

# CO-LOCATED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCATES PROGRAM

The Oregon Department of Human Services Co-Located Domestic Violence (DV) Advocates are contained in the Child Welfare and Self-Sufficiency Programs Offices to provide confidential advocacy services to survivors. These advocates strive to provide a client-centered, trauma-informed, culturally and linguistically appropriate approach to supporting DV survivors and their children and serve all community members.

Services include, but are not limited to: safety planning, risk and fatality assessment, shelter services, support in referrals to other community resources such as housing, mental health services, counseling, support groups, etc. The advocates also provide time for survivors to talk about anything they need; to discuss and support survivors in recovering or leaving their abusive situation. Services also include confidential advocacy and secondary trauma supports to Department of Human Services staff.

## Confidentiality and Privilege

The Federal government demands strict confidentiality. In Oregon, most domestic violence sexual assault advocates have privilege and are not mandatory reporters. Which means: Survivors can assert privilege. They can refuse to disclose in a legal matter, and prevent others from disclosing, any confidential communications with a certified advocate and the records created or maintained in the course of providing services.

The benefits of these confidentiality mandates:

- These crime victims will be safer.
- These crime victims will not be further victimized.
- These crime victims will be more likely to use advocate services.
- These crime victims will benefit more from advocate services.

## SERVICE FACTS

July 2018 – June 2019

Co-located DV Advocates served over 10,800 survivors this year!

Advocates completed 8,992 safety plans!

Within DHS, advocates provided 48,527 direct service hours.

## FAST FACTS

- Program started in 2012 and serves all 36 counties
- Currently, there are 33 Co-Located contractors
- Advocates serve in all DHS Child Welfare and Self-Sufficiency Offices
- Any community member can work with Co-Located Advocates, including but not limited to individuals without children, individuals with disabilities
- In 2018 – DHS held a workgroup with provider input to establish a consistent and equitable distribution formula for funding the program
- DHS commits to having advocate informed processes and policies
- As of 12/2019 – There are 60 Co-Located Advocates across Oregon month.

*"My co-located DV advocate gave me all the support I needed to feel that I could get away from the situation safely." –Survivor*

