

A Roadmap to Designing a Successful Diversion Program: What Questions Should My Office Be Asking?

While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to designing a DV diversion program, there are several questions that can serve as a roadmap for program planners. The questions below can provide further clarity around program goals and implementation and important tools for measuring factors relevant to programmatic success.

1. *What resources are available to assist in the development of the diversion program?*
 - a. Privately-funded grants (i.e. private foundations and agencies)
 - b. Third-party partnerships with community-based organizations
 - c. Government funding grants (i.e. Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, etc.)
 - d. Annual municipal/city/county/state budget

2. *What are my office's capabilities and limitations in measuring the success of a diversion program, including progress and compliance, when it comes to DV offenses?*
 - a. Evidenced-informed resources for tracking the success of pretrial services (i.e. National Institute of Corrections [measures](#))
 - b. See the work of APA's Domestic Violence Committee members [insert links below]
 - c. Research partners through third-party providers or local colleges and universities to determine compliance measures and explore alternative data technology
 - d. Existing demographics collected and data collection capabilities through CMS
 - e. External data collection systems to incorporate, whether computerized or by hand, data not captured by CMS
 - f. Police arrest records and statistics
 - g. Statewide crime statistics and trends

3. *Who should be responsible for oversight of the diversion program, including the adoption of improvements and compliance monitoring?*
 - a. Designated staff from prosecutor's office, whether individual prosecutors or specialized administrative staff
 - b. Departments of Parole and Probation
 - c. Third-party treatment providers and community-based organizations
 - d. Court

4. *How can a victim-centered approach to handling DV cases be maintained at each step of the diversion program?*
 - a. Trauma-informed programming begins with incorporating victim input as early as possible
 - b. Pair victim with designated victim advocate, provider, or prosecutor to provide continuity of services and court updates
 - c. Referrals to robust victim services providers to assist with basic needs and counseling services
 - d. Engage survivors to learn model practices to incorporate and detrimental practices to avoid
 - e. Research feasibility and safety of virtual proceedings to avoid multiple court appearances
 - f. Include strategies to address biases and stigmas that arise with virtual appearances for both the accused and victim, such as language barriers or access to computers

5. *How can the obstacles to enrollment in the diversion program, such as the costs associated with diversion or limited resources, be adequately addressed during program planning?*
 - a. Seeking out third-party providers that accept insurance, Medicaid, and sliding scale options
 - b. Connect pre-charge diversion with post-charge use of treatment interventions in pretrial services and sentencing. The creation of funded treatment for DV offenders should include all three areas.
 - c. Engage public defenders and the private defense bar in early program planning
 - d. Create a process that allows law enforcement, defense counsel, corrections staff, and victims to make referrals to prosecutors

6. *How can my office generate buy-in from criminal justice stakeholders, including line prosecutors and members of law enforcement, and important stakeholders in the community to ensure a coordinated response to DV?*
 - a. Create a multidisciplinary team to handle diverted cases
 - b. Rely on existing internal support to staff DV diversion program
 - c. Hold periodic case reviews for diverted, high-risk, and potential cases
 - d. Specialized cross-collaborative DV and trauma-informed training for involved stakeholders
 - e. Host survivor listening sessions to improve existing practices

7. *How can my office's diversion program for DV best address disparities in the criminal justice process?*
 - a. Remove socioeconomic barriers to participation through sliding scale fees and/or free programming
 - b. Include demographics in data collection to monitor racial and ethnic disparities and generate solutions to any identified disparities
 - c. Consult those with lived experience to determine model practices for engagement
 - d. Provide cultural competency training and implicit bias training for diversion program staff