

9. Community resources

Recommended approach—panel

Alternative approach—presentation

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Brief panel presentations and a question-and-answer session can give training participants some first hand knowledge of local resources. Allow two hours if you can take this approach to the topic of community resources. Steps to consider in arranging, running and following up on a panel are outlined below.

Before training

1. Resources for dealing with domestic abuse vary from county to county. As you prepare to invite panelists, consider representatives that provide the following types of services.

Emergency services: Organizations that help victims safely escape an abusive or potentially abusive situation. Services can include crisis intervention, short-term shelter, counseling and coordination of legal, health, substance abuse, mental health and relocation services.

Transitional services: Organizations that offer longer-term residential services aimed at helping victims establish independent living arrangements. Services can include transitional housing; assistance with finding permanent housing; counseling; coordination of legal, health, substance abuse and mental health services; childcare; and assistance with employment, financial planning, transportation and other services to support self-sufficiency.

Legal services: Organizations that offer professional services and assistance in legal issues. Services can address restraining orders, custody disputes, child and spousal support, divorce, property disputes, criminal matters, victim-witness assistance and immigration issues.

Individual and group counseling: A variety of organizations facilitate one-on-one and group counseling, including victim support groups. Providers may include organizations that provide emergency and transitional services, community-based mental health services and county mental health department.

Substance abuse services: Domestic abuse cases often involve substance abuse. In addition to offering treatment services that may be needed by victims, community-based organizations and county agencies in your area may offer services helpful to non-abusing family members of a substance abuse, including support groups.

Law enforcement: Police, sheriffs, district attorneys or courts in some jurisdictions have specialized domestic abuse units.

Services for batterers: While CalWORKs staff may not be involved in these types of referrals, providers of individual and group treatment offer a perspective that rounds out the full range of community services available to deal with domestic abuse.

2. Let panelists know they will have 10-15 minutes for a presentation, depending on the number of panelists, plus time for answering questions.
3. Be specific in your requests to panelists. Describe the audience and their information needs. For representatives of some groups, such as batterer treatment providers and law enforcement, you may want presenters to describe how they work. For groups participants may make referrals to, consider asking panelists to address the following types of questions.
 - A. Who is eligible for services? Can they have a history of substance abuse or mental illness?
 - B. What is your intake process?
 - C. Do you take children? How many?
 - D. Is there a waiting list? How long? Are there services available in the interim?
 - E. Do you provide comprehensive services such as housing and employment assistance?
 - F. Are there after hours services? Emergency services?
4. Ask each panelist to bring written materials about their organization and business cards.

During the presentation

5. Assign moderator and timekeeper functions to separate people. The moderator can introduce panelists and facilitate the question-and-answer session. The timekeeper should sit in the front row and have "five minutes," "one minute" and "stop" cards panelists can clearly see.
6. Consider taking questions after all presentations have been made. This will maintain the flow of information and help with keeping time.

7. Consider giving training participants question sheets. This will allow them to keep notes during presentations. It will also help participants who don't feel comfortable asking questions in front of the entire class.

After training

8. Follow up with panelists who offered to provide further information and distribute it to training participants.
9. Send thank you notes or letters to panelists.

Alternative approach—presentation

If time or local resources make a panel presentation impractical, consider the following possibilities for a presentation about community resources.

- Involve a CalWORKs domestic abuse specialist or social worker with expertise in domestic abuse in the presentation.
- Offer an in-depth presentation based on the agency's domestic abuse resource list. Address as many referral and services issues as possible. (See item 3 in the panel presentation guidelines for examples of questions to answer.)
- Contact service providers for printed information to distribute to training participants.