




Co-Located Programs

Chapter 2 Assessment Tool




Prepare to Incorporate Sexual Assault Legal Services

Questions to Ask: Professional Audit

- What, if any, statutory or ethical privilege or confidentiality protections do your staff offer clients?
- If applicable, will the communications between two privileged providers within your organization remain privileged? (E.g., if the survivor's psychologist and attorney speak, is that conversation privileged?)
- See jurisdiction-specific **VRLC Privacy Cards**. 

Questions to Ask: Privacy of Information

- Do you have digital and physical firewalls that prevent staff from one program accessing the files/information of staff from another program?
- Are your physical files stored securely? See state law for any file maintenance requirements.
- Do you have a policy for removing files from the office (e.g., for court, meetings, working from home)?
- Are your digital files password protected? Encrypted?
- Do you have a policy for accessing client information from portable devices (e.g., email on phone)?
- Do you have a policy about social media use (e.g., connecting with clients, sharing case stories for fundraising or to promote awareness)?
- See **VRLC Personal and Remote Devices Tip Sheet** and **Sample Client Data Sheet**. 

Questions to Ask: Safety and Privacy in Physical Space

- Who is accessing services across your programs? When and how are they interacting with survivors?
- Is your space open to the general public?
- Is it possible to create separate spaces for separate programs?
- Do you have private rooms for privileged and confidential conversations?
- Is your space accessible and welcoming (e.g., gender-neutral restrooms, wheelchair accessible)?








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Questions to Ask: Information Sharing

- Are you conducting conflict checks across programs?
- Do you notify clients of their privilege and confidentiality rights? See **Sample Notice of Confidentiality Rights.** 
- Do you have release forms for clients to sign to permit staff from one program within the organization to speak with staff from another? Are these used only as needed (i.e., not a blanket, unlimited release)? See **Sample Release of Information.** 
- Do you have referral forms to refer clients within your programs? See **Sample Referral Form.** 
- Do you have a policy for responding when clients request their records? If a third party makes a request? If a court orders that records be produced?

Expand Your Services

Questions to Ask: Announcing Sexual Assault Legal Services

- Have you notified community partners of your expanded services? How?
- Does the language on your website reflect your SA legal services (e.g., perpetrator vs. abuser)?
- Do the photos on your website, on promotional materials, in your office reflect the population you are aiming to serve?
- See **Sample Client Brochure.** 

Questions to Ask: Sustaining Sexual Assault Legal Services

- Do your available services reflect the legal needs of non-intimate partner survivors (e.g., beyond family law)?
- Do your co-located services accommodate non-intimate partner survivors (e.g., non-intimate partner safety planning, appropriate intake questions, privacy considerations)?

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