



Sample Organizational Care Plan Template

This project was supported by Grant Nos. 15JOVW-24-GK-03024-MUMU and 2017-FW-AX-K004 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Introduction to the Organizational Care Plan Template



If organizations want to keep doing the tough, important work of helping survivors, they need to make self-care (what individuals do for themselves) and organizational care (what the workplace does for staff) a normal part of their culture. **Working with survivors often means staff are exposed to difficult stories and experiences, which can lead to trauma exposure** (sometimes called secondary or vicarious trauma).

The **organization must have policies and procedures in place that actively help reduce this impact**. VRLC has created this tool to help organizations do just that!

Guidelines for Supervisors



SET BOUNDARIES: The supervisor's role is to support work performance and well-being in the workplace; they are not a therapist or a friend. They must maintain professional boundaries.



BE FLEXIBLE: This template is a starting point. It should be changed and adapted to fit the needs of each person and the organization. Care looks different for everyone based on their background and needs.



ENSURE SAFETY: Staff should feel free to express their needs without being judged.



ASK FIRST: If any information needs to be shared with team members (like, "I need my teammates to cover my calls after a tough meeting"), it must only be done with the staff member's clear permission.

The Tool: Individualized Care Plan

- **WHAT IT IS:** A template for supervisors to use with their team members (supervisees) to create a personal plan for well-being and support.
- **HOW IT'S USED:** It's meant to be discussed during one-on-one check-ins between the supervisor and the staff member.
- **THE GOAL:** To make time and space to talk openly about how the job is affecting the staff member and what specific personal and professional supports they need to manage stress and trauma.



START ANYTIME: It can be introduced at any point, even after the supervisory relationship is already established.



KEEP IT CURRENT: The plan shouldn't be permanent ("set in stone"). It needs to be checked regularly to make sure the supports are still working. This shows the staff member that their well-being is a top priority.



KEEP IT PRIVATE: The plan's content should only be shared with the staff member's supervisor(s) and Human Resources (HR).

[Your Organization] Care Plan

At _____, you will work with or on behalf of individuals who have experienced trauma on a regular basis. Engaging with this work and this subject matter can result in vicarious trauma for us as service providers. Supporting our staff as much as possible is a top priority, and we are committed to helping address the effects of vicarious trauma. If you feel like you are experiencing vicarious trauma, please reach out to your supervisor or the _____ for support.

To be proactive, we encourage you to think about activities or practices that you can engage in when you are exposed to trauma and work with your supervisor to create a care plan that includes both personal and organizational strategies and resources to help address vicarious trauma. The information shared in furtherance of creating this plan will not be used as a factor to measure performance or against the staff member in any way.

_____ views the ability to identify vicarious trauma signs and symptoms as a strength and not a weakness. It will also be kept confidential between you and your supervisor, with the inclusion of the _____ or others as needed and only with your express permission.

Considerations for Employees

- Do not try to implement a plan alone. Identify people and resources that will help you succeed. Ask for what you need.
- Take it one day, one step, and one change at a time.
- Anticipate obstacles and develop strategies to prevent the ones you have control over.
- Increase your self-acceptance and mindfulness.
- Make time and space for what you love to do and do it. Even small, simple things and actions can bring you joy.
- Remember your commitment to yourself. If you are not healthy, it will be hard to care for others.
- If work feels overwhelming, talk to your supervisor about ways to redistribute tasks, adjust caseloads, or incorporate more administrative breaks.
- Set and maintain clear boundaries between work and personal life.
- Above all, do not give up. Your mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical health matter. Self-care is not selfish!

WHY I DO THIS WORK (THIS MIGHT INCLUDE AN ACTIVITY OR OBJECT THAT HELPS GROUND YOU IN OR REMIND YOU OF THE WHY):

SIGNS THAT I MAY BE FEELING STRESSED, OVERWHELMED, OR BURNT OUT:

WHAT I NEED FROM MY SUPERVISOR IF/WHEN THEY NOTICE I AM STRUGGLING:

WHAT I NEED FROM MY TEAM IF/WHEN THEY NOTICE I AM STRUGGLING:

TYPE OF CARE	ACTIVITY THAT SUPPORTS AND/OR ENERGIZES ME	WHO CAN SUPPORT ME	POSSIBLE OBSTACLES	ACTION STEP TO TAKE (OPTIONAL)
SHORT-TERM SELF-CARE: Provides comfort or distraction (TV, time off, certain kinds of food, admin tasks)				
MAINTENANCE SELF-CARE: Grows resilience and grounds me (regular exercise, therapy, wellness check-ups)				
EMERGENCY SELF-CARE: Provides immediate relief in the moment (deep breathing/meditation, leaving the space)				
INTERPERSONAL CARE: Support, connection, and accountability between people (time with friends, family, colleagues, support group, volunteer)				
ORGANIZATIONAL CARE: Establish or maintain a culture of self-care in my organization				