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The Santa Clara County Domestic Violence Death Review Team (DVDR T) is a multi-disciplinary team of experts that investigates and reviews all domestic violence related deaths that occur in Santa Clara County. The DVDR T provides monthly updates to the Santa Clara County Domestic Violence Council and prepares an annual report that the Domestic Violence Council posts on its website. The annual report contains recommendations to community leaders and messages to victims and community members based upon what DVDR T members have learned from the review process, with the goal of improving system response and preventing future deaths.

OVERVIEW OF THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELATED DEATHS IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY IN 2015

The year 2015 had thirteen (13) domestic violence related deaths, including eight (8) victims and five (5) perpetrators who committed suicide or blue suicide\(^1\). That number represents a large increase from 2014 when only two (2) deaths occurred.\(^2\) However, this year’s number of domestic violence related deaths only slightly exceeds the average occurring in Santa Clara County over the past 21 years. Since 1994 we have had an average of twelve (12) domestic violence related deaths every year.

In 2015, eight (8) perpetrators killed eight (8) victims. Of those eight (8) killers, five (5) survived and have been charged with murder, and three (3) committed suicide or blue suicide. A ninth (9\textsuperscript{th}) perpetrator tried to kill his partner and then successfully killed himself. A tenth (10\textsuperscript{th}) perpetrator committed blue suicide after officers responded to a 911 call by a neighbor. In total then, five (5) of ten (10) perpetrators in lethal domestic violence incidents in 2015 – or 50\% - committed suicide or blue suicide.

Friends, Family and First Responders Are at Risk

In 2015, one of the eight (8) victims was the friend of the perpetrator’s former intimate partner and one victim was a first responder. One survivor of an attempted murder was the mother of the perpetrator’s former intimate partner. These incidents underscore the fact that domestic violence can be lethal for friends, family and first responders as they become vicarious victims of domestic violence.

Families under Extreme Stress Are at Risk

For the second time in two years, we saw a murder/suicide involving an elderly couple facing debilitating medical conditions. In both cases it was a male partner who killed his female partner and then killed or tried to kill himself.\(^3\) We expect to see more of these

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\(^1\) Blue suicides are those situations where an individual threatens to kill police officers and/or others and comes toward the police with a deadly weapon – intending that they respond by shooting him or her.

\(^2\) Actually, one of the 2014 perpetrators, an elderly man who killed his wife and then tried to kill himself, later died of causes related to his self-inflicted injuries, bringing the total number of domestic violence related deaths in 2014 to three (3).

\(^3\) In neither case was there a confirmed end of life agreement between the couple.
tragedies unfold as our elderly population increases and issues such as caregiver stress, terminal illness and dementia create later-in-life mental health crises that our health care system must recognize and address. (See pages 15-16 for additional lethality risk factors.)

Families under extreme stress can be vulnerable even where the parties are not elderly or terminally ill. The second of two domestic violence related suicides in 2015 was an attempted murder/suicide in a family trying to cope with a severely disabled child and an extramarital affair. In that case, the unemployed male perpetrator who tried to kill his wife and then committed suicide was the primary caregiver for the disabled child, and may have believed his relationship with his wife was ending.

Our examination of these cases led the DVDRT to recognize a need to expand our list of Crisis Hotlines and Referral Agencies to include mental health referrals. (See Attachment 5 – Santa Clara County Mental Health 800-704-0900.) We need to spread the word that mental health issues can arise quickly in anyone facing extreme stress, even previously healthy individuals living in intact families. Recognizing that fact, and seeking help can mean the difference between life and death.

**Enduring Truths about Domestic Violence Homicide**

The deaths in 2015 reveal facts about domestic violence homicide that have been true for the entire time that we have been tracking these deaths in our community, and validate what evidence and research tell us about domestic violence deaths nationally.

- The average age of a perpetrator of domestic violence homicide in our County over the prior twenty years is thirty-four (34). The perpetrators this year ranged from age nineteen (19) to seventy (70), with an average age of thirty-seven (37).

- Second, these crimes happen in every community in the County, east and west, north and south, rich and poor, with the homicides this year occurring in Saratoga, Milpitas, San Jose and Gilroy. Half of the eight (8) victims were professionals or retired professionals and at least three of the incidents occurred in upscale neighborhoods.

- Third, a study of the last twenty years of domestic violence deaths in our County showed that more than half of the incidents involved a perpetrator actually killing or trying to kill him or herself. This year saw the same trend. Five (5) of ten (10) perpetrators in this year’s lethal domestic violence incidents committed suicide or blue suicide. (Notably, four (4) of the five (5) suicides or blue suicides were committed by the four oldest perpetrators, ages forty four (44) to seventy (70), all male. Older males are often cited as having an above-average suicide risk.)

Attachment 1 shows the domestic violence related deaths since the formation of the Domestic Violence Death Review Team.
#256 and #257 HOMICIDE / BLUE SUICIDE

On March 24, 2015, at approximately 6:50 p.m., a 911 caller reported that her mother had contacted her and said that her (the caller’s) intoxicated father had a gun to his head and wanted to kill himself. The mother fled the apartment. The mother later told police that her husband was on medication and had been drinking wine. She had been taking a bath when he removed a handgun from the nightstand and told her to “get out of the house before I kill you and then myself.” She threw on some clothes and left the apartment. Responding officers were met with gunfire from the suspect, who shot and killed an officer. The suspect was then shot and killed by police.

#258 HOMICIDE

On April 7, 2015, at approximately 10:00 p.m., the suspect shot his girlfriend to death in front of her 17-year old daughter, their 1-year old baby daughter, and the 17-year-old’s 19-year old boyfriend. The victim and suspect had been arguing as they drove around looking for a hotel where they could spend the night. The victim, who was driving, turned up the music. The suspect reached under the front passenger seat where he was sitting and retrieved a handgun. The victim started to pull the vehicle towards the curb. The suspect shot the victim one time. The victim said “You shot me!” and the suspect shot her several more times. The suspect then ordered the other occupants out of the car, pushed the victim out the driver’s side door, got behind the wheel of the vehicle and fled. He has been charged with murder and the case is pending in criminal court.

#259 HOMICIDE

On July 30, 2015, at approximately 2:10 a.m., the suspect violated a restraining order and entered a residence where the male victim was socializing with the suspect’s ex-girlfriend. The suspect stabbed the victim to death. The suspect had learned of the victim’s location, and the fact that he was with the suspect’s ex-girlfriend, through social media. The perpetrator had had a history of becoming upset when his ex-girlfriend began dating someone else. After the murder, the suspect fled the scene. He has been charged with murder and the case is pending in criminal court.

#260 HOMICIDE

On September 12, 2015, sometime after 10:00 p.m., the suspect killed his girlfriend in the kitchen of their home. The victim died of blunt force trauma to her head and liver. The morning after the murder, the suspect called 911 claiming he had discovered the victim in the kitchen not breathing. Further investigation revealed that neighbors had

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4 The DVDRT has been tracking Domestic Violence Related Deaths since 1994 using a sequential numbering system. Please see page 22 and the section entitled Definition of “Domestic Violence Related Death” for additional information.
heard a male and female yelling the night before and a woman screaming for help. There had also been an altercation earlier in the evening at a restaurant in front of their friends during which the suspect may have pushed the victim off her chair. The suspect has been charged with murder and the case is pending in criminal court.

#261 HOMICIDE

On October 5, 2015, sometime between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m., the suspect stabbed his ex-girlfriend to death in her bedroom. The victim had recently broken up with him and begun to date someone the suspect knew. The suspect had confronted the victim and her new boyfriend a few weeks earlier, threatened to kill the victim if she didn’t break up with her new boyfriend, and physically assaulted them both. Soon after that, he purchased a paring knife, a Halloween mask and two sets of gloves. On the day of the murder, the suspect traveled to the victim’s home at 6 a.m. and waited for her mother to leave for work. The suspect convinced the victim to let him into the house to talk. The suspect again asked the victim to break up with her new boyfriend. When she refused, he stabbed her in the back multiple times and covered up her body in her bed. He went home and hid his blood-stained clothing and weapons in his bedroom. The suspect has been charged with murder and the case is pending in criminal court.

#262 HOMICIDE

On October 23, 2015, most likely between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., the suspect strangled and stabbed his ex-girlfriend to death in an Airbnub apartment. Three days after the murder, on October 26, 2015, the suspect walked into the San Jose Police Department and gave officers a hand-written note that reported the location of a dead body. The victim may have been lured to the apartment expecting to collect a debt owed to her by the suspect. The suspect has been charged with murder and the case is pending in criminal court.

#263 and #264 HOMICIDE / BLUE SUICIDE

On November 9, 2015, at approximately 2:30 p.m., the suspect forced his way into the victim’s home, armed with a pistol. The victim’s roommate heard gun shots. She was able to flee. The suspect texted the victim’s husband, said he had the victim in the house with him, and challenged the husband to come inside. The suspect was a former roommate with whom the victim had had an intimate relationship. At approximately 5:00 p.m., the suspect exited the home armed with both a semi-automatic pistol and a black revolver. The suspect opened fire on police, and the police returned fire, ultimately killing the suspect. Police entered the home and discovered the deceased victim. The suspect was pronounced dead at the scene.

#265 ATTEMPTED MURDER / SUICIDE

On November 10, 2015, at approximately 6:40 a.m., the suspect repeatedly stabbed the mother of his three children before turning the knife on himself and stabbing himself to death. The victim reported that the suspect had recently discovered that she had had an affair, but they were going to try to work things out. The victim said that the suspect told her “sorry, I have to do this” and then began stabbing her and stabbing himself. The assault was interrupted by the victim’s mother who had been alerted by two of the
children of the victim and suspect. The suspect told the victim’s mother “she is going with me” as he tried to slit his own throat. The suspect’s wife survived the numerous stab wounds to her abdomen and was able to flee. Responding officers found the suspect’s body in the bedroom where the attack occurred, and where their disabled child was sleeping.

### #266 BLUE SUICIDE

On December 14, 2015, at approximately 7:00 p.m., the suspect was seen grabbing the victim by the hair just outside the victim’s apartment door. He appeared to be trying to force her to unlock the door so he could gain entry. Neighbors could hear the victim crying, “You’re hurting me!” The suspect tried to muffle her voice with his hand. Police were called. As the first responding officer approached the victim’s apartment, the suspect was making his way down the stairwell. The officer identified himself, ordered the suspect to stop, and repeatedly ordered the suspect to put his hands on top of his head. The suspect did not comply. The suspect twice reached into his pants as if he were looking for a weapon and charged at the officer. As the officer backed up, the officer fired several rounds, hitting the suspect in the chest. The suspect was pronounced dead at the scene.

### #267 and #268 HOMICIDE / SUICIDE

On December 18, 2015, at an unknown time, the suspect killed his wife with a gunshot to the head at their home. He took his own life using the same method four days later on December 22, 2015. The suspect and victim had married on December 21, 47 years earlier. The suspect left several type-written letters addressed to law enforcement. He wrote that he had killed his wife on December 18, 2015 and that he had made funeral arrangements for her and for himself. The suspect was terminally ill with cancer and had recently learned his prognosis was poor. The suspect wrote that the victim suffered from Alzheimer’s. One of the suspect’s notes to authorities stated that he had killed his wife because there would not be anyone to take care of her in the event of his death and thought the best solution was for the two of them to “go together.”
2015 CASE SUMMARIES
Domestic Violence Related Attempted Homicide

ATTEMPTED MURDER

On December 7, 2015, at approximately 6:30 a.m., the suspect forced his way into his estranged wife’s home and repeatedly stabbed her mother (his mother-in-law) when the mother refused to disclose the location of her daughter. The suspect threatened to kill his wife’s sister who was also present in the home but who heard the threat and was able to flee. After the stabbing, the suspect called his wife and told her that he had tried to kill her mother and that he was coming after her kids next. The suspect has been charged with attempted murder, and the case is pending in criminal court.
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

I. OVERVIEW

Decedents: 13
Number of Incidents: 10
Homicide Victims: 8
Suicides: 2
“Blue suicides”: 3

II. MANNER OF DEATHS

Gun Shot: 4
Stabbing: 3
Blunt Force Trauma: 1
Blue Suicide (gunshot): 3
Suicide (stabbing): 1
Suicide (gunshot): 1

III. LOCATIONS OF DEATHS

Victim’s Residence: 4 (2 + 2)
Victim and Perpetrator’s Joint Residence: 4 (2 + 2)
Other Residence: 4 (3 + 1)
Public Place: 1

IV. POLICE AGENCIES INVOLVED

9 deaths (6 + 3) investigated by San Jose Police Department
1 death investigated by Gilroy Police Department (also 1 attempted murder)
1 death investigated by Milpitas Police Department
2 (1 + 1) deaths investigated by Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office

V. SOCIAL IDENTIFIERS

1. Ages

Female Homicide Victims: 20, 27, 28, 30, 33, 53, 77
Male Homicide Victims: 21, 38
Male Perpetrators: 19*, 22, 25, 26, 28, 36, 44*, 46*, 57*, 70* (*deceased)

2. Race/Ethnicity of Decedents

Caucasian: 2 (1 + 1)
Hispanic: 6 (3 + 3)
African-American: 0
Asian-American: 4 (3 + 1)  
Hispanic/African-American: 1

3. Race/Ethnicity of Perpetrators

Caucasian: 1  
Hispanic: 5  
African-American: 1  
Asian-American: 3

4. Gender of Decedents

Female: 6  
Male: 7 (2 + 5)

5. Gender of Perpetrators

Female: 0  
Male: 10

6. Same Gender Couples

0

VI. CHILDREN

1. Number of Biological Children Perpetrator and Victim had in Common

6 + one pregnancy

2. Number of Children who were Homicide Victims

0

3. Minor Children Present at Time of Incident

Two children (an 18-month old boy and a 17-year old girl) saw their mother shot to death in front of them. Two children (a 2 year old boy and a 7 month old girl) were in an apartment nearby when a perpetrator (the father of the girl) was shot to death by police. Two children (a 6 year old boy and a 3 year old girl) saw their father stab their mother multiple times and a third child (an 11 year old boy) was present when the father fatally stabbed himself.
4. **Children Whose Parents were Decedents**

   a. Minors – 6 plus one in utero
   b. Dependent Adults - 0
   c. Non-Dependent Adults - 3

5. **Children Orphaned**

   a. Minors - 0
   b. Dependent Adults - 0
   c. Non-Dependent Adults - 0

VII. **RELATIONSHIP HISTORY AND CURRENT STATUS OF PARTIES***

1. **Type of Relationship at Time of Death (Recorded per Incident)**

   Married: 1
   Divorced: 0
   Married and filed for divorce: 0
   Married and discussed separation: 0
   Married and separated: 0
   Unmarried cohabitant: 1
   Dating: 1
   No longer dating: 2
   Dating and seeing other people: 0
   No longer dating but living together: 0
   Dating but in the process of breaking up: 0
   Extramarital affair that ended: 1

2. **Length of Pre-Separation Relationship**

   Less than one year: 1
   One year: 0
   1-3 years: 4
   4-15 years: 0
   Over15 years: 0
   Over 20 years: 0
   Over 30 years: 0
   Over 40 years: 1
   Over 50 years: 0

3. **Length of Post-Separation Relationship**

   No separation: 3
   Less than one year: 3
   One year: 0
   1-4 years: 0
   Over 5 years: 0
* Data applies only to the 6 instances where the perpetrator killed his intimate partner.

4. **Prior Police Reports of Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence had previously occurred in 8 of the 10 intimate relationships where lethal violence later occurred. The violence had been observed by or known to others (family and/or friends) in each and every one of those relationships. Yet the prior abuse had been reported in only 4, or half, of those 8 relationships.

5. **Restraining Orders**

None of the deceased victims killed by their intimate partners had restraining orders against the perpetrators.

In one of the blue suicide cases a criminal protective order existed between the deceased perpetrator and his intimate partner. In the homicide involving the friend of the perpetrator’s intimate partner, the intimate partner had a restraining order against the perpetrator. The victim in the attempted murder case had a 10-year “peaceful contact” criminal protective order which was set to expire in 2022. All three of the restrained parties had violated the orders prior to the lethal incident.

6. **Employment Status of Homicide Victims**

- Retired: 1
- Full-time Employment: 2
- Unemployed: 3
- Part-time Employment: 2

7. **Employment Status of Perpetrators**

- Retired: 1
- Full-time Employment: 1
- Unemployed: 8
- Part-time Employment: 0

8. **Immigrant Victim**

None known.

Note: The DVDRT defines an immigrant as a person who has been in the United States for 10 years or fewer. We do not look at legal status.
9. **Chronic Health Conditions**

a. **Mental Health Issues**
   
   Victim - 1  
   Perpetrator - 2

b. **Physical Health Issues**

   (i) **Debilitating Physical Condition**
   
   Victim - 0  
   Perpetrator - 1

   (ii) **Neuro-Cognitive Impairment (age 65 and older)**

   Victim - 1  
   Perpetrator - 0

   (iii) **Developmental Disability (under age 65)**

   Victim - 0  
   Perpetrator - 0
In 2015, there were 4,286 domestic violence cases referred to the District Attorney’s Office for review; of these 757 resulted in the filing of felony charges, 1,929 in the filing of misdemeanor charges, and 1,660 (37%) did not have criminal complaints filed.
RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE DVDRT TO COMMUNITY LEADERS

The DVDRT has compiled a list of recommendations for numerous agencies throughout Santa Clara County. There are myriad government, private, non-profit and other groups working to end domestic violence and we trust that they will continue their excellent efforts. The recommendations for 2016 are intended to be incorporated into the fine work already underway.

Last year (2015) the DVDRT recognized the need to assess lethality in individual cases, to spread information about work being done by one of the team members involving traumatic brain injuries, and to enhance our outreach efforts in Asian communities. To that end, the team undertook numerous efforts, the most significant ones being the following:

1) Spread awareness among law enforcement and other justice partners of the need to use the Lethality Assessment tool in each and every domestic violence incident in order to assess the appropriate level of response needed;

2) Added language to the Domestic Violence Law Enforcement Protocol designed to elicit information from victims regarding traumatic brain injuries; and

3) Opened a San Jose Family Justice center serving domestic violence victims at the AACI (Asian Americans for Community Involvement) facility on Story Road. This FJC joins two others already in existence, one in South County (Community Solutions in Morgan Hill) and one in North County (YWCA Silicon Valley in Sunnyvale.)

This year the DVDRT continues to focus on identifying those domestic violence cases and situations that have the highest risk of turning lethal and which therefore demand the most aggressive intervention by justice partners and advocacy groups. DVDRT members have participated in and conducted trainings regarding a lethality assessment tool, now a mandatory part of every domestic violence investigation in Santa Clara County. **Our challenge now is to make sure that the results of the lethality assessments conducted by law enforcement are communicated to Pretrial Services, the agency charged with advising the Court as to whether a defendant can be safely released, and to the Magistrates charged with setting an arrestee’s initial bail amount.**

The final case in 2015, involving an elderly couple and a homicide/suicide by the male spouse suffering from terminal illness underscored the need for particular attention to be paid to elders who are facing terminal or debilitating mental or physical illness. **Doctors treating elderly patients with terminal or increasingly debilitating conditions should recognize the need to have in place a support plan for the patient’s spouse, particularly if the spouse with the terminal or debilitating condition is male. Patients should be asked if they have help not just for physical needs but for emotional ones as well.** In the coming years there will be an increased need for doctors specializing in gerontology, who understand the differing effects of medication on elders. The community as a whole also needs to be on alert. We must check in on our senior neighbors. Doing so is not being nosy; it is being caring. Remember that pride and cultural issues can make it difficult for people in need to reach out on their own. The greatest generation raised many of us. Now it is our turn to care for them.
RED FLAGS AND CHARACTER TRAITS FOR POTENTIAL LETHAL SITUATIONS

In many instances, domestic violence homicides are about an individual’s desire to have power and control over their intimate partner. When a perpetrator begins to feel that power eroding, they may do whatever they can to regain power, including killing the people they seek to control. In the end, the perpetrator ensures that the victim cannot leave and start a new life. The risk may escalate when the victim challenges the perpetrator’s control by trying to end the relationship, file for divorce, or begin a relationship with another person. It is critical that safety planning is a part of the process of terminating a relationship and that the safety planning continues even after the relationship ends. It is also important that mental health issues relating to the separation be addressed.

We learned in 2015 how insufficient support systems in areas such as medical well-being, appropriate self-care and alternative care provider options can lead to despair and can make previously-intact families vulnerable to extreme violence as well.

The DVDRT has identified numerous “red flags,” or factors that may precede a domestic violence related death. These factors have been reported and discussed in multiple studies. These red flags may not apply in every situation but may signal that a person is at risk. We hope that people will recognize these risk factors and seek help before it is too late. (“Red flags” that were present in the 2015 cases are in bold.)

Risk factors may include:

(1) Prior acts of intimate partner violence.
(2) Resistance to separation or ending the relationship.
(3) Access to firearms.
(4) Controlling behaviors which may include social isolation, financial dependency by restricting access to money and information about finances, threats to take away children, or threats involving deportation.
(5) Stalking behavior including monitoring of daily activities.
(6) Threats of suicide and/or homicide.
(7) Kidnapping or imprisoning someone against their will.
(8) Lack of any, or very few, friends outside the relationship.
(9) Untreated and inadequately treated mental health conditions or illnesses including depression, anxiety, and related conditions. Issues may stem from early childhood trauma, abuse, neglect or abandonment.
(10) Previous use of weapons or threat of using weapons.
(11) Extreme jealousy and/or possessiveness.
(12) Prior strangulation.

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5 See:
(13) Aging related diseases (like dementia) which may exacerbate abusive or violent behavior.
(14) A sense of entitlement, self-centeredness, or a lack of empathy for others (including children).
(15) Illegal drug use or undue alcohol consumption.
(16) Unemployment or under-employment.
(17) Public display of aggression/ violence towards partner.

A review of our 2015 cases validated the prevalence of these known risk factors:

(1) Unemployment or under-employment – 9 of 10 perpetrators.
(2) Prior domestic violence, victim fear of perpetrator – 8 of 10 cases.
(3) Recent separation resisted by perpetrator – 7 of 10 cases, 4 of 5 where the perpetrator killed his intimate partner and survived.
(4) Prior weapons, access to firearms or other deadly weapons – 7 of 10 perpetrators.
(5) Jealous/controlling behavior – 6 of 10 perpetrators, 4 of 5 where the perpetrator killed his intimate partner and survived.
(6) Public display of aggression/ violence towards partner – 6 of 10 perpetrators.

Our review also established that these risk factors were present:

(7) Substance Abuse – 5 of 10 perpetrators.
(8) Prior threats to kill – 4 of 10 perpetrators.
(9) Prior strangulation – 3 of 10 cases, 2 of 3 blue suicides.
(10) Mental health issues – 3 of 10 perpetrators.
(11) Perpetrator abused as a child – 3 of 10 perpetrators confirmed, likely higher.
(12) Perpetrator stalked victim – 2 of 10 perpetrators.
(13) Perpetrator had few friends outside the relationship – 2 of 10 perpetrators.
(14) Perpetrator falsely imprisoned victim – 1 of 10 perpetrators.
(15) Perpetrator lacked empathy – 1 of 10 perpetrators confirmed.

In the attempted murder case, risk factors 1-4 and 7 from page 15 were present, underscoring the fact that unemployment, prior domestic violence, a victim who fears the perpetrator, recent separation resisted by the perpetrator, and other jealous or controlling behaviors together signal a high risk of lethality. Though many domestic violence murders are planned and deliberate – the ultimate exercise of control- others appear to occur more spontaneously. Cases in the latter category often involve mental health issues, substance abuse issues and/or access to weapons, so any combination of risk factors that includes one or more of these three factors – particularly if the perpetrator has exhibited controlling behavior or prior violence - creates significant cause for concern and requires immediate intervention and safety planning.
A MESSAGE TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: “REACH OUT!”

The DVDRT studies domestic violence related deaths within the context of both lethal and non-lethal acts of domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Death Review Team discussed numerous controlling behaviors that are commonly seen in these domestic violence incidents and encourage individuals to reach out for advice and assistance if your partner:

1. Physically abuses you in any way.
2. Threatens you.
3. Makes you afraid they will follow through with their threats.
4. Isolates you from friends and family members.
5. Becomes emotionally intense and frightening.
6. Keeps you on an emotional roller coaster.
7. Does not, cannot, or will not accept you ending the relationship.
8. Uses force, coercion, or threats to control you.
9. Apologizes profusely for “bad” conduct but then repeats the conduct on other occasions.
10. Shows anger that is out of proportion to the incident.
11. Never takes responsibility for the problems in the relationship and minimizes, denies, or blames you for the partner’s behavior.
12. Often or always has access to firearms or other deadly weapons.
13. Monitors your phone calls, text messages, emails, letters, and computer usage, or uses social media to detect and follow your daily activities.
14. Is extremely jealous and always wants to know your location.
15. Wants to have control over your financial situation and restricts your financial independence, keeps important documents and other information from you.
16. Wants to know everything about you from the very beginning of the relationship, including phone numbers, access codes, and computer passwords.
17. Abuses alcohol or prescription drugs or uses illegal drugs.

All threats must be taken seriously, whether or not you feel the perpetrator has the means to follow through on them or says that the threats were just a joke. Listen to your inner voice that says there may be a problem. **If you are afraid, there is probably good reason to be.**

A further message we would like to send to domestic violence victims and survivors: **You are not alone.** You are among thousands of other people in Santa Clara County facing similar challenges, and there are thousands more working to help you and others survive those challenges. For example, we now have **three Family Justice Centers** where you can meet confidentially with an advocate, and with family and immigration law attorneys. You can meet with Victim Services. You can also meet with law enforcement, though you can receive most services at the FJCs without having to make a police report. **Attachment 5 (pp 29-30)** contains the addresses of the FJCs and contact information for numerous other advocacy centers as well. Contacting one of them can be a first step toward safety planning, understanding your legal options, and obtaining a wide range of supportive services including shelter and counseling. Culturally competent help is available. **You do not need to go through this alone!**

“REACH OUT!”
A MESSAGE TO FRIENDS, FAMILIES, CO-WORKERS
AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS:
“IF YOU HEAR SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING”

Numerous fatalities studied by the DVDR T since 1994 have involved situations where family members, co-workers, friends, and community members were aware of serious problems in a relationship but did not intervene. Intervention and support is necessary when someone may be a victim of domestic violence. Domestic violence does not get better on its own, in fact it usually escalates without intervention. Calling 911 or seeking professional assistance could save a life!

In 2015, once again we saw domestic violence cases where members of the public or even family or friends of the victim were reluctant to intervene. Perhaps they thought calling the police would make things worse for the victim. Or that yelling or pushing is not cause for police intervention. Call even if you only HEAR something. If you hear something, say something. Don’t be afraid of being perceived as over-reacting or of abusing police resources. Police never mind the opportunity to assist others. Don’t hesitate to report just because what you are hearing or seeing is occurring in a “nice neighborhood” or involves people who are professionals. Domestic violence can happen to anyone in any neighborhood. Finally, always remember that whatever violence a person exhibits in public suggests worse in private. What you are hearing or seeing probably means the victim is in even more danger when you are not around, and it almost certainly means they are in more danger if no one intervenes.

Moreover, children, other family members, other household residents, neighbors, co-workers, innocent bystanders and first responders are all put at risk if they are nearby when the violence erupts. We must continue to educate the public on vicarious victim violence and how these issues affect all those who surround the primary victims.

The DVDRT recognizes that a person may not know what to do when they suspect a person is a victim of domestic violence or if a child is at risk. The DVDRT recommends that one or more of the following actions be taken:

1. Call 911.
2. Contact a victim advocacy agency and inquire about ways to help the victim. The names and numbers of local agencies can be found on pages 29-30 of this report.
3. Ask victims if they are fearful of the perpetrator and why. Let them know that you are there for them.
4. Determine if there are deadly weapons in the home and contact local law enforcement or advocacy agencies about the threat of the use of these weapons.
5. Assist victims in calling a domestic violence advocacy agency to create a safety plan, obtain a restraining order, or seek domestic violence counseling. This is especially important if the victim wishes to end the relationship.
6. Take all threats seriously even if the victim says that the perpetrator is just “blowing off steam.”
7. Protect children. Do not be afraid to tell victims that domestic violence is harming their children. When necessary, contact the Child Abuse Hotline at the Department of Family and Children’s Services.
(8) Learn about domestic violence and share the information with others.
(9) Encourage people to seek mental health help if they are suffering from the loss of a relationship.
(10) Reach out to a person who may be depressed or upset about the end of a relationship. Attempt to guide them into counseling or to seek professional help.

The DVDRT has also studied numerous instances where a child has been killed, lost a parent and witnessed the murder of a parent. When a child expresses real fear of a parent or if a child is living in dangerous conditions and is subjected to abuse or neglect, action must be taken. Please contact the Child Abuse Hotline at the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) at 408-299-2071 or a local law enforcement agency immediately.

A phone call can save a life!

“IF YOU HEAR SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!”
CONCLUSION

Domestic violence impacts every aspect of our community regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, religious beliefs, age, immigration status, or sexual orientation. Domestic violence and abuse will not end on its own. Family members, co-workers, and neighbors who are aware of the serious problems in relationships and recognize domestic violence, should report the abuse and let victims know that there are options available. Domestic violence deaths are preventable!

Our community must continue to educate itself about all forms of domestic violence and realize that these situations may turn deadly. Law enforcement, the courts, pretrial services, probation, victim advocacy agencies, batterer intervention treatment programs, and victims need the help of the community to combat domestic violence. We must all make a concerted effort to become more knowledgeable about domestic violence and to speak up when we know something is wrong. The community must get involved before another victim loses their life.

School children in Santa Clara County receive coaching on how to deal with bullies. They are told and can be heard repeating: “Don’t be a bystander, be an up-stander.” Sage advice in the area of domestic violence as well since perpetrators are bullies after all. So we end this report with a final thought, borrowed in part from our schools:

“Don’t be a bystander, be an UP-stander.”
Stand UP for victims of domestic violence.

Respectfully Submitted: The Domestic Violence Death Review Team 2015
OVERVIEW OF THE DVDRT

Mandate

The DVDRT investigates and reviews domestic violence related deaths in order to make recommendations aimed at preventing deaths in similar circumstances and reducing domestic violence in general. The DVDRT examines lives of the victims and perpetrators’ lives with a special focus on any contact the individuals may have had with the justice system, mental health services, or other social service programs. A comprehensive database of victims, perpetrators, and the circumstances surrounding the deaths is created to help identify trends and risk factors. The DVDRT has reviewed 268 deaths since 1993.

Recommendations for effective intervention and prevention strategies are prepared if problems, gaps or shortcomings are discovered. The recommendations are included in the DVDRT’s Annual Report. The Annual Report is given to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and is published on the Santa Clara County Domestic Violence Council’s website.

Discovered information is only used to accomplish the constructive work of advocating for system-wide change and protecting future victims. The team’s job is not to point fingers or place blame. The members of the DVDRT firmly believe that many lives have been saved as a result of the team’s work.

Creation of the DVDRT

In early 1993, a representative of the United States Department of Justice visited the Santa Clara County Domestic Violence Council and requested that the Council create a domestic violence related death review team. The DVDRT was established by the Santa Clara County Domestic Violence Council in October, 1993 in response to this request. Santa Clara County was one of the first counties to establish a death review team.

In 1995, the California Legislature enacted Penal Code section 11163.3 which allowed all California counties to establish an interagency domestic violence death review team. These teams were mandated to coordinate and integrate state and local efforts to address fatal domestic violence incidents and create a body of information which would help prevent domestic violence deaths.

In 1996, the California Legislature expanded Penal Code section 11163.3. As a result of the new legislation, information shared in death review team meetings was to be confidential and not subject to disclosure or discovery by a third party. Recommendations and summary data may be disclosed.

Confidentiality

DVDRT members sign an agreement requiring that all information discussed in team meetings remain confidential. The only agreed upon public disclosure of cases involves statistics and fact patterns. The names of particular victims and perpetrators are removed out of respect for victims, family members, and survivors. The signed agreement is kept on file by the team chair. A copy of the agreement is provided in Attachment 2.
Membership

DVDRT membership consists of a cross-section of organizations and disciplines in Santa Clara County that interact with domestic violence victims, perpetrators, and their children. Team members come from the Office of the District Attorney, local law enforcement agencies, the therapeutic community, victim advocacy agencies (including Asian Americans for Community Involvement, MAITRI, Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence, Community Solutions, YWCA Support Network), the Probation Department, the Department of Corrections, Pretrial Services, the Department of Family and Children’s Services, Adult Protective Services, Family Court Services, Family Law Bar, Victim Services, County Mental Health, the LGBTQ community, batterer’s intervention programs, the Department of Public Health, Veteran’s Affairs, and the Medical Examiner/Coroner’s Office.

Definition of “Domestic Violence Related Death”

The DVDRT defines a “domestic violence related death” as a death that occurs when the perpetrator and victim were involved in an intimate relationship, either at the time of death or prior to the death, and domestic violence was the catalyst for the death. A time of separation between the parties does not preclude a review of an incident if domestic violence was the catalyst for the death(s). A domestic violence related death also includes the death of a family member(s), friend(s), and community member(s) if the motivation for the homicide was domestic violence. Domestic violence related deaths include homicides, homicide/suicides, suicides, fatal accidents, and blue suicides. Blue suicides occur when an individual threatens to kill police officers, verbally or by use of a weapon, and intends that the police will respond by firing upon the individual.

Each decedent is counted separately and given their own number, even if multiple people die during one incident. The sequential numbering system began in 1994 and continues to the present.
Cindy Seeley Hendrickson, District Attorney’s Office, Chair
Annette Spicuzza, Stanford Department of Public Safety
Bill Hoyt, Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department
Brenda Farrell-Thomas, LMFT, Family Court Services
Brian Dutton, Gilroy Police Department
Campbell Duncan, Campbell Police Department
Carl McGrew, Pretrial Services
Carlton Sheppard, San Jose Police Department
Carmen Garcia Vargas, Adult Probation Department
Christiana Blawie, Pretrial Services Department
Cynthia Guzman, Department of Family and Children’s Services
Cynthia Hunter, Office of Women’s Policy
Cynthia Spencer, Children’s Attorney
Dan Rodriguez, Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office
David Siddall, Veteran’s Affairs Palo Alto
Denise Henderson, YWCA Support Network
Eric Bulatao, Palo Alto Police Department
Eric Golembiewski, Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety
Geraldine Foley, Adult Probation Department
Hien Pham, Department of Family and Children’s Services
Jamie Field, Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department
Jennifer Forrester, Medical Examiner/Coroner’s Office
Jenny Gaxiola, San Jose State University Police Department
Jon Hernandez, Stanford Department of Public Safety
Julie Saffren, Family Law Attorney
Justin Matsuhara, Gilroy Police Department
Katelyn Riley-Cook, Pretrial Services
Kevin Elliott, Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department
Kimberly Nielsen, Family Court Services
Kristen Tarabetz, Medical Examiner/Coroner’s Office
Leo Coddington, Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department
Linda Hsiao, Department of Family and Children’s Services
Lindsey Mansfield, YWCA Silicon Valley
Lisa Gannon, San Jose Police Department
Lulu Lopez, Community Solutions
The Rev. Maly Hughes, clergy
Mariluisa Diaz, Family and Children’s Services of Silicon Valley
Marla Allen, Domestic Violence Intervention Collaborative
Mary Ryan, Adult Probation Department
Matthew Breaux, Adult Protective Services
Melissa Luke, Asian Americans for Community Involvement
Dr. Michelle Jorden, Medical Examiner/Coroner’s Office
Dr. Michael Kerner, Psychologist
Mindy Zen, Morgan Hill Police Department
Mireya Ramos, Department of Family and Children’s Services
Nancy Marshall, LMFT, Domestic Violence Intervention Collaborative
Nicole Ford, Family Law Attorney
Nida Rehman, District Attorney’s Office, Victim Services Unit
Perla Flores, Community Solutions
Rachel Arias, Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence
Ruth Patrick, WomenSV
Saher Stephan, District Attorney’s Office, Victim Services Unit
Dr. Sara Copeland, Public Health Department
Steve Baron, LMFT, Santa Clara University, Family Court Services (ret.)
Dr. Susan Ditter, Department of Mental Health
Susan McGarry, Department of Family and Children’s Services
Sylvia Mata, District Attorney’s Office, Victim Services Unit
Tony Becker, Palo Alto Police Department
Tony Serrano, Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety
Trinh Nguyen, Asian Americans for Community Involvement
Valerie Smith, Adult Protective Services
William Oberst, Medical Examiner/Coroner’s Office
Attachment 1: Domestic Violence Related Deaths Since 1993

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Domestic Violence Related Deaths</th>
<th>D.V. Death Incidents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993 (partial)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>2014</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Santa Clara County DV Deaths 1993-2015

- **DV Deaths**
- **DV Death Incidents**
CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT
SANTA CLARA COUNTY
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DEATH REVIEW TEAM

As a participant in the Santa Clara County Domestic Violence Death Review Team (DVDRT) I understand that all cases discussed, information received, and all documents reviewed pertaining to cases presented to the DVDRT, are strictly confidential.

I agree that I will not discuss, disseminate in any manner, nor otherwise cause dissemination of such information, to any non-member unless otherwise provided by law.

I further understand, and agree, that my duty to preserve and protect the confidentiality of all information received as a team member, is a continuing and permanent duty, and is not contingent upon my status as a team member, and is not terminated upon conclusion of membership.

Name ___________________________________________________________ (Please print)
(First, Last and Title)

Signature ___________________________________      ________________
Date

Agency Name _________________________________________________ (Please Spell Out)

Agency Address __________________________________________________
Street                                            Suite or Bldg. #
________________________________________________________________
City                                 Zip Code

E-mail Address _____________________________________________ (Please print clearly)

Telephone No. ____________________________ Fax No. ___________________________

Replacing or Filing in for Current Member ________________________________________
(Please print current member’s name you are replacing or filling in for)

☐   Guest Only (Please check)

Rev. 03/20/14
## Attachment 3: Police Agencies in Santa Clara County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California Highway Patrol</td>
<td>(408) 467-5400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell Police Department</td>
<td>(408) 866-2121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilroy Police Department</td>
<td>(408) 378-8161*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Altos Police Department</td>
<td>(650) 947-2770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department</td>
<td>(408) 354-8600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milpitas Police Department</td>
<td>(408) 586-2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan Hill Police Department</td>
<td>(408) 776-2101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain View Police Department</td>
<td>(650) 903-6922*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palo Alto Police Department</td>
<td>(650) 321-4433*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>(408) 299-2311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Jose Police Department</td>
<td>(408) 277-8900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Clara Police Department</td>
<td>(408) 615-5580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety</td>
<td>(408) 730-7180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Clara County Adult Probation Department</td>
<td>(408) 435-2100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CALL 911 FOR ALL EMERGENCIES

* Some of the Law Enforcement Agencies in Santa Clara County have direct emergency telephone numbers that can be programmed into a person’s cellular telephone. These numbers are provided by the DVDRT for those individuals who may need these numbers as part of their safety planning. The DVDRT recommends that individuals call 911 for all emergencies.*
Attachment 4: Campus Police and Security Agencies

De Anza Community College Campus Safety and Security Department
7 a.m. – 12 midnight (408) 864-5555

Evergreen Valley Community College Police Department
8 a.m. – 11 p.m. Monday-Friday
and 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. business line only (408) 270-6468

Foothill Community College Police Department
7 a.m. – 11 p.m. business line (650) 949-7313
7 a.m. – 11 p.m. emergency line (650) 949-7911

Gavilan College Security Department
8 a.m. – 11 p.m. Monday-Friday business line only (408) 848-4703

Mission Community College Police Department
7 a.m. – 11 p.m. business line (408) 748-2797
After hours dispatch line (408) 299-2311

San Jose City College Police Department
7 a.m. – 3 p.m. dispatch line only; will connect to
Evergreen Police Department after 3 p.m. (408) 288-3735

San Jose State University Department of Public Safety
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. business line (408) 924-2185
24 hour dispatch line (408) 924-2222

Santa Clara University Department of Public Safety
24 hour business and dispatch line (408) 554-4441

Stanford University Department of Public Safety
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday-Friday business line (650) 723-9633
24 hour non-emergency dispatch line (650) 329-2413

West Valley Community College Police Department
7 a.m. – 11 p.m. business line (408) 741-2092
After hours dispatch line (408) 299-2311
Investigations Bureau (408) 741-2068
Attachment 5: Crisis Hotlines and Referral Agencies

**EMERGENCY POLICE RESPONSE - 911**

Adult Protective Services  
[www.sccgov.org/aps](http://www.sccgov.org/aps)  
(800) 414-2002

Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI)  
[www.aaci.org](http://www.aaci.org)  
(408) 975-2739

Bay Area Legal Aid  
[www.baylegal.org](http://www.baylegal.org)  
(408) 850-7066

Billy DeFrank Center  
[www.defrankcenter.org](http://www.defrankcenter.org)  
(408) 293-3040

Child Abuse Neglect and Reporting Hotline  
[www.sccgov.org](http://www.sccgov.org)  
San Jose – (408) 299-2071  
Palo Alto – (650) 493-1186  
Gilroy/Morgan Hill – (408) 683-0601

Community Solutions (South County)  
[www.communitysolutions.org](http://www.communitysolutions.org)  
(877) 363-7238

CONTACT (Hotline for all hotlines)  
(408) 850-6125

Domestic Violence Intervention Collaborative  
[www.dvintervention.org](http://www.dvintervention.org)  
(408) 294-0006

Family and Children Services of Silicon Valley  
[www.fcservices.org](http://www.fcservices.org)  
HQ – (650) 326-6576

Family Court  
[www.sccourt.org](http://www.sccourt.org)  
(408) 534-5600

Family Court Self Help Center  
[www.courtinfo.ca.gov](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov)  
(408) 882-2900

Family Justice Centers  
[www.santaclara-da.org](http://www.santaclara-da.org)  
San Jose – Open Thursdays 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. – (408) 975-2739  
North County – Open Fridays 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. – (408) 749-0793  
South County – Open Wednesdays 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. – (408) 779-2113

Legal Advocates for Children and Youth (LACY)  
[www.lawfoundation.org](http://www.lawfoundation.org)  
(408) 280-2416
MAITRI  
www.maitri.org  (888) 862-4874

National Domestic Violence Hotline  
www.thehotline.org  (800) 799-7233 (SAFE)

Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence  
www.nextdoor.org  (408) 279-2962

Pro Bono Project  
www.probonoproject.org  (408) 998-5298

Restraining Order Self Help Center  
www.courts.ca.gov  (408) 534-5709

San Jose State Counseling Service (SJSU students)  
www.sjsu.edu/counseling  (408) 924-5910

**Santa Clara County Mental Health**  
(800) 704-0900

Senior Adult Legal Services  
www.sala.org  (408) 295-5991

SJPD Family Violence Center  
www.sjpd.org/boi/fvc  (408) 277-3700

Suicide Crisis Service  
www.suicide.org/hotlines/california-suicide-hotlines.html  
North County  (650) 494-8420  
South County  (408) 683-2482

Victim Services Unit – District Attorney’s Office  
www.santaclara-da.org  8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  (408) 295-2656

Victim Notification System  
(Victims can register and be informed when a defendant is to be released.)  
www.vinelink.com  (877) 411-5588

WomenSV  
www.womensv.org  (650) 996-2200

YWCA Support Services  
www.YWCA-SV.org  
Business line  (408) 295-4011  
English/Spanish  (800) 572-2782
## SANTA CLARA COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
### LETHALITY ASSESSMENT FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Case #:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Officer:</td>
<td>Agency:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim:</td>
<td>Offender:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Victim's Safe Numbers to Call:
- **Home:**
- **Cell:**
- **Work:**

Would you like to provide names/phone numbers of 2 people that can reach you?
1. 
2. 

Is the victim monolingual/limited English proficient? If yes, what language do they speak?

- [ ] Check here if the victim did not answer any of the questions.

### If the victim answers YES to any of questions 1-3, please call the appropriate domestic violence crisis hotline and have the counselor speak with the victim.

1. **Has your current or previous partner ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a weapon?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] No Answer

2. **Have they threatened to kill you or someone else?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] No Answer

3. **Do you think your current or previous partner might try to kill you?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] No Answer

### If the answers to the above questions are NO but at least 4 of the questions below are YES please contact the hotline.

4. **Do they have a gun or can they easily get one?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] No Answer

5. **Have they ever tried to choke/strangle you?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] No Answer

6. **Are they violently or constantly jealous or try to control most of your daily activities?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] No Answer

7. **Have you left or separated from your partner after living together or being married?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] No Answer

8. **Are they unemployed?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] No Answer

9. **Have they tried to commit suicide?**
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   - [ ] No Answer

10. **Do you have a child that he knows is not his?**
    - [ ] Yes
    - [ ] No
    - [ ] No Answer

11. **Do they follow or spy on you or leave threatening messages?**
    - [ ] Yes
    - [ ] No
    - [ ] No Answer

12. **Is there anything else that worries you about your safety? If yes, what concerns do you have?**

### Officers are encouraged to call the hotline whenever they believe the victim is in a potentially lethal situation regardless of the victim's responses to the questions above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check one:</th>
<th>Did the victim speak with the hotline counselor?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| [ ] Victim screened in based on responses | [ ] Yes
| [ ] Victim screened in based on the belief of officer | [ ] No |

### Hotlines:

- **NORTH COUNTY HOTLINE:**
  - YWCA Support Network
  - 1-800-572-2782
  - FAX: 408-295-0608

- **CENTRAL COUNTY HOTLINE:**
  - Next Door Solutions
  - 408-279-2962
  - FAX: 408-441-7562

- **SOUTH COUNTY HOTLINE:**
  - Community Solutions
  - 1-877-363-7238
  - FAX 408-782-9469

**PLEASE FAX THIS DOCUMENT TO THE APPROPRIATE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGENCY**
Purpose of the Lethality Assessment:

This evidence based Lethality Assessment form is a user-friendly, straightforward instrument that predicts danger and lethality in domestic incidents between intimate or former intimate partners to a high degree. Research shows that only 4% of intimate partner murder victims ever used domestic violence services. This Assessment encourages victims in high danger to seek domestic violence program services to prevent serious injury or death.

Step 1 – Fill out the Assessment Form with the victim.

Step 2 – If any of the first three answers are yes, ask the victim to call the agency’s local advocacy agency and ensure they make contact. You may need to dial the number for them if they are upset.

Step 3 – If they talk to someone, check the box that they spoke to a hotline counselor.

Step 4 – If they answer yes to one of the first three questions but do not want to speak to a hotline counselor right away, note the victim’s safe phone numbers to call and fax the Lethality Assessment to the appropriate DV organization at the bottom of the form.

Step 5 – If the victim answers yes to the first three answers, or a significant number of follow up questions are yes, but they refuse to speak to a hotline counselor, advise the victim that in your opinion, he/she is in high danger for lethality and you highly encourage them to seek DV program services. Fax the Lethality Assessment to the appropriate DV organization at the bottom of the form.

Step 6 – Provide them with the DV resource card, case number and Marsy’s card as per the DV protocol.

Step 7 – Please fax all Lethality Assessment forms to the appropriate DV organization listed on the bottom of the form regardless of the answers or whether or not the victim answered any of the questions.