

Travis County Domestic Violence High Risk Team Memorandum of Understanding

I. Scope

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formalizes the commitment between agencies participating in the Travis County Domestic Violence High Risk Team (DVHRT).

II. Members of the Domestic Violence High Risk Team

The team members who will participate in the DVHRT include the Austin Police Department, Travis County Sheriff's Office, County and District prosecutors, Travis County Attorney's Office Protective Order Division, Travis County Community Justice Services (TCCJS) – Adult Probation and Pretrial Services, The SAFE Alliance, Travis County Counseling and Education Services, Victim Safety First, and Texas Advocacy Project.

III. Term

This MOU will commence upon complete execution by all parties and will continue through October, 2025. Any party may, upon written notice to all other parties provided at a monthly meeting, withdraw from this Agreement at any time.

IV. Purpose

The purpose of the DVHRT is to provide effective interventions for high-risk domestic violence cases in Travis County to increase victim safety and offender accountability. Team members will collaborate to identify high risk cases and formulate individualized intervention plans based on the unique needs of each victim. Team members will also engage in clear communication to monitor the status of these high risk cases across systems and ensure offender accountability.

V. DVHRT Operations

Every domestic violence case in Travis County will be assessed using the Danger Assessment, an evidence based tool used to assess the level of danger of continued violence and potential lethality for a victim. Cases that land in the 'extreme danger' category will be accepted onto the Travis County high risk caseload. The DVHRT will meet bi-monthly to present new cases and discuss updates on current cases. The DVHRT coordinator will send out a list prior to each meeting of cases to be discussed to allow team members to prepare. The DVHRT will provide ongoing case updates between meetings to ensure that all team members are up to date on every case. The DVHRT will monitor case updates including court dates, release dates, bond conditions and violations, protective orders and protective order violations, and victim safety in a manner that aligns with the purpose of clear interagency communication.

A. Roles and Responsibilities of Team Members

1. All Team Members agree to:
 - a. Designate consistent primary and alternative DVHRT liaisons
 - b. Participate in all of the DVHRT meetings requested by the Coordinator
 - c. Refer appropriate cases to DVHRT
 - d. Share information on case status, victim contact, and any other relevant information at monthly meetings, as allowed by confidentiality requirements
 - e. Provide the DVHRT coordinator with any information that will enhance effective case interventions through email or phone call

- f. Participate in trainings intended to enhance operations of the DVHRT
 - g. Sign an updated Memorandum of Understanding annually
- 2. DVHRT Coordinator agrees to:
 - a. Accept cases onto the DVHRT caseload
 - b. Act as primary point of contact for all high risk victims and update partner agencies accordingly
 - c. Provide counseling and intensive case management to high risk victims
 - d. Facilitate monthly meetings and any other necessary DVHRT meetings, including determining who needs to be present at each meeting
- 3. Law Enforcement Agencies Sworn Personnel agree to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Alert the DVHRT to case updates and calls involving the parties of existing high risk cases
 - c. Administer Assault Victim Statement with lethality assessment to victims of domestic violence calls to help identify high risk cases
- 4. Law Enforcement Agencies Victim Services Divisions agree to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Alert DVHRT of relevant case information provided to them by victims of high risk cases
 - c. Alert DVHRT coordinator if a conversation with a non-high risk victim provides information indicating that case should be considered high risk
- 5. Travis County Attorney's Office Criminal Division agrees to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Provide the DVHRT with information on all high risk criminal case updates
 - c. Use high risk case status to inform prosecutorial decisions
- 6. Travis County Attorney's Office Protective Order Division agrees to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Conduct a Danger Assessment with all protective order applicants
 - c. Set appointments for high risk applicants as needed to ensure they are seen as quickly as possible
- 7. Travis County District Attorney's Office agrees to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Provide the DVHRT with information on all high risk criminal case updates
 - c. Use high risk case status to inform prosecutorial decisions
- 8. The SAFE Alliance agrees to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Advise the DVHRT of any high risk victim updates, as allowable per agency confidentiality requirements
 - c. Expedite shelter and other service options for high risk victims when possible
- 9. TCCJS Pretrial Services agrees to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Advise the DVHRT of bond conditions for high risk cases
 - c. Advise the DVHRT of offender's compliance with bond conditions
 - d. Advise the DVHRT of the motion off status on a high risk case
- 10. TCCJS Adult Probation agrees to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Advise the DVHRT of probation conditions for high risk cases

- c. Advise the DVHRT of offender's compliance with probation conditions
 - d. Advise the DVHRT of intermediate sanctions, recommended interventions, and court action on high risk cases
- 11. Travis County Counseling and Education Services agrees to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Inform DVHRT of assessed risk level of high risk defendants
 - c. Inform DVHRT of assessment results of high risk defendants
- 12. Victim Safety First agrees to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Advise DVHRT of GPS installs, exclusion zone violations, or tampers involving high risk offenders
 - c. Extend exclusion zone for high risk cases as needed
 - d. Advise DVHRT when terminating service of high risk offenders
- 13. Texas Advocacy Project agrees to:
 - a. Participate in all scheduled DVHRT meetings where their presence is requested
 - b. Alert the DVHRT to updated non confidential victim information for high risk cases
 - c. Provide services (and expedite services when possible) such as case management and civil legal aid to high risk victims referred by the DVHRT

VI. Confidentiality

Each participating team member will securely protect all information exchanged during meetings, and all team members agree to not disclose any of the shared information outside of the DVHRT except as necessary in court and with other members of their office for the specific purpose of accomplishing law enforcement goals and only as reasonably necessary to serve justice. Further, all team members agree to abide by all state and federal law governing the use and dissemination of private information.

To the extent that any team member uses, discloses, maintains, or transmits protected information that concerns alcohol and substance abuse treatment, team members acknowledge and agree that:

1. Such information is protected by 42 C.F.R. Part 2 ("Part 2"), and team members are bound by these regulations;
2. Part 2 prohibits a team member from further disclosing such information unless disclosure is authorized by Part 2, Subparts D or E, or the team member obtains the written consent of the individual whose information is to be further disclosed; and
3. If necessary, the team member will resist any effort to obtain access to such information by initiating judicial proceedings against the person or entity attempting to gain access in contravention of Part 2.

VII. Memorandum of Understanding Signatures

We, the undersigned, approve the DVHRT activities and responsibilities outlined in this MOU.

Signed by:
Travis County District Attorney's Office
By: Jose Garza
EDCA84B91F9C46C...
District Attorney Jose Garza (or designee)
Date: 10/24/2024 | 12:06 PM CDT

DocuSigned by:
Travis County Sheriff's Office
By: Sally Hernandez
C8240F088573455...
Sheriff Sally Hernandez (or designee)
Date: 10/28/2024 | 12:52 PM PDT

Travis County District Attorney's Office Victim
Services Division
By: Neva Fernandez
EE8E2704E9CB4E2...
Neva Fernandez
Date: 10/29/2024 | 10:07 AM CDT

Travis County Sheriff's Office Victim Services
Division
By: Davany Vargas
7344C68B98D940E...
Davany Vargas
Date: 10/29/2024 | 5:44 AM PDT

Travis County Attorney's Office Victim
Services Division
By: Stephanie Richardson
5AB3CA46CB2F4FA...
Stephanie Richardson
Date: 10/24/2024 | 9:21 AM CDT

Signed by:
The SAFE Alliance
By: Julia Spann
816CDE68EE2F4E1...
Julia Spann (or designee)
Date: 10/28/2024 | 1:39 PM CDT

Travis County Attorney's Office Family
Violence Division
By: Elizabeth Whited
D8F843890666401...
Elizabeth Whited
Date: 11/5/2024 | 10:21 AM CST

Signed by:
Travis County Community Justice Services
Adult Probation and Pretrial Services
By: Rodolfo Perez, Jr.
FCE5C3276EE9493...
Rodolfo Perez, Jr. (or designee)
Date: 10/24/2024 | 7:55 AM CDT

Travis County Attorney's Office Protective
Order Division
By: Lauren Cisneros
EA7649B7B2654CF...
Lauren Cisneros
Date: 10/29/2024 | 2:41 PM CDT

Travis County Counseling and Education
Services
By: Corey Bryks
10D2B357F65D4CB...
Corey Bryks
Date: 10/25/2024 | 8:20 AM PDT

Signed by:
Austin Police Department
By: Lisa Davis
F1EC6C96FAE34C5...
Chief Lisa Davis (or designee)
Date: 10/30/2024 | 4:24 PM CDT

DocuSigned by:
Victim Safety First
By: Rena Boisvert
D2375F2E8D5C45E...
Rena Boisvert
Date: 10/31/2024 | 11:01 AM CDT

Austin Police Department Victim Services
Division
By: Kachina Clark
411BA2DD8E914C4...
Kachina Clark
Date: 10/29/2024 | 11:30 AM CDT

DocuSigned by:
Texas Advocacy Project
By: Heather Bellino
62829264AEC24BC...
Heather Bellino (or designee)
Date: 10/28/2024 | 2:56 PM CDT

Pflugerville Police Department
By: Sereniah Breland
Sereniah Breland (Or designee)
Date: _____

