

## **Slide 1**

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## **Slide 2 – Welcome and Overview**

Hello, and welcome to Violence Free Minnesota's series on Housing 101 for Victim Service Providers. My name is Guadalupe Lopez, and I am the Executive Director at Violence Free Minnesota. We are very excited to have you join us for this series on housing and domestic violence. We hope to engage you in conversations about housing systems and the barriers faced by survivors of domestic violence, and by the Victim Service Providers who work with them, as they try to navigate those systems.

## **Slide 3 – Series Overview**

We will start with a brief overview of this training series. In this session I will describe the goals of the project, provide some background about why we're doing it, identify the intended audience, and finally, describe the series format. But first, I want to say a few words about terminology. Throughout all eight parts

of the series, for the sake of brevity we will use the term “households” broadly, rather than adding “individuals and families”.

And to be as respectful as possible, we will use terminology such as “houselessness” or “unhoused” rather than “homeless.” The change in terminology reflects a desire to move away from a toxic narrative that often blames people for not having a permanent home or residence. The term “homeless” is often seen as othering or dehumanizing.

## **Slide 4 – Series Goals**

The overarching goals of this series are to:

- First, provide a broad overview of housing terminology and the general housing landscape to make what can be a complex and convoluted system more familiar and accessible.
- Second, we hope to stimulate conversation and action within Victim Service Provider agencies and among stakeholders to increase housing-related programming for survivors; to create survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive housing options for survivors; to undo and repair

inequalities that have been created and continue in housing systems; and to end housing instability and homelessness for all Minnesotans.

- It is no secret to anyone working in this field that there is a severe housing shortage around the country, including here in Minnesota. And what is sometimes characterized as “affordable housing” is anything but. We also know that income inequality has deepened the housing crisis as wages, and benefit levels remain flat while housing costs skyrocket.
- We hope that some of you who might not yet be involved in systems advocacy related to housing in your local area will be inspired to take up that work, and that some of you might even become more involved on a state-wide level to address housing and income inequalities.

## **Slide 5 – Series Background**

This series came about as the result of conversations that Violence Free Minnesota conducted with Victim Service Providers, or VSPs, and housing stakeholders related to confidentiality and technology issues in the housing context. Throughout our conversations the consistent feedback from VSPs was

that there was a need for foundational information about housing systems for them to be able to fully participate in these conversations. VSPs were also keenly aware that the housing mechanism that has developed in recent years was not designed with the needs of survivors in mind and that there is a need for system change advocacy.

VFMN developed this series in response to this feedback.

Confidentiality issues are the core of the series. But it also includes several sessions that provide foundational information about housing systems, stakeholders, and programming to help give context for the confidentiality discussions. We'll have one session specifically dedicated to survivor confidentiality, and you will find this important issue referenced throughout the series.

## **Slide 6 – Intended Audience**

The intended audience for this series is staff at victim service provider agencies, regardless of their level of experience with housing programming or what role they have within the agency. Some of the sessions will be more relevant to, for

example, an advocate as opposed to an agency administrator or agency head.

We'll do our best to identify that for you when it applies.

This series can also be a resource for anyone interested in growing or improving housing access for survivors of domestic violence.

## **Slide 7 – Series Format**

The series is divided into multiple pre-recorded sessions, as follows:

- Part 1 is The Intersection of Domestic Violence & Housing.
- Part 2 addresses Affordable Housing Models.
- Part 3 is about Housing Programs in Minnesota.
- Part 4 provides an overview of the Continuum of Care.
- Part 5 discusses Continuum of Care Program Funding.
- Part 6 addresses Survivor Confidentiality and its relationship to housing systems.
- Part 7 is on Comparable Databases describing data collection requirements for victim service providers.

- And Part 8 orients us to the Coordinated Entry process.

We believe that all eight of these sessions will be of interest and relevance to anyone working in the field. In particular Parts 1, 2 and 4 provide broad overviews that contain important information for everyone. Parts 3, 5 and 7 will be of interest to agency administrators, agency leaders and people who are responsible for programming and funding decisions. Advocates and direct service providers should pay special attention to Parts 6 and 8. But again—everyone will benefit to some extent from all eight parts of the series.

As we noted before, understanding how the housing system works can be confusing, involving a lot of technical concepts and procedures. This training is not designed to be a comprehensive approach to everything involved in the housing system; rather, it is an introduction to the eight topics listed here. Each part of the series will include a resource page that will be posted on the Violence Free Minnesota's website, directing you to where you may go for more information if you are interested.

## **Slide 8 – Gratitude**

Finally, in closing, we want to express our deep gratitude to everyone who participated in the creation of this training series. A special thanks to Anne Applebaum, who provided the momentum and much of the information you will learn about. For a complete list of everyone who participated, please see the attached resource page.

Thank you for joining us for this series and for all that you do. Thank you for your time, which we know is precious and scarce. Thank you for your care, your thoughtfulness, and your advocacy. And thank you for taking steps to create a community where everyone has a safe, stable, and permanent place to call home.

## **Slide 9**

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