

Monitoring Tips for LGBTQ+ Accessibility

Shelter Observations

- Are there visual representations? Would an LGBTQ+ survivor see themselves reflected in the environment? (ex. magazines, posters, language?)
 - Who is represented? Who is not?
- What about implicit messaging?
- Are the bathrooms accessible?
- Is the Domestic Violence shelter space non-gendered **OR** does it have multiple options?
 - Ex. Private studio spaces
 - Communal or dorm style
 - Privacy screens or barriers
- Are survivors oriented to the shelter in an inclusive manner?

Intake

- Do forms include sexual orientation, gender identity, and pronouns? Do staff use that language when communicating?
- Do intake forms include multiple choice and fill in the blank? Are survivors the ones filling out the forms?

Data Collection

- What do the organization's PPR statistics reflect?
 - Who is being served? Who is not being served?

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- Why? Have they worked with partners to improve responses? What needs to change?
 - Does the State analyze data to identify barriers, obstacles, and accessibility?
- Are there conversations the State can have with the organization about limitations of grant reporting that they are asking the State to address?
- Has the State examined their own grant reporting forms?
 - Has the State looked at them in conjunction with the coalition and LGBTQ+ partner organizations?

Support groups

- Are there LGBTQ+ support groups OR non-gendered, LGBTQ+ competent, support groups?
- Can survivors self-select into support groups?
- Is there evidence of referrals to local LGBTQ+ identity specific resources?

Sex-specific or sex-segregated services

- Are there separate shelter spaces for men, women, LGBTQ+ survivors?
- Does the organization have the documented justification required by FVPSA that meets the criteria?
 - Has the organization's board reviewed and approved the justification?
 - Does the organization routinely review/update their justification to ensure sex-specific and/or sex-segregated services are still necessary?
- Do LGBTQ+ survivors have the same level of on-site access to advocates?

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Comparable Services

- Who is offered alternate accommodations?
 - When, under what circumstance?
- Is there evidence of comparable services being provided?
 - In the policies, in staff descriptions of practices, in financial documentation?
 - Does the organization's submitted budget reflect inclusion of costs related to comparable services?
 - Do financials reflect comparable services for survivors housed in different locations?
 - Ex. Are you noticing a pattern of shorter hotel stays?
 - Why is that?
- What do the organization's policies say about when alternate accommodations are used and what services are provided?
 - Do the listed procedures match?
 - Has the State asked staff open-ended questions to discern if their practices match?
 - Ex. The State should ask staff to describe how they would handle different scenarios

External Feedback

- If the organization collects survivor feedback, what have survivors shared about their experiences? about access for all genders? about sex-specific and/or sex-segregated services?
 - Note: survivor feedback should be anonymous and must be voluntary!
- Does the State have a grievance policy/process for complaints?
 - Do survivors know how to reach the State?

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- What has the State been hearing from partners and the community?

External Communication

- What about the organization's name?
 - If it is gendered:
 - Do they have plans to make it more inclusive?
 - If not, how are they ensuring the message about inclusive services is being conveyed?
- Is social media and external messaging inclusive (ex. websites)?
- How is the State ensuring that survivors are not being "screened out"?
 - Ex. Does the State have a policy and process for conducting "test" hotline calls?
 - These policies and processes should be developed in conjunction with the State/Territorial DV Coalition & Tribal Coalition
 - These policies and processes should be transparent and clearly communicated to subrecipients
 - These policies and processes:
 - Should be conducted with the goals of improving access to survivors
 - Should be used as a method to ensure organizations have access to training, TA, and support to improve access and compliance
 - Should ***not*** be used as an attempt to "catch" an organization in non-compliance
- How is the State ensuring survivors are "screened in" and are able to communicate their choices and receive services accordingly?

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Organizational Policies

- Do the organization's policies meet each of the components in the FVPSA and other Federal requirements?
- Are the policies comprehensive? Do they cross-reference other policies as needed? (ex. financial aspects when needed)
 - Do the listed procedures match?
 - Do staff descriptions of their practices match?
 - Consider asking staff to describe their approach to particular scenarios through open ended questions
 - If a staff member shares a practice that does not match the policy, what do other staff members say? Are they all mismatched? What about the Executive Director? Is this an organization wide challenge or an individual staff issue? Why? (Ex. is the staff person new? Is there enough training?)
 - Do board minutes reflect approval of the policies? When were they last updated or reviewed?
- What do organization's policies say?
 - Who do they include? Who is missing?
- Does the organization have clear policies/procedures to ensure all survivors are provided access to services that:
 - Are welcoming
 - Are truly equitable
 - Allow ALL survivors the ability to be and feel safe
 - Offer alternate options that are comparable
 - Allow options for the survivor to decide how they want to receive services

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- Does not exclude or make the survivor feel unwelcome
- Address Safety concerns

Overall Organization

- Does the organization demonstrate cultural responsiveness?
- Is there staff representation?
- Is staff language inclusive?
 - Is it gender inclusive, or based in heteronormativity?
 - Is it in plain speak or is it jargon heavy in a way that focuses on female victims and male offenders?
 - Do they respond to the survivor and refer to others about the survivor by the survivor's preferred pronouns?
- Are the written materials inclusive?
- Are staff responding to other survivors or other staff making biased statements in an appropriate way to ensure LGBTQ+ survivors feel safe?
- Are staff receiving regular, on-going training on how to work with LGBTQ+ survivors?
- What do staff say about the direct or implicit internal messaging around LGBTQ+ accessibility and inclusion?