & Neglect	Domestic Violence – adult victims
<b>ALL ADULTS</b>	<p>YES – if reasonable cause to know or suspect that child has been abused or neglected, must report to DCYF within 24 hours by calling 1-800-RI-CHILD</p> <p>Not required to provide name in report</p>	NO
Physician & nurse practitioner	YES – cause to suspect child brought to them for treatment is abused or neglected or child under 12 suffering from STD	NO
Attorneys	Attorney-client privilege can be reason for failure to report	NO
Healthcare providers	YES	YES – must report incidents of DV including adults but only for data collection purposes – <i>no identifying information needed</i>

## KEY DEFINITIONS

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**Abused and/or neglected child:** child whose physical or mental health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm when his or her parent or other person responsible for his or her welfare inflicts or creates substantial risk of physical or mental injury, commits or allows sexual abuse, fails to provide for basic needs, abandons the child.

**Domestic Abuse: any of these acts against a present or former family member, a current or recent romantic partner, or a cohabitant:**

- **Attempts to cause or causes you physical harm** (with or without a weapon);
- Places you in **fear of immediate serious physical harm** (including threatening you with a weapon);
- Causes you to have **sexual relations against your will** by force, threat of force, or duress (coercion);
- **Stalks** you – stalking is defined as either:
- **Harassment** (behaving or acting in a way that intends to seriously alarm, annoy, or bother you, and which serves no legitimate (valid) purpose. His/her actions must reasonably cause you to suffer substantial emotional distress or to be in fear of bodily injury); OR
- Maliciously and repeatedly **following you** with the intent to place you in reasonable fear of bodily injury; or
- **Cyberstalks** you (sends any communication by computer to you for the sole purpose of harassing you or your family).

## RELEVANT LAWS

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- Rhode Island General Laws § 40-11-2 (definition of abuse/neglect child)
- Rhode Island General Laws § 40-11-3 (standards for reporting)
- Rhode Island General Laws §§ 8-8.1-1(5)(iv)-(vi),(4),(6),(8); 15-15-1(2),(6)-(8); see also "complaint for protection from abuse" form at RI Gen Laws §§ 8-8.1-6; 15-15-6



## Appendix H

### Links to useful resources

- **Love is Respect** (<http://www.loveisrespect.org/download-materials>) – this resource page provides links to a variety of informational handouts as well as other materials such as posters and wallet cards.
- **ASISTA** (<http://www.asistahelp.org/>) – works to centralize assistance for advocates and attorneys facing complex legal problems in advocating for immigrant survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- **National Resource Center on Domestic Violence** (<http://www.nrcdv.org/>) - comprehensive source of information for those wanting to educate themselves and help others on the many issues related to domestic violence.