Houston Police Department
Victim’s Services Division
Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) Program

Final Assessment Report
August 15, 2022

Submitted by Aabha Brown, LMSW
Co-Founder
Collective Experience Group

This report was produced for the International Association of Chiefs of Police by Collective Experience Group LLC under grant number 2018-V3-GX-K049, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this report are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.
The mission of the Houston Police Department (HPD) Victim’s Services Division (VSD) is to enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Houston by assisting victims and the families of the victims’ experiencing crime and trauma. The VSD Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) program began as a pilot program in a limited number of HPD patrol stations in 2019 with funding from the Harris County District Attorney’s Office. Although the pilot ended in 2020, HPD subsequently embraced the model and implemented it citywide late that year. Efforts to secure funding to sustain and expand the program are ongoing.

Houston is the nation’s fourth most populous city, situated mostly within Harris County, the nation’s third most populous county. The city is a sprawling metroplex and the Houston Police Department is responsible for a 671 square mile area, with roughly 2.3 million residents. In Houston in 2021, there were 28,588 violent crimes, which included 479 murders, 1,175 rapes, 7,801 robberies, and 19,133 aggravated assaults. That year, the Victims Services Division provided services to 36,348 crime victims, which included 14,544 victims of family violence, 14,319 victims of aggravated assault, 3,128 robbery victims, 703 victims of sexual assault, and 766 homicide survivors. Within that year, the DART program specifically served a total of 4,379 victims of crime, representing 12% of overall victims served.

Collective Experience Group (CEG) was engaged by the HPD VSD to conduct a limited assessment focused in three areas to identify opportunities to enhance program outcomes and make a stronger case for sustainment to funders. This engagement involves an assessment of data, the perceptions of the program by referral partners and perceptions of vicarious trauma support from DART personnel.

---

1 For a brief (two minute) video explanation of the DART program, visit https://m.facebook.com/Houstonpolice/videos/dart-video/691470172241932/
3 City of Houston, Department of Planning & Development. http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/Demographics/
4 HPD Office of Planning & Data Governance, from Records Management System as of 1/22/2022
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Initially, participation in the DART Unit was afforded to personnel, both classified and civilian, as an opportunity for overtime pay. With grant funding, VSD has been able to create new full-time civilian advocate positions to minimize the reliance on overtime and allow DART to cover more of the city every night of the week. Classified officers participating in DART must complete a four-hour, TCOLE-approved DART course. Civilian advocates complete the 55-hour Sexual Assault Training certification facilitated by representatives from the Houston Area Women’s Center (HAWC), DART’s primary referral partner. Advocates also complete a four-hour Crime Victim Compensation training and a one-hour training by domestic violence forensic nurse examiners.

Both classified and civilian personnel indicated multiple motivations for working in the DART Unit including:

- strong motivation to help others
- personal experiences with family violence
- utilization of professional credentials and crisis intervention skillsets
- desire to diversify professional experience

While the focus of this assessment was data, referral partner perceptions, and vicarious trauma management, important learning was derived through this process. Most notably the impact of classified and civilian partnership while working in the DART Unit.

Classified personnel in particular indicated that observing the work of civilian advocates has a significant impact on their professional skillset and interactions with civilians while on patrol. Officers cited that prior to working with the DART Unit, they only provided crime victims a “blue card”, referring to the VSD informational pamphlet distributed by HPD officers to victims at crime scenes. Working in the DART Unit, specifically observing civilian advocates, is reported to provide a better understanding of:

- the role and importance of empathetic responses in crisis situations
- scene management from a crime victim’s perspective
- the entire workflow associated with medical and service intervention for victims
- effective communication strategies to utilize while on patrol
Additionally, officers indicated that their knowledge of legal protections afforded to and resources available for victims increased, and they are able to discuss these options with crime victims while on patrol. Officers also credited their experience with the DART Program for giving them a stronger understanding of strategies to better establish rapport and trust with victims on a scene.

DATA INVENTORY
Data currently being collected are useful to communicate the demand for DART services and provides a view into the demographics of victims that utilize DART services. Additional data that can more fully communicate the impact of the program include:

- Origin of Notification to DART Unit
- Number of internal referrals for DART Services (calls not identified through scanning)
- Victim Outcome Data (from referral partners)
- Personnel Surveys

REFERRAL PARTNER PERCEPTIONS
The Houston Area Women’s Center (HAWC) is the primary referral partner for the DART program and reports satisfaction with the current referral process. HAWC staff reported a desire for a stronger collaborative partnership with DART personnel to increase information exchange, identify mutual learning opportunities, and establish best practices for safe removal of victims of domestic violence. Additionally, through this process several shareable outcome data elements were identified and will now be shared with regularity between HPD and HAWC, furthering articulation of the DART Program’s impact.

VICARIOUS TRAUMA MANAGEMENT
The DART Program serves households in crisis and exposes DART personnel to multiple crises and traumas at each scene. DART personnel reported keen awareness of this exposure and balanced that knowledge with their strong motivations to assist victims in the aftermath of these crises and traumas. DART personnel reflected that the work of supporting victims is important to managing the vicarious (secondary) trauma that they experience. Classified personnel specifically discussed the impact of observing civilian advocates as professionally beneficial and important to understanding the full flow of victim engagement. DART personnel shared insights and recommendations to better manage vicarious trauma experienced as a result of working with the DART program including:
Strategies used to process and manage vicarious trauma:

- Preparing ahead of time mentally
- Engaging in acute self-awareness
- Checking in with one another
- Focusing on the next call
- Utilize existing resources available through HPD
- Taking time off

Strategies that could be useful in supporting DART personnel:

- Increase Accessibility of Support Services
- Establish DART Specific Protocols
- Technology Utilization
- Customized Training Opportunities
- Supervision Consideration as Program Expands
- Enhance Communication of Relevant Processes and Practices
WORKFLOW

What additional data could VSD be capturing to better demonstrate impact to funders to make the case for sustainment funding for Houston’s LEV program?

In order to best articulate the types of data needed to demonstrate impact, a documentation of the DART workflow was conducted to clearly identify when, where and how data points are captured and recorded. Through a process mapping session with key stakeholders, the workflow by which a DART Unit is requested or notified of a scene where DART services are needed was documented in narrative and visual form. Although each scene is different and may require related adjustments, the following narrative and visual describe the typical procedure associated with a DART Unit’s engagement with victims at a scene.

NOTIFICATION

A city-wide message is sent out to patrol units daily between 7:30-11:30pm that communicates DART Unit availability to assist with scenes through 3:00am. DART Units are staged at specific stations and at HPD headquarters.

Classified personnel are made aware of the services of the DART Units through several mechanisms including:

- required reading that explains DART services
- briefings by commanders during 10:00 & 11:00pm roll calls
- training included in Victim’s Services portion of HPD Academy Basic Peace Officer Course
- inclusion in promotion school curriculum
- personal experience with DART unit on scene
- testimonials from others regarding DART unit assistance on scene

DART Units are notified of scenes in several ways. According to DART personnel, scanning patrol calls for service to assess whether DART services can be utilized is the most effective mechanism for initiating response to a scene. Additionally, internal referrals are made by responding officers or other classified personnel aware of the scene. Such requests are made via phone call, text message, and/or email directly to DART leadership.
RESPONSE & DOCUMENTATION

Civilian Advocate

Once a scene is identified as involving Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and DART Unit assistance is deemed appropriate, a DART Unit comprised of one uniformed officer and one non-uniformed civilian advocate travel to the scene in an HPD patrol vehicle. It is important to note that DART Unit vehicles do not have a cage between the front and back seat as they are used to transport victims from a scene when needed.

Once on scene, the DART officer exchanges information with the first responding patrol officer(s) while the civilian advocate engages with the victim(s). The DART officer also maintains the security of the scene for the safety of the DART advocate and victim(s). There is significant variation between scenes, thus civilian advocates customize their trauma-informed interventions based on their assessment of victim’s needs in each situation. These interventions may include:

- brief crisis intervention counseling
- securing immediate shelter for victims
- obtaining verbal consent from victim for a domestic violence forensic examination
- serving as liaison between the victim and officers on scene
- providing information and referral services to victim(s)

Civilian advocates complete a handwritten DART Scene Report and a portion of the information from the DART Scene Report is input into the VS Tracking software system used by the VSD. A copy of the handwritten report is emailed to the VSD administrative personnel for record keeping and, with victim consent, to the director of Counseling Services at HAWC for follow-up. VS Tracking captures demographic information about the victim and suspect, the number of children in the household (whether or not they were present at the time of the incident) and what referrals were provided to the client. The system allows cases to be connected should the victim be involved or have been involved in more than one case.

 Classified Officer

After exchanging information with the first responding patrol officer(s), the DART officer continues to secure the scene in order for the advocate to safely intervene with the victim. In cases where a domestic violence forensic nurse examiner is requested and the advocate obtains verbal consent for an exam from the victim, the DART supervisor corresponds with the domestic violence forensic nurse examiner to make exam arrangements. If the victim needs shelter, the DART Unit uses their patrol vehicle, which does not have a cage between the front and back seat, to transport the victim to HAWC for shelter placement. In cases where a shelter bed is available in closer proximity to the scene, the DART Unit can transport the victim directly to the identified shelter, or another safe location that the victim identifies. Finally, the DART officer inputs all
relevant data into the HPD record management system (RMS) which is accessible by the District Attorney’s office.

**FOLLOW UP**

**Victim’s Services Day Shift**
Day shift advocates conduct follow-up calls to victims seen during the night shift. Two follow up attempts are made to reach the victim for further support and referral.

**Referral Partner – Houston Area Women’s Center**
Copies of all handwritten DART Scene Reports are sent to HAWC’s director of Counseling Services via email. HAWC advocates attempt two follow up phone calls to the victim(s) to offer counseling services and assess needs for additional HAWC services.

Victims that indicate a need for shelter on scene will be taken to HAWC’s Shelter Respite Room to await shelter placement. Placement involves an assessment of needs and resources conducted by HAWC staff, and may include residential shelter, temporary housing, hotel vouchers or sheltering with friends/relatives.
DATA COLLECTION AND USE

The following categories of data are being captured manually on the DART Scene Report, included in the Appendix, during DART Unit interactions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Information</th>
<th>Safety Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Contact information for the victim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demographic information for the victim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Suspect information</td>
<td>A 29-item questionnaire is used to assess the following areas:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o physical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o emotional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This data provides a useful understanding of the individuals served by Victim’s Services as well as the needs those victims have in the dimensions listed above. The following data elements may be useful to collect and report to more fully articulate program impact and budget needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Data for Collection</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Origin of Notification to DART Unit</td>
<td>Capturing how the DART Unit is notified of a scene can be useful in documenting and understanding the awareness level within the department of the role and value of the DART Program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of internal referrals for DART Services (calls not identified through scanning)</td>
<td>Capturing the number of referrals on a monthly basis can assist in understanding demand for DART Unit services. Demand for services can provide guidance with regard to staffing needs and potential growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Outcome Data (from referral partners)</td>
<td>De-identified outcome data can provide a view into the impact of DART Unit intervention with victims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified Personnel Surveys</td>
<td>Anonymous survey specifically designed to capture the impact of working with the DART Unit on their professional practice on patrol can assist in understanding positive impacts that could be replicated in training/experience for other officers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Personnel Surveys</td>
<td>Anonymous survey specifically designed to capture the support experienced while working with the DART Unit as well as recommendations to improve assistance for victims on scenes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMMUNITY PARTNER REFERRAL PROCESS

How is the program being perceived by the personnel of agencies to which victims are referred?

The primary referral partner for the DART Unit within the VSD is the Houston Area Women’s Center (HAWC). Established in 1977, HAWC serves those in the Houston metropolitan region that have been affected by domestic and sexual violence. The graphic below details the referral workflow between HPD DART Units and the HAWC Hotline, Shelter and Counseling Services.
A focus group comprised of HAWC leadership and key stakeholders that engage with the DART Unit was conducted. The three areas of assessment during the focus group included:

- overall sentiments about the relationship between HAWC and the DART Program
- strategies to strengthen the referral process
- victim outcome data points that can be shared between HPD VSD and HAWC

**FOCUS GROUP INSIGHTS**

**Overall sentiments about the relationship between HPD and HAWC:**
Universally, respondents indicated that the relationship between HPD and HAWC related to the DART program is extremely positive. Leaders in both organizations talk and meet with frequency to ensure the program is effectively meeting the needs of victims. HAWC staff view themselves as community-based advocates and regard HPD VSD advocates as system-based advocates. This distinction is important to HAWC staff as they perceive system-based advocates as critical first responders to victims of domestic violence. Anecdotally, HAWC staff reflected that victims entering HAWC services through a DART Unit intervention appear more apt to take advantage of options for shelter and legal protection services offered to victims of domestic violence.

**Potential strategies to strengthen the referral process:**

- **Consistent Prior Notification** – HAWC staff discussed incidents when DART Units transported victims without first notifying the Hotline. A lack of notification in advance of arrival can delay the intake process which can be challenging for a victim to experience. Consistent prior notification of the need for shelter and subsequent transport affords the greatest opportunity for a trauma-informed transition for victims.

- **Stronger Collaborative Approach** – HAWC frontline staff discussed the value of DART advocates and officers establishing stronger professional relationships. HAWC staff are particularly motivated to learn from the experiences of DART advocates and officers to establish best practices for safe removal that can benefit both organizations. A more comprehensive understanding of the referral process and HAWC programming can assist victims with navigating services from the first point of contact at the scene to shelter/housing placement. Potential collaboration strategies include:
  - Touring the HAWC shelter and hotline
  - Establishing a consistent meeting time for HAWC and DART personnel
  - Establishing communication channels between HAWC and DART personnel
• **Continuing Education** – HAWC staff discussed the value in understanding more about the criminal justice processes associated with the crime of domestic violence. Providing and sharing continuing education opportunities is believed to be an important opportunity that fosters collaboration, facilitates information sharing, and establishes best practices. In addition, shared continuing education costs may be of financial benefit to both organizations.

**Victim Outcome Data Points:**
As a result of the focus group discussion, several data elements were identified that can be shared by HAWC with the DART program. Although individual data cannot be shared, aggregate data can convey information about the impact of the DART program. The following categories of information will be available from HAWC in aggregate form for review on a quarterly basis:

- Number of victims referred by DART
- Number of DART clients referred to a non-HAWC shelter for placement
- Number of DART referrals for shelter as compared to the number of non-DART referrals for shelter
- Number of DART referrals that enroll into HAWC programs
- Types of services provided to DART referrals
- Goals (started, in progress, and achieved) for DART referrals enrolled in HAWC programs
VICARIOUS TRAUMA MANAGEMENT

EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF VICARIOUS TRAUMA

Are LEV/DART personnel adequately managing vicarious trauma and/or is additional management intervention needed to maintain personnel mental health and job satisfaction?

The work of the DART Unit primarily involves responding to scenes where domestic violence has occurred. These scenes often involve multiple traumas, may involve multiple victims, and many scenes involve children. The crisis intervention offered by advocates is invaluable in assisting the victim(s) to navigate a traumatic event and is often assistive in collecting useful information about the scene to supplement officers’ incident reports. Often, victim hesitation to discuss the criminal behavior with officers is alleviated when an advocate is present and connecting with the victim. The nature of this work can create vicarious or secondary trauma for both the officers and advocates.

Focus groups were conducted with classified and civilian personnel separately to:

- assess perceptions of vicarious trauma by DART staff
- discuss strategies personnel use to process and manage vicarious (secondary) trauma
- explore strategies that could be useful to supporting all DART staff

FOCUS GROUP INSIGHTS

Perceptions of vicarious trauma:

Officers and advocates both acknowledged the personal impact they felt from the frequency of engaging with trauma on scenes and magnitude of the trauma in most domestic violence cases. Impacts ranged from having difficulty sleeping to experiencing professional burnout. Many expressed an understanding that vicarious trauma is understood as an expected aspect of this type of work. Both classified and civilian personnel discussed the importance of brevity in processing trauma related to experiences with the DART Unit, citing that long term processing work should be voluntarily managed by individuals rather than being embedded as a job requirement. While all personnel discussed the difficulty associated with not knowing the outcomes of cases, all agreed that this lack of closure is an understood aspect of this type of work. Great satisfaction was expressed about being able to help and provide supportive interventions in the immediate aftermath of a crime. Additionally, classified personnel reflected positively about growing their professional skillsets by observing the work of civilian advocates on a scene.
Strategies used to process and manage vicarious trauma:

- **Preparing ahead of time mentally** – Participants cited that greater knowledge of the scene in advance of the DART Unit arrival is very helpful in managing vicarious trauma. As scenes vary significantly in the type of crime and severity of violence, advocates and officers indicated that this kind of situational awareness prior to arrival on scene is a useful trauma management strategy.

- **Engaging in acute self-awareness** – Advocates especially indicated the importance of self-awareness to maintain a calm, focused demeanor which assists in establishing a trusting rapport with the victim(s). Advocates reported prioritizing self-awareness as a function of their responsibility to support victims and provide stability during crisis intervention, domestic violence forensic exams, and/or shelter service provision.

- **Checking in with one another** – Officers and advocates discussed checking in with one another in a variety of ways. They most commonly debrief a scene after departing to ensure consistency in data reported in both RMS and VS Tracking, as well as to briefly process the experience. Frequency and length of check ins vary based on the pre-existing rapport between the officer and advocate and length of their experience with the DART Unit. Advocates reported having frequent check ins with the entire advocate team and prioritize checking in after scenes that involve homicide(s) or those that receive media attention.

- **Focusing on the next call** – Both officers and advocates indicated that moving from one call to the next without de-briefing the prior scene is a useful and often necessary strategy for limiting the impact of vicarious trauma. Officers reported that spending too much time on debriefing a scene can increase the impact of vicarious trauma rather than alleviate it. Focusing on the next call also prepares both officer and advocate to “reset” themselves prior to arriving at the next scene. Advocates especially communicated the importance of this “reset” in order to provide victims with high quality intervention and service provision.

- **Utilize existing resources available through HPD** - Both advocates and officers reported limited engagement with services available through the Peer Support Program and the Psychological Services Division. Peer Support was generally viewed positively; however, respondents conveyed that Peer Support appears to be geared more directly to classified rather than civilian personnel. Additionally, officers reported their perception that Peer Support volunteers often do not have personal experience with navigating more challenging professional circumstances, thus limiting the impact of the support offered through the program.
• **Taking Time Off** – Taking vacations and/or days off was reported as the most effective way for respondents to manage vicarious trauma related to their professional experiences working in the DART Unit and at HPD in general. Scheduling vacation is prioritized among respondents. More challenging is the ability to take a “mental health day,” defined as a non-previously scheduled day off, often desired after engaging with a particularly difficult scene or shift. These types of breaks are highly desired and are reported to be effective in managing vicarious trauma; however, the current process for taking a non-scheduled vacation day is unclear to respondents. Inconsistent requirements regarding documentation have led to confusion for both officers and advocates, thus clarity around this process would be beneficial. In addition, the degree and frequency of exposure to trauma in the DART program offers a unique opportunity to innovate policy regarding time off. Consideration could be given to accruing “mental health hours” or additional time that can be used without personal disclosure that can be experienced as invasive.

Strategies that could be useful in supporting DART personnel:

• **Increase Accessibility of Support Services** - Increasing the accessibility of counseling support services at varied times and in varied formats (in person and virtual) may better accommodate a multitude of shifts. Meetings where important announcements are shared, and other training opportunities should also be offered at varied times and formats in order to provide equitable opportunity for participation. While the Peer Support program and Psychological Services were discussed, it would be useful to communicate all support services currently offered at HPD through health insurance plans, employee assistance plans and any other relevant community-based services.

• **Establish DART Specific Protocols** - Creating specific protocols can provide guidelines for processing traumatic events, especially for civilian advocates where no such protocols currently exist. This is especially important as VSD has recently begun to engage with assisting after catastrophic and critical events. These types of protocols should be person centered and focused on processing the personal impact of the event on personnel. It is important that these protocols be able to stand alone as a focused supportive opportunity rather than being connected to any type of after-action review. These protocols are reported to have greatest impact if implemented on leadership, supervisor, and peer levels.

• **Technology Utilization** – Currently, DART Scene Reports and referrals are handwritten on scene. Advocates are extremely supportive of this method of notetaking and referral as it allows them to focus solely on the victim(s) rather than on technology. Portable devices that allow for documentation would be helpful to have for use when not on a scene – either in the HPD vehicle or at respective HPD facilities. Since documentation occurs in
two different systems, allocating time while on shift to complete documentation can lead to greater data alignment between RMS and VS Tracking, as well as provide day shift personnel more comprehensive information to review prior to following up with victims.

- **Customized Training Opportunities** – Personnel, especially classified, communicated a desire for more training opportunities organized by relevant life and/or professional experiences. Respondents explained that training participants may find more utility in learning with others experiencing similar life circumstances, for example, years of service with the department or acting as a caregiver for young children, etc. This similarity is believed to potentially foster great rapport between participants thus enhancing dialogue and application of the training material. Respondents expressed that these types of training opportunities can better showcase the impact of trauma and importance of trauma informed approaches to various aspects of their work expectations.

- **Supervision Consideration as Program Expands** – As the DART program continues to expand, respondents discussed the importance of supervision related to classified and civilian personnel. Supervisors should have knowledge, training, and skill sets related to the personnel they supervise. Managers or supervisors with background in crisis intervention would be critical to assisting both officers and advocates with problem solving on scene and processing their experiences.

- **Enhance Communication of Relevant Processes and Practices** – Both classified and civilian personnel discussed occurrences of a lack of clarity related to process and/or practices often leading to mistakes in documentation and miscommunication. Currently, communication about changes is perceived as fragmented and peers heavily rely on one another to ensure understanding of process and practice expectations. Providing clear and uniform information to all shifts is perceived as critical, particularly related to documentation, follow up and scene management.
CONCLUSION

The overall goal of this limited assessment, focused in three areas, was to identify opportunities to enhance program outcomes and make a stronger case for sustainment to funders. The three areas of focus include identification of data that best communicates the impact of the DART program, perceptions of the program by referral partners, and perceptions of DART staff regarding vicarious trauma.

Working with victims of crime, particularly crimes of domestic violence, involves a number of intangible factors that are difficult to measure, yet are powerful indicators of programmatic impact. As reported by DART personnel, providing crisis intervention and empathic support to victims of domestic violence, often in their most traumatic moments, is fulfilling, necessary and challenging work. The conviction of DART personnel regarding the importance of “standing with” a victim in their worst moments was clear and unquestionable. Additionally, according to officers, observing civilian advocates do their work increased the professional communication tools and knowledge of resources they utilize while on patrol.

While exploring the above insights expands beyond the scope of this assessment, the partnership between officers and advocates appears to be noteworthy and should be explored as a potential tool to increase skills for community-oriented policing and trust building between law enforcement and communities. Fostering candid, anonymous, feedback opportunities for DART personnel may be a very effective strategy for increasing programmatic capacity, identifying opportunities for innovation, and support expansion of the DART program. Finally, as the signature feature of this program is the partnership between officers and civilians, careful attention should be paid to cultivating a culture in the DART program that is representative and inclusive of both civilian and classified personnel within the DART program.
APPENDIX
D.A.R.T. Scene Report

Date: _____________________   HPD Incident #:________________________________

Charges Accepted: Yes or No

Advocate Assigned _________________   D.A.R.T. Officer: ________________________________

Primary Officer: ___________________   Location of Offense: ________________________________

VICTIM INFORMATION

Relationship to Suspect: __________________________ Is the victim an adult, child or elder: _________

Client’s Name: _______________________________ DOB: ___________________   Age: _____
Ethnicity: ____________  Phone: _______________________    Cell phone: Yes or No
Email: ________________________    Language(s) Spoken: ___________________________________

Open to follow up from a community partners?   Yes or No

SUSPECT INFORMATION

Suspect’s Name: ________________________ DOB: _____________ Ethnicity: _______

(enter Defendant’s Tab/VS Tracking) Note to Advocate: If not applicable put N/A

Safety:

1. Do you share your residence with the suspect? Yes or No
2. Do you feel safe to remain at this residence? Yes or No
3. If not, do you have a safe place to stay that is unknown to the suspect? Yes or No
4. Would you like assistance with shelter? Yes or No
5. Are there any weapons in the home? Yes or No
6. If yes, what? ____________ Where in the residence? __________________________
7. Can the suspect track you by phone? Yes or No   If yes, Cell Number tracked ____________

8. Have you ever been threatened or stalked by the suspect? Yes or No
9. What is your form of transportation? ________________________

Children:

10. Do you have children with the suspect? Yes or No   If yes, how many children? _________
11. Did any children in the home witness the incident? Yes or No
12. Were any children injured during the physical altercation? Yes or No
13. Has the suspect ever used the children to lure you back into the relationship? Yes or No
14. Is there a LEGAL Custody Agreement? Yes or No
15. Has the suspect ever taken your children without your permission? Yes or No
Physical:

16. Did the suspect strangle you during this incident? **Yes** or **No**
17. Did the suspect use an object/weapon during the assault? **Yes** or **No**  If yes, what? 

18. Did you feel pain during the assault? **Yes** or **No**
19. Do you have any injuries due to the assault? **Yes** or **No** *(notate in observation)*
20. How long have you been with the suspect? __________
21. Has the suspect assaulted you in the past? **Yes** or **No**  If yes, how many times w/in the last 12 months? ______
22. Has the violence increased since COVID (March)? **Yes** or **No**
23. Do you think the COVID pandemic has created an unsafe environment for you? **Yes** or **No**, If yes, how so?

Economic:

24. Do you have access to money? **Yes** or **No**
25. Do you share a bank account with the suspect? **Yes** or **No**
26. Does the suspect control your finances? **Yes** or **No**

Emotional:

27. Would you like to speak with a Counselor or Social Worker about the abuse? **Yes** or **No**
28. Do you have any pre-existing mental health diagnoses? **Yes** or **No**
29. Have you ever contemplated or attempted suicide? **Yes** or **No**

Circle One: **Advocate’s Observations & Brief Summary** OR **Declined Services**
ADVOCATE USE ONLY

Did the victim submit to a forensic interview, if yes what agency?

Was a forensic nurse called to the scene? Yes or NO

Indicate what community partner referrals were made on scene and agencies used for services, if any:

Note: This information is solicited to aid the Victim Services Div. of the Houston Police Dept. and is recorded in V.S. Tracking.