

Welcome

Welcome to Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center. We are excited that you have brought your strengths and talents to our team to further our mission. DVCAC has provided prevention, education, intervention, and advocacy services to the greater Cleveland area since 1976 and we continue to be guided by our core values. The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are written in accordance with these core values and should be seen and used as a resource for best practice throughout your volunteer experience with our agency.

Mission

The Mission of Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center is to empower individuals, educate the community, and advocate for justice to end domestic violence and child abuse.

Vision

Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center envisions a community in which all people enjoy lives free from violence and abuse and feel safe and secure in their relationships.

Core Values & Guiding Principles

1. **Respect** - We practice compassionate treatment of others without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, military status, national origin, disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, politics, or ancestry. We believe in the inherent worth of all people and in honest, open communication. All clients, employees, volunteers, and interns will be treated with honesty, integrity, and compassion.
2. **Empowerment** - We stand for an environment where individuals can make decisions and move forward with their lives free from bias, coercion, and fear.
3. **Accessibility** - We are committed to overcoming cultural, geographic, or other barriers to share our expertise and extend our services into every corner of the community.
4. **Safety** - We honor the right of all individuals to be free from harm and to enjoy relationships based on fairness and trust.
5. **Commitment to Excellence** - We maintain an environment that is committed to excellence through innovation, training, and professional growth. All services will provide measurable results and outcomes. Services will be solution-focused by building on the strengths of clients and their families.

Guiding Principles

1. DVCAC will provide a safe environment where clients, employees, and volunteers will be supported.
2. Integrity and mutual respect will guide all aspects of DVCAC activities.
3. DVCAC employees, volunteers, and board members will treat people with compassion.
4. DVCAC will work with clients to use proactive individual intervention methods and resources.
5. DVCAC will seek excellence through qualitative innovations.
6. DVCAC will celebrate success.

Volunteer Guidelines

Volunteers are critical to the work of DVCAC. Because DVCAC relies on volunteers to further our mission, an application, screening, and training process is conducted prior to an individual volunteering.

DVCAC recognizes that current or former clients may have an interest in volunteering. Due to issues surrounding confidentiality and in consideration of trauma-informed practices, clients must not have received DVCAC services in the past three (3) years to be eligible to volunteer.

Background Verification

DVCAC relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the volunteer application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in DVCAC's exclusion of the individual from consideration or termination.

DVCAC requires background checks on candidates and is required to do so pursuant to various applicable laws and governmental mandates. These checks include:

1. Federal Exclusion checks through Office of Inspector General (OIG) and Systems Award Management (SAM);
2. BCI&I criminal background check;
3. FBI background check - required if applicant has not lived in Ohio for the past five (5) years.

Initial costs will be at the expense of the volunteer. Names and location of testing facilities will be provided by DVCAC.

Volunteering is contingent upon the receipt and review of background information received by DVCAC. All information will be kept confidential. The applicant will be given the opportunity to provide additional details on any information in the reports. All executive decisions pertaining to information in background checks will be final.

Current volunteers convicted of any misdemeanor or felony must report it to their staff contact within five (5) business days. DVCAC reserves the right to conduct background checks for current volunteers as needed. If a criminal background check and/or primary source verification of credentials fails to support the volunteer's claims, they may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Volunteer Handbook

This handbook sets forth the policies, procedures, and standards of behavior for volunteers of DVCAC. Every attempt has been made to make these policies as complete as possible but it is impossible to cover all conceivable circumstances. There are other policies that do not pertain to all volunteers that are kept outside of this handbook and other policies that may be oral or

written, procedures, or standards of behavior that are in effect and not mentioned in this handbook. In such cases, those policies, procedures, or standards of behavior may take precedence.

This handbook is not intended to create or to be construed to constitute an expressed or implied employment contract between DVCAC and any one or all of its volunteers nor do the policies contained herein constitute a promise that all policies will be applied in their entirety in all cases. The policies, procedures, and standards of behavior detailed in this handbook are conditions of volunteering to which the volunteer agrees and are bound by during their time with DVCAC. DVCAC reserves the right to modify, discontinue, or revise the policies, procedures, and standards of behavior contained herein without prior notice. Any concerns regarding a policy or procedure should be addressed with your agency contact/supervisor.

Volunteers must sign an acknowledgment that they received this handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures as outlined.

Attendance

Volunteers are critical to DVCAC and the clients and community we serve. Regular attendance during all scheduled hours, including reporting on time and continuing to work until the end of the scheduled period, is expected of every volunteer. If volunteers are unable to come for their scheduled period, will be late, or need to leave early, they must notify their staff contact/supervisor as soon as possible.

Tracking Time

Volunteers are expected to maintain accurate records of their time spent at DVCAC. Timesheets must be completed and turned in to their supervisor no later than the 3rd of the following month.

Agency Property

Personal Use

The computers, electronic media and services provided by DVCAC are for business use to assist volunteers in the performance of their jobs. Use of DVCAC property for personal use is prohibited.

Prohibited Usage

- A. DVCAC resources may not be used to create or disseminate materials that are discriminatory, harassing, obscene, pornographic, defamatory, threatening, and illegal or in violation of DVCAC's Domestic Violence policy.
- B. DVCAC resources may not be used for personal business or profit making ventures
- C. Certain steps may be taken to ensure limited access to categories of information deemed "inappropriate for the work environment" by leadership.

- D. Computer activity that runs contradictory to DVCAC's mission, values, policies, or business interests is in violation of this agreement and is subject to disciplinary action.

Data and Information

Associates and others acting on DVCAC's behalf are responsible for protecting DVCAC's Confidential information from unauthorized use and disclosure whether internal or external, deliberate or accidental. Associates and others acting on DVCAC's behalf must not:

- Illegally collect, use, and/or disclose confidential information.
- Violate external laws and regulations related to the protection of data and personally identifiable information
- Post, store and/or transmit confidential and personally identifiable information in an insecure manner.

If improper disclosure or breach of information is suspected or known by any individual, that individual has a responsibility to report the disclosure or breach to Finance.

Asset Management – Hardware and Software

- A. DVCAC-owned technology, including, but not limited to computers, cell phones, software, and network peripherals (printers, faxes, VRI, iPads, etc.) are intended to support *DVCAC* related activities. Employees are prohibited from using these resources for personal or financial gain unrelated to a work functions.
- B. Upon completion/termination of volunteering duties each day, the volunteer must promptly cease use of all *DVCAC* equipment and return any equipment to their immediate supervisor at *DVCAC*. Failure to return equipment will result in personal cost to the volunteer.
- C. Any emails, documents, pictures, media, or other content created on a *DVCAC* workstation or transmitted through *DVCAC* emails are the ownership of *DVCAC*.
- D. At times, it may be necessary as part of your volunteer role to take *DVCAC*-owned hardware off-site. In this case, the volunteer is to take every reasonable precaution to ensure the safety and viability of that equipment. If equipment should become damaged or stolen while off-site, the volunteer may be responsible for the replacement cost of the device.
- E. Promptly report any theft or loss of *DVCAC* assets to your immediate supervisor and the Chief Financial Officer / Controller.

Separation

Volunteers reserve the right to end their service at any time. For continuity of services, *DVCAC* requests at least two (2) weeks' notice if possible.

DVCAC also reserves the right to terminate a volunteer for violations, including but not limited to, policies outlined in this handbook.

Volunteer Conduct

Cultural Competence

DVCAC recognizes the importance of continuously developing cultural awareness and competency of all employees and volunteers in order to provide the most appropriate services to all members of our ethnically and culturally diverse community. It is essential that DVCAC employees, volunteers, and board members demonstrate cultural competency at all times. The following plan will detail our ongoing efforts to ensure that this goal is met. This plan will be reviewed at least annually for relevance and will be updated to address areas that need improvement.

DVCAC is committed to creating an environment where all employees, volunteers, and persons served are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, military status, national origin, disability, age, or ancestry.

The long-range Cultural Competency objectives of DVCAC are outlined below:

1. Environment: DVCAC will provide a welcoming environment that reflects the belief that people and their individual differences and contributions are valued. We will:
 - a. Provide culturally diverse reading material to clients, employees, and volunteers;
 - b. Display diverse artwork throughout agency sites;
 - c. Encourage employees to decorate office areas with diverse items; and
 - d. Demonstrate zero tolerance toward culturally insensitive, sexually offensive, or violent images or expressions.
2. Employees/Personnel: To have diverse & culturally-competent employees, volunteers, and board members who:
 - a. Seek to recruit and retain a more diverse staff, evaluating the distribution of diversity across programs, and ensuring equal opportunities for advancement in the organization;
 - b. Seek employees that have multi-lingual skills;
 - c. Provide all employees with ongoing cultural competency training to continuously develop cultural awareness, cultural competency skills, and an awareness of differences.
3. Services: To make accessible and provide services that are culturally acceptable:
 - a. Consider client preferences for service providers during intake and assessments;
 - b. Include culturally sensitive prompts and questions on agency forms;
 - c. Identify resources (people, organizations) in the community to be available for referrals in culturally sensitive situations;
 - d. Establish culturally-sensitive community-based programs;
 - e. Partner with County departments and/or agencies; and

- f. Expand on assessment and service-planning approaches which identify resources and support clients' individual needs.

Confidentiality

Clients of DVCAC are ensured that their information and records are protected and held in the strictest confidence. Within DVCAC, client information will be discussed only when such discussion enhances services for a client. Any/all discussions regarding client related information must be done in confidential spaces being mindful of hallways and public areas. Sharing information with other agencies requires the prior written consent of the client. Employees and volunteers sign a confidentiality agreement and any breach will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All clients will be advised of their right to confidentiality during their initial orientation to DVCAC. Therapists and service providers will remind clients of their right to privacy during treatment in individual or group sessions as appropriate.

There are three (3) exceptions to the confidentiality rule:

1. If a client presents serious threats of bodily harm to self or others (suicidal or homicidal threats), the employee/volunteer must make appropriate contacts with emergency services/police, and consult with a supervisor, the threatened individual (if applicable), and file an incident report;
2. If a client discloses information indicating that a child under age 18 years, a developmentally disabled or physically impaired youth under age 21 years, a person aged 60 years or older, who is mentally or physically impaired, or a developmentally disabled adult is at risk for serious injury due to abuse or neglect, the employee/volunteer must assume responsibility for reporting this to the appropriate authority as a mandated reporter; or
3. If a client is part of a DVCAC sponsored program in which there is a contract with another agency to provide assessment or evaluation, the prospective employee may provide information to that agency regarding the client's progress in the program.

In each of the three (3) exceptions, clients will be informed about any information communicated concerning them and will be included in this process, whenever possible. Exceptions can be made (after consultation) if there is potential harm to client and/or family.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), sets the standard for protecting sensitive patient data. Any company that deals with protected health information (PHI) must ensure that all the required physical, network, and process security measures are in place and followed. Healthcare information cannot be shared or used without the client's written permission.

Information protected under HIPAA includes the following:

1. All healthcare related information including what providers put in healthcare records
2. Conversations about care or treatment with providers

3. Billing information

Conflict of Interest

All employees and volunteers must fulfill their responsibilities in the best interest of DVCAC and their clients and not in consideration of personal interests. All employees and volunteers must conduct themselves in such a manner to avoid even the appearance of conflict between personal interests and those of DVCAC. This policy governs employees and volunteers engaged in activities that may present actual or perceived conflict of interest with the ethical operation of DVCAC.

1. Business Practices:

Business and financial transactions in which a director, employee, or volunteer will financially benefit will be subject to prior full disclosure of the transaction and Board of Directors approval.

The use of DVCAC staff, equipment, facilities, and other resources for any purpose other than the express mission of DVCAC or specific program function without the prior approval of the CEO is prohibited.

Employees are not permitted to engage in private practice or other private enterprise while on DVCAC time or to use DVCAC employees, equipment, facilities, or other resources for private practice or enterprise unless by written agreement from the CEO or Board of Directors.

Specific Agreements by person signing this form:

As a director, and/or officer, and/or committee member, or an employee in a position to influence or vote on policy or expenditures of DVCAC, I will exercise good faith in all transactions relating to DVCAC. I will not use my position or knowledge gained there, directly or indirectly, to influence my conduct with regard to any personal interests including the personal interests of my spouse or other immediate family members; or the interests of any corporation, partnership, proprietorship, firm, association in which I have significant administrative responsibilities or in which I have any financial interest (or if a publicly traded company, an ownership interest of at least 5%) as a shareholder, partner, owner or otherwise; nor will I allow any such interest to influence a decision regarding the governance or administration of DVCAC.

All acts shall be undertaken for the benefit of DVCAC with respect to transactions, activities, or dealings related to DVCAC.

With respect to any proposed contract or other transaction between DVCAC and myself or any party in which I have an interest (as stated above) considered by the Board of

Directors, the officers, or any committee of DVCAC for authorization, approval, or ratification, the following rules shall apply:

- a. Full disclosure of the relationship or interest shall be made to the Chair of the DVCAC Board of Directors and CEO prior to discussion or action on such contract or transaction;
 - b. I will present factual information and respond to questions, but will not participate in the discussion, deliberations, or DVCAC decision with respect to such contract or transaction, nor attempt to use any personal influence;
 - c. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the disclosure made, the vote taken and, where applicable, my abstention from voting and participating.
 - d. All known conflicts where there has not been full disclosure to all appropriate parties are attached to this form.
 - e. I will safeguard sensitive DVCAC information, which includes but is not limited to: strategies, policies, or confidential information relating to programs, projects, research, customers or client information; information from other organizations that is not to be disseminated; and fiscal, salary, or other personal and personnel information.
2. Program Services:
- Volunteers and employees may not refer DVCAC clients to their own private practice in the following circumstances:
- a. The client is receiving services from DVCAC or has received services within the last 12 months.
 - b. DVCAC provides the services.

Employees and volunteers may be on a referral list for services not provided by DVCAC (i.e., attorney list). It is understood that employees or volunteers will not solicit, recruit, or refer DVCAC clients to their own practices or businesses. No employee or volunteer will be permitted to accept payment or pay for referrals in any situation with regard to DVCAC.

Code of Conduct

All DVCAC employees, contractors, students, volunteers (collectively referred to as “staff”), and members of the Board of Directors are expected to perform their designated functions in a manner that reflects the highest standards of ethical behavior. The ethical standards contained in this policy shape the culture and norms of DVCAC’s administrative operations and service provision, and both staff and members of the Board of Directors will be held fully accountable to these standards. In addition to the specific guidelines contained in the policy, professionals are expected to follow the ethical standards required by their specific licensing and certification boards.

The Code of Conduct Policy is to ensure that all actions by staff reflect a competent, respectful, and professional approach when serving clients, their families and/or representatives, working with other providers of services, and interacting within the communities we serve. It is expected that staff and members of the Board will perform their duties in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations and policies and procedures that are pertinent to their position or that apply to DVCAC operations. Staff must avoid actions that are, or might be seen as, violations of laws and regulations, including violating the rights of fellow employees, clients, volunteers, and anyone else doing business with DVCAC.

This Code is intended to reinforce DVCAC's commitment to ethical and lawful behavior. These standards summarize the principles that are to guide daily actions; however, they do not address every situation that may be encountered. When situations not specifically covered by this code occur, staff should discuss these with their supervisors. Ultimately, each person is accountable for their own behavior and is responsible for reviewing and following DVCAC policy and procedures.

DVCAC will take disciplinary action, up to and including termination, against staff who violate this policy. Disciplinary action may also be taken against any individual who retaliates against another for reporting, in good faith, a possible violation. Disciplinary action may be taken against any employee who fails to report a violation or illegal act about which they have information.

Staff must sign an acknowledgment stating that they have read and will comply with the Code of Conduct. Such acknowledgment will be part of the initial orientation and annually thereafter.

Questions regarding the Code of Conduct may be brought to the appropriate supervisor or the Corporate Compliance Officer.

Procedures:

A. Ethical codes regarding:

1. Business: DVCAC will utilize the Corporate Compliance Officer to ensure that it conducts business in an ethical manner and to ensure that any business practices that are questionable are thoroughly investigated. All financial, purchasing, personnel, facility development, and information technology practices shall comply with local, state, and federal law and guidelines. All employees shall adhere to DVCAC's personnel policies and procedures.
2. Marketing: DVCAC will conduct marketing practices in an honest and factual manner. Marketing materials and practices will in no way mislead the public or misrepresent DVCAC's abilities to provide services. DVCAC will not claim any service outcomes unless represented by valid and reliable outcome data and/or research studies. DVCAC will utilize clear and consistent methods of communicating information to clients, family members, third-party entities, referral sources, funding sources, and community

members, and will exhibit sensitivity to the educational and reading levels of all persons when distributing information.

3. **Contractual Relationships:** Vendors who contract to provide goods and services to the organization will be selected on the basis of quality, cost-effectiveness, and appropriateness for the identified task or need, in accordance with DVCAC policy. All employees and volunteers must conduct DVCAC business activities based on fair practices and maintain impartial relationships with actual or potential vendors, contractors, and others who do business with DVCAC. Employees and volunteers should not accept gifts, loans, entertainment, or anything else of value from a person or organization that does business with DVCAC, nor should offers of such incentives be made to others in return for referrals of clients or business.
4. **Conflicts of Interest:** All DVCAC employees shall conduct professional and personal business in a manner that avoids potential or actual conflicts of interests in compliance with DVCAC's Conflict of Interest Policy. Employees shall not use their official positions to influence an organizational decision in which they know, or have reason to know, that they have a financial interest. Employees must be knowledgeable about activities that may be an actual or potential conflict of interest.
5. **Use of Social Media:** All employees are required to adhere to DVCAC's Social Media Policy.
6. **Service Delivery:**
 - a. **Exchange of:**
 - i. **Gifts:** Staff are not permitted to accept gifts of value from a client, family member, or stakeholder. Gifts of value may be accepted as a donation to the agency or returned.
 - ii. **Money:** DVCAC will not utilize monetary rewards or gifts to any potential client in an attempt to entice them to enter programs.
 - iii. **Gratuities/Perks:** Staff are not permitted to accept personal favors or benefits that may reasonably be construed as influencing their conduct.
 - b. **Personal Fundraising:** Staff are not permitted to solicit clients for a personal or community cause or for political fundraising.
 - c. **Personal Property:** Staff will not misappropriate or take, borrow, or remove, agency or personal property not belonging to them without permission of the property owner.
 - d. **Setting Boundaries:** All prior personal relationships between staff and clients entering the organization's programs shall be disclosed by the staff member and subject to review by the appropriate supervisor. Staff will limit relationships with clients to their defined professional roles. Staff will not establish ongoing personal or business relationships with clients receiving services. Sexual relationships between staff and clients are never appropriate. Sexual relationships include, but are not limited to the following: engaging in any type of sexual activity, flirting, advances and/or propositions of a sexual nature, comments of a sexual nature about an individual's body, clothing, or lewd sexually suggestive comments.

- e. Witnessing of Legal Documents: Staff involved with a client's clinical care will not serve as a witness of any document for that client.
7. Professional Responsibilities: Staff must conduct themselves in a professional, ethical, and moral manner. Staff will adhere to all professional codes of conduct and ethical standards for their specified professional discipline.
 - Staff must be committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment.
 - Staff are expected to demonstrate honesty, integrity, and respectful behavior towards fellow employees, volunteers, contractors, and clients.
 - Staff will carefully consider the public perception of their personal and professional actions, and the effect their actions could have, positively or negatively, on DVCAC's reputation in the community and elsewhere.
 - Staff will strive for personal and professional growth to improve their effectiveness as employees or volunteers of DVCAC.
 8. Human Resources: DVCAC prohibits discrimination in any work related decision on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, physical or mental disability, ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or status as a covered veteran. The organization is committed to providing equal employment opportunity in a work environment where each employee is treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. DVCAC will make reasonable accommodations for known physical and mental limitations of otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities. DVCAC does not tolerate harassment or discrimination by anyone based on the diverse characteristics or cultural backgrounds of those who work for the organization in accordance with DVCAC's Affirmative Action policy. Additionally, any form of sexual harassment or workplace violence is prohibited.
 9. Prohibition of:
 - a. Waste: Government payers shall not be charged in excess of the provider's usual charges.
 - b. Fraud: DVCAC's employees involved in coding, billing, documentation, and accounting for client care services for the purpose of governmental, private, or individual payers will comply with all applicable state and federal regulations and organizational policies and procedures. DVCAC will only bill for services rendered and shall seek the amount to which it is entitled. Supporting clinical documentation will be prepared for all services rendered. If the appropriate and required documentation has not been provided, then the service has not been rendered. All services must be accurately and completely coded and submitted to the appropriate payer in accordance with applicable regulations, laws, contracts, and organizational policies and procedures. Federal and state regulations take precedence, and organizational policies and procedures must reflect those regulations. Clients shall be consistently and uniformly charged. Government payers shall not be charged in excess of the provider's usual charges. Billing and collections will be recorded in the appropriated accounts. An accurate and timely billing structure and medical records system will ensure that DVCAC effectively implements and complies with required policies and procedures. DVCAC will ensure that all preparation and cost reports submitted

to governmental and private organizations are properly prepared and documented according to all applicable federal and state laws. All cost reports will be submitted and prepared with all costs properly classified, allocated to the correct cost centers, and supported by verifiable and auditable cost data. All cost report preparation or submission errors and mistakes will be corrected in a timely manner and, if necessary, clarify procedures and educate employees to prevent or minimize recurrence of those errors.

- c. Abuse: Clients shall be consistently and uniformly charged.
 - d. Other Wrongdoing: The following violations of the Code of Conduct will result in termination of employment: theft of funds, and/or physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of a client or employee.
10. Respect for Clients: All employees and volunteers are expected to deliver the highest quality care to clients while protecting their rights to dignity, privacy and respect.
- a. Staff will not practice or condone any form of discrimination or harassment against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, military status, national origin, disability, age, or ancestry of any person.
 - b. Staff will provide clients with available information regarding their services, and will use reasonable care to see that clients are informed of their rights and choices regarding services.
 - c. Staff will involve clients and family members, when appropriate, in the development of their treatment plans.
 - d. Staff will provide respectful services with recognition of the client's spiritual, cultural values, and belief systems.
 - e. Staff have a moral, professional, and legal obligation to protect the confidentiality of client information, including information contained in medical records.
 - f. All employees and volunteers must respect the privacy of clients and their families and comply with all of the confidentiality rules. In order to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of our clients, DVCAC has developed policies and procedures to follow regarding privacy of medical information. These policies and procedures are written in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
 - g. Employees and volunteers should never discuss client information outside the normal course of DVCAC business.
 - h. Access to client records is limited to staff who are providing services to those clients or otherwise have the authority or specific permission to access those records.
 - i. All clients are entitled to equal access to services that DVCAC provides based on their varied physical health, mental health, and social service needs and are to be treated with care and respect.
11. Maintenance of Accurate Records and Documents: All financial matters shall be conducted within the standards of commonly accepted, sound financial

management practices. All financial practices of DVCAC shall be handled in accordance with the applicable federal, state, and local laws. Employees and volunteers will ensure that DVCAC records, documents, and reports are accurate and complete. These must comply with the procedures of the organization and all government requirements.

- a. All invoices for services must be based on services actually provided, and timely supporting documentation must be kept.
- b. Staff are expected to honestly report and account for their work time, travel, and entertainment expenses and mileage.
- c. Staff are expected to accurately report time worked as scheduled and documented on the appropriate form.

12. Supervisors: All supervisors will be fair, consistent, and respectful in carrying out their supervisory responsibilities.

- a. All supervisors are required to approve time sheets and time off requests verifying the validity of the information on the form(s).
- b. All supervisors will take responsibility for their actions and demonstrate positive collaboration and teamwork in carrying out their responsibilities.
- c. All supervisors are expected to act as a model to employees with regard to professional behaviors.
- d. To the greatest extent possible, all supervisors will involve an employee in decisions that impact them and will strive to be positive and constructive in their communications.

13. Board of Directors: Board members will do their best to see that DVCAC is operated in a manner that upholds the agency's integrity and merits the trust and support of the public.

- a. Board members will uphold all applicable laws and regulations to protect and/or enhance DVCAC's ability to accomplish its mission.
- b. Board members will be responsible stewards of DVCAC's resources.
- c. Board members will take no actions that could benefit them personally at the unwarranted expense of DVCAC, avoiding even the perception of a conflict of interest.
- d. Board members will carefully consider the public perception of their personal and professional actions, and the effect their actions could have, positively or negatively, on DVCAC's reputation in the community and elsewhere.
- e. Board members will strive for personal and professional growth to improve their effectiveness as board members of DVCAC.
- f. Board members will refrain from unwarranted intrusion into the responsibilities of DVCAC's operational management.

14. Safeguarding and Conserving System Resources

- a. All employees and volunteers are required to retain and dispose of business documents and records in accordance with applicable record retention laws, policies, and CARF standards.
- b. All staff are expected to follow agency IT policies.

- c. All staff are expected to make every effort to responsibly utilize agency materials and resources.
- B. Procedures for allegations of violations of ethical codes
 1. A no-reprisal approach for personnel reporting: DVCAC believes in the importance of ethical practices within the organization. Any employee who reports, in good faith, waste, fraud, abuse, illegal action, violation of law or the Code of Conduct, or any other questionable practice(s), will not be subject to reprisal by leadership of DVCAC. To assure that reprisal is not used, DVCAC's governance authority will serve as advocates for any employee who reports questionable practices. The Corporate Compliance Officer will provide assurance and oversight that there are no adverse actions toward the employee.
 2. Timeframes that:
 - a. Are adequate for prompt consideration:
 - When any client, family member, authorized representative, advocate, or other person believes that an ethical violation has occurred within the operations of DVCAC, they may report such suspicion directly to any employee or leadership staff.
 - When employees believe a violation of the Code of Conduct has occurred, they are obligated to report the violation in one of the following ways: Immediate notification of the incident or violation through the corporate compliance program, CEO, member of the Leadership Team, or their supervisor.
 - Supervisors who have been informed of a suspected violation are required to immediately inform the Corporate Compliance Officer of the suspected violation. If the violation involves a direct and immediate threat to the safety of a client, staff member, or visitor, employees are obligated to report the alleged violation immediately to their supervisor.
 - Staff is required to report any suspected violation of the Code of Conduct; however, they are not required to investigate or know for certain that a violation has occurred. Once the questionable behavior has been brought to the attention of the supervisor or reported, staff reporting the situation will no longer have a responsibility for being involved with the investigation other than providing additional information through a requested interview by the investigator.
 - Staff must report each suspected violation of the Code of Conduct separately, should a violation that has been reported occur again.
 - When any suspected violation of the Code of Conduct is reported, the Corporate Compliance Officer will begin an investigation of the matter immediately. Code of Conduct investigations will follow the guidelines outlined in DVCAC's Corporate Compliance Policy and Procedure.
 - b. Result in timely decisions: All allegations of violations of ethical codes are to be reported to the Corporate Compliance Officer immediately. This report can be

made to the Corporate Compliance Officer from the staff that witnessed or heard of the allegation, or said staff person's supervisor.

- c. Education of stakeholders on ethical codes of conduct: The Code of Conduct is shared with clients during client orientation and is posted throughout public areas in all owned, leased, or rented facilities.
- d. Advocacy Efforts for Clients: While investigating the complaint, the following issues should be considered and action taken depending on the situation: Is any client in any harm or potential harm because of this behavior? Does the complaint require immediate action to remove the employee from contact with a client?
- e. Corporate Citizenship: DVCAC recognizes that it has a social, cultural, and environmental responsibility to the community we serve. DVCAC will take into consideration the impact of organizational activities on clients, staff, other stakeholders, and the environment and will make every effort to be effective and efficient in our service and administrative practices.

Abuse & Neglect Reporting

DVCAC employees and volunteers, in the course of their professional responsibilities, have an ethical and legal obligation to protect individuals, families, and youth by reporting suspected physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation, or neglect of youth, individuals with disabilities, or elderly adults. Employees and volunteers with DVCAC are mandated reporters, as listed in Ohio Revised Codes (2151.421, 5101.60, 5101.71, and 5123.61) as being "...employed by a private children services agency" and/or a "...person engaged in social work". Social Work is defined as work carried out by trained personnel with the aim of alleviating the conditions of those in need of help or welfare. All licensed employees/volunteers of DVCAC are automatically mandated reporters by virtue of their licensure and code of ethics.

This policy summarizes the principles that are to guide daily actions; however, they do not address every situation that may be encountered. When situations not specifically covered by this policy occur, employees and volunteers should discuss these with their supervisors. Ultimately, each employee and volunteer is accountable for their own behavior and are responsible for reviewing and following DVCAC's policies and procedures.

Procedure

Any employee or volunteer receiving information in person or via phone who has reason to believe that any of the persons listed below are being or have been abused or neglected, is required to file an abuse report with either: Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS) by calling (216) 696-KIDS; Adult Protective Services by calling (216) 420-6700; or Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (ODOD) by calling (440) 333-MUI1, (referred to as "agency"). All reports must be made in good faith.

The following persons may be reported under this policy:

- A child under age 18 years;
- A developmentally disabled or physically impaired youth under age 21 years;
- A person aged 60 years or older, who is mentally or physically impaired;
- A developmentally disabled adult.

The following steps must be taken to report abuse and/or neglect:

1. At the onset of services or during a client's initial contact, DVCAC employees or volunteers must inform clients orally and/or in writing of their mandated reporting duty to report abuse and/or neglect to the appropriate agency.
2. The employee or volunteer that suspects abuse and/or neglect must make a report to the appropriate agency within twenty-four (24) hours in consultation with their supervisor. All agencies accept anonymous reports if the situation calls for this; all instances must be discussed with a supervisor prior to making an anonymous report.
3. The local police must also be contacted when there is an imminent, life-threatening situation.
4. Information given to the agency should be the least amount possible. Safety for the family, victim/survivor, and the community must be first and foremost.
5. A Suspected Abuse or Neglect form must be completed within twenty-four (24) hours of the report and submitted to DVCAC's Client Rights Officer. The form must include date/time, list all persons involved, include the agency's case number, and to whom the report was made.
6. If the client has a clinical chart or services file, the report must be noted in this chart/file.
7. Depending upon the emotional and developmental maturity of the youth/adult/elder, the employee or volunteer may inform them that a report has been made, unless such information will jeopardize their safety or there is suspicion they will flee. This must be reviewed with a supervisor prior to any notification.
8. An investigation by an external agency should be initiated within 24-72 hours of the report. Employees and volunteers may follow-up with the agency to discuss the status of the abuse and/or neglect allegation.
9. Employees and volunteer must follow-up with the youth/adult/elder and their family after consultation with their supervisor.

Violence against Women Act stipulations

DVCAC receives Violence against Women Act (VAWA) funding for several of our programs. VAWA grantees and sub-grantees are prohibited from disclosing any personally identifying information unless compelled by statutory or court mandate. The most common statutorily mandated exception is the mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect, which is included in Ohio Revised Code. DVCAC employees and volunteers fall under this exception, however, as outlined in #4 above, the employee/volunteer should disclose the least amount of information needed to keep the youth, adult, or elder safe from harm.

Discipline for Violations

DVCAC employees must make all reports in good faith. DVCAC will take disciplinary action, up

to and including termination, against any employee/volunteer who violates the Abuse & Neglect Reporting policy. Disciplinary action may be taken with any employee who fails to report a violation or illegal act about which they have information.

Weapons

DVCAC prohibits the possession of any and all weapons by employees, volunteers, clients, or company contractors on agency property or anywhere agency business is conducted, including company events or contracted agency sites. Weapons include but are not limited to guns, knives, explosives, incendiary devices, and any chemical whose purpose is to harm another person. Regardless of whether an individual possesses a carrying concealed weapons (CCW) permit or is allowed by law to possess a weapon, weapons are prohibited on any company property or in any location in which the individual represents the company for business purposes, including those listed above.

1. CEO or designee may authorize possession of a weapon when this possession is determined necessary to secure the safety and security of the agency.
2. This policy excludes any on duty law enforcement officers, security officers, or service partners attending meetings/functions at our offices.
3. Further information regarding possession of a weapon within DVCAC's visitation center and Shelter can be found in visitation center and Shelter specific policies.
4. Employees and volunteers violating this policy will be immediately terminated. DVCAC volunteers, clients, company contractors, and visitors on company property found in violation of this policy will be expelled immediately from the premises and will be subject to criminal trespassing charges.
5. The CEO or designee should be immediately notified if policy violations are observed.

Domestic Violence

DVCAC is aware that its employees and volunteers can be victims of domestic violence. DVCAC is committed to creating a supportive workplace environment in which employees, interns, and volunteers feel safe and comfortable seeking assistance for domestic violence concerns.

Managers and supervisors shall be sensitive to and respectful of the needs, expectations, and choices of a person who is or may be a victim of domestic violence. All people must be treated with dignity, respect, and compassion and with sensitivity to age, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability while recognizing that domestic violence is unacceptable in any relationship.

The employee or volunteer involved may choose the workplace intervention on their behalf, unless safety measures are deemed necessary by the CEO to maintain the safety of employees, volunteers, clients, or visitors.

Procedures

1. If you suspect an employee or volunteer may be being abused:

- a. Regard the safety of the victim and their child(ren) as priority.
 - b. Let the person know what you have observed.
 - c. Express concern that they might be abused.
 - d. Make a statement of support.
 - e. It is important to understand that a person may not be ready to admit that they have been abused by a partner or family member and may choose not to discuss the topic. Co-workers should respect their decision, but should provide information about available resources.
 - f. Every attempt will be made to protect the privacy of the employee or volunteer. However, if you believe this situation compromises the safety of the workplace, it may be reported to the COO or CEO to implement a workplace intervention if deemed necessary.
2. Guidelines if an employee or volunteer self-discloses abuse:
- a. Communicate your concerns for their safety and safety of their family.
 - b. Avoid dictating the safety plan for the person.
 - c. Maintain your work relationship; not the role of counselor.
 - d. Encourage them to seek help through available resources.
 - e. Do not ignore the situation. A workplace intervention may be appropriate at the employee or volunteer's request or to respond to a threat to the workplace.
 - f. Every attempt will be made to protect the privacy of the employee or volunteer. However, let them know that in the case of a clear threat to the workplace, you, and anyone else who knows, are obliged to seek help, including reporting the situation to the COO or CEO.
3. Any employee or volunteer who is a victim of domestic violence and is being harassed or stalked while on the job by the perpetrator - whether by telephone, facsimile, e-mail, texts, visits to the workplace, or other means:
- a. Must immediately report the harassment or stalking to a supervisor, COO or CEO, who will then commence immediate appropriate action.
 - b. In cases of harassment in the workplace, stalking, or when there is any concern of the violence impacting the workplace, DVCAC will assess the safety risk and any/all of the following agency actions may be considered as a workplace intervention:
 - i. Providing a photograph of the perpetrator to appropriate employees.
 - ii. Requiring that access to the premises and individual work sites remain locked.
 - iii. Relocating the work site, if possible.
 - iv. Altering the work schedule or providing other flexibilities, if possible.
 - v. Limiting information about the individual that is disclosed.
 - vi. Providing time off as they may need to go to court, seek shelter, or connect with other resources.
 - vii. Obtaining a copy of any protection order that may be in effect.
 - viii. Providing a leave of absence.
 - ix. Determining safety measures for going to and from work and work functions.
 - x. Any other action that may be considered appropriate.

- c. Every attempt will be made to respect the privacy of the employee or volunteer. This includes providing information about the situation to coworkers on a need-to-know basis.
- 4. If any employee or volunteer becomes aware of domestic violence being perpetrated by any other employee or volunteer, the matter is to be reported immediately to a supervisor and/or the CEO or COO.
 - a. DVCAC has a zero tolerance policy towards perpetration of domestic violence.
 - b. If any employee or volunteer is charged with, or suspected of perpetrating domestic violence, they may be placed on a leave of absence without pay pending investigation. If the investigation deems appropriate, DVCAC will take disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
 - c. If any employee or volunteer perpetrates domestic violence in the workplace, e.g. by harassing a victim on DVCAC time or through the use of telephone, facsimile machine, or otherwise, DVCAC will take disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Non-Harassment

DVCAC maintains our commitment to our core values, including the safety of all individuals. DVCAC has zero tolerance for workplace violence of any kind. DVCAC prohibits harassment of any employee or volunteer by any other employee or volunteer. Harassment includes verbal, physical, emotional, sexual, visual, technological, and/or intimidation.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment, DVCAC will look at the totality of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. The determination of the appropriateness of a particular action will be made from the facts, on a case by case basis.

Any employee or volunteer who believes that they are being harassed should report the issue and can expect action will be taken. All such complaints will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate sanctions will be taken against any employee, volunteer, contractor, or client found to be at fault.

Smoking

DVCAC complies with the City of Cleveland ordinance and prohibits smoking in all our locations. Policies for smoking at off-site program locations are determined by the policies of the host organization and the laws of the jurisdiction. Designated smoking areas are located at the various working sites. Individuals are asked to use discretion at agency sponsored events and community meetings.

Drug-Free Workplace

DVCAC is committed to protecting the safety, health, and well-being of all employees and other individuals in our workplace. We recognize that alcohol abuse and drug abuse pose a significant threat to our goals. We will balance our respect for individuals with the need to maintain an

alcohol and drug-free environment. Any individual who conducts business for, is applying for a position, or is conducting business on the agency's property is covered by our drug-free workplace policy. Our policy includes, but is not limited to employees, volunteers, board members, interns, and contractors.

This policy is applicable whenever anyone is representing or conducting business for DVCAC. Therefore, this policy applies during all working hours, whenever representing the organization, while on organization property, and while attending agency- sponsored events in a professional capacity.

Procedures:

1. Drug Testing:

- a. Each employee, as a condition of employment, will be required to participate in pre-employment drug and alcohol testing.
- b. Additionally, each employee may be required to participate in drug and alcohol testing post-accident, after a reasonable suspicion, or as follow-up testing upon selection or request of leadership. All tests will be conducted through urine samples and breath analysis unless another appropriate method is necessary.
- c. To ensure the accuracy and fairness of our testing program, all drug and alcohol testing will be conducted by an outside organization.
- d. Individuals with a positive test have the right to have their positive result reviewed with the opportunity to provide a legitimate medical explanation, such as a physician's prescription, for the positive result. Individuals should provide in writing the necessary documentation for the legitimate medical use of a substance. Upon satisfactory showing of a legitimate medical use, the employee will be allowed to return to work or the applicant's offer of employment will be reinstated. However, if a satisfactory showing is not made, the consequences of a positive result will stand.
- e. One of the goals of our drug-free workplace policy is to encourage employees to voluntarily seek help with alcohol and/or drug problems. If, however, an individual violates the policy, the consequences may be serious; they may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

2. Prohibited Behavior:

- a. It is a violation of our drug-free workplace policy to use, possess, sell, trade, and/or offer for sale alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, and/or intoxicants.
- b. Prescription and over-the-counter drugs are permitted when taken in standard dosage and/or according to a physician's prescription. Any employee or volunteer taking prescribed or over-the-counter medications will be responsible for consulting the prescribing physician and/or pharmacist to ascertain whether the medication may interfere with safe performance of their job. If the use of the medication could compromise the safety of the individual or others, it is their responsibility to use appropriate personnel procedures (i.e., call in sick, notify supervisor) to avoid unsafe workplace practices.

- c. The illegal or unauthorized use of prescription drugs is prohibited. It is a violation of this policy to intentionally misuse, illegally distribute, and/or abuse prescription medications.
 - d. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken if an employee or volunteer presents under the influence at work, and/or job performance deterioration, and/or other accidents occur.
3. Assistance:
- a. DVCAC recognizes that substance use disorders and addictions are treatable illnesses. We also realize that early intervention and support improve the success of rehabilitation. We encourage employees and volunteers to voluntarily seek help with drug and alcohol problems. In support of employees and volunteers, we encourage them to seek help if they are concerned that they or their family members may have a substance use disorder and to utilize the services of qualified individuals within the community to assess the seriousness of the suspected problem and to identify appropriate sources of help. DVCAC will make available a list of resources and qualified professionals within the community that may be utilized to assist with any suspected substance use disorder.
 - b. DVCAC will provide all necessary leave to address the problem, as required by the Family Medical Leave Act, if the employee is eligible. The employee can utilize their available paid time off or choose to take an unpaid leave. All leave will be handled under DVCAC's leave policy and all applicable state and federal laws.
 - c. All information received by DVCAC through the drug-free workplace policy is considered confidential communication. Access to this information is limited to those individuals who have a legitimate need to know in compliance with applicable laws and management policies.
4. Communication and Training:
- a. Communicating our drug-free workplace policy to supervisors, employees, and volunteers is critical to our success. To ensure all employees and volunteers are aware of their role in supporting our policy, a written copy of this policy will be provided. All new employees and volunteers will receive a copy of the policy as well as a review of the policy during orientation sessions.
 - b. This policy will be reviewed annually during an appropriate employee training. Along with the policy, each employee will receive education about the dangers of alcohol and drug use and the availability of help. Supervisors will receive this training, as well as training to help them recognize and manage employees with alcohol and/or drug problems.

Attire

DVCAC provides services to individuals and families in our community and it is important that a professional, responsible image be projected by agency employees and volunteers. All DVCAC employees and volunteers are expected to exercise good judgment in selecting a wardrobe that reflects the high quality of services provided. In considering wardrobe, individuals should be mindful and respectful that DVCAC works with children and adults who have been exposed to

trauma. Supervisors have discretion to send an employee or volunteer home to change if their attire is considered inappropriate for our work setting.

Transportation

In order to protect our clients, staff, and DVCAC, it is the policy of the agency that no employee or volunteer shall transport a client in their personal vehicle. Employees and volunteers are prohibited from driving a vehicle belonging to a client or a relative of a client. Employees or volunteers using their personal vehicles for work related activities must have a current and valid driver's license and liability insurance. Employees and volunteers are prohibited from using electronic devices while driving (i.e. texting and driving) with the exception of the use of hands-free technology.

Procedure:

1. In cases of emergencies, transportation assistance can be provided to clients based upon funding availability, including bus tickets, taxi vouchers, Uber, etc.
2. Employees must make these arrangements through their supervisor or COO.
3. Company vehicles are for the use of transporting Shelter clients and children, when accompanied by a parent. Vehicles may also be used for transportation of non-shelter clients, in coordination with Shelter leadership.
4. Employees and volunteers may be required to provide documentation to DVCAC of their current liability insurance and valid driver's license. Employees and volunteers must report any changes to the agency or designee immediately.
5. Employees and volunteers must immediately report any vehicular accident that has occurred while conducting agency business to their supervisor and complete, in conjunction with their supervisor, an incident report within twenty four (24) hours.
 - a. Employees and volunteers may be asked to complete drug and/or alcohol testing immediately following an accident. Failure to comply with testing may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
 - b. A police report must be filed for all accidents.

Language & Communication Access

DVCAC is committed to providing meaningful access and effective communication for all individuals seeking agency services. This affords all individuals the ability to receive equal services and information and is a critical function of ensuring safety for all survivors.

DVCAC's goal is to provide the same high quality service to all individuals, regardless of their language and communication abilities. To achieve this, DVCAC has developed this plan to provide meaningful access through bilingual advocates, language assistance services, and/or auxiliary aids and services which will be provided by DVCAC at no charge when needed or when requested.

Purpose & Authority

This policy is in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This policy establishes guidelines for providing language and communication accessible services to individuals that are Limited English Proficient (LEP) and/or individuals who have vision, hearing, or speech disabilities.

Definitions

- Limited English Proficient (LEP): any individual whose primary language is not English and has limited or no ability to speak, understand, read, or write English.
- Primary language: the language that an individual communicates most effectively in.
- Interpretation: process of orally rendering a spoken or signed communication from one language into another language.
- Translation: converting written text from one language into written text in another language.
- Sight translation: rendering of written material in one language completely and accurately into spoken or signed communication in another language.
- Qualified interpreter or translator: a trained professional who can interpret/translate effectively, accurately, and impartially and adhere to ethical standards.
- Bilingual services: Bilingual staff communicating with clients fluently in a foreign language in the course of performing their professional duties.
- Vital documents: any materials that are essential to an individual's ability to access services provided by the organization or required by law.
- Plain language: a clear and succinct way of writing designed to ensure that the average reader understands the material quickly and completely.

A. Procedures

1. Identify service request at first point of contact.
2. Determine preferred language and/or auxiliary aids or services needed by using the questions included on the intake form.
 - a. "I Speak" cards are available to assist staff in language identification.
 - b. The client will be notified of their right to language assistance services or auxiliary aids and services at no cost to them.
3. Staff will arrange for requested language assistance services or auxiliary aids and services that facilitate service.
 - a. All reasonable requests will be honored.
 - b. Primary consideration will be given to the aid or service requested by the client
 - c. If requested aids or services will cause "undue hardship" or are not considered reasonable, staff will explore alternative options with the client.
 - d. For scheduled appointments and classes, requests will be responded to within two (2) business days.
 - e. For immediate communication needs, such as walk-ins or phone calls, staff will utilize Language Line or VRI services.

4. Questions regarding language assistance or auxiliary aids and services can be directed to immediate supervisor.
5. DVCAC assumes the cost of reasonable aids or services for agency activities or service provision.
6. Staff must inform immediate supervisor and finance of requested aids or services by completing a disbursement request.
7. Staff will document both request for language assistance or auxiliary aid or service as well as outcome of request in the client record.
8. DVCAC encourages the use of qualified interpreters and will not use family members to interpret. Staff are prohibited from using minor children to interpret, outside of emergency situations.
 - a. At the beginning of service, interpreters hired by DVCAC must sign a confidentiality form.
 - b. If an interpreter is unavailable (an attempt to schedule a professional interpreter was made but there is not an interpreter in the community that speaks a specific language) a friend or family member may be used. Prior to interpreting, this person must review and understand the interpreter code of ethics and also sign the confidentiality form.
9. DVCAC staff must inform clients of their right to effective communication for all court proceedings.
10. Staff will continue to assess for the need for language assistance and/or auxiliary aids or services and respond to all requests throughout the time the client is receiving services.
11. For Shelter clients:
 - a. Upon admission, an attempt to secure a live interpreter must take place immediately. If a live interpreter is not available, off-site interpreting services such as Video Remote Interpreting or the Language Line will be used.
 - b. A communication plan will be discussed with clients within 24-hours of admission.
 - c. Staff and volunteers will be trained on assistive devices available to be used in the Shelter setting.
 - i. Each device is available for use by any client who may need them.
 - ii. A sign-in, sign-out form will be used when devices are used by clients, staff, or volunteers.

B. Resources

1. Bilingual/multilingual staff: DVCAC strives to hire bilingual/bicultural staff members whenever possible to work directly with individuals with Limited English Proficiency.
 - a. Bilingual staff provide bilingual services.
 - b. DVCAC should not rely on bilingual staff to provide interpretation services.
 - i. For all internal language access needs, DVCAC will use qualified, professional interpreters and translators (in-person or via the phone).

- ii. If a bilingual staff member is asked to interpret outside of DVCAC during the course of performing their professional duties, bilingual staff are encouraged to decline and should advocate for a qualified, professional interpreter.
 - c. If it is in the interest of a client's immediate safety AND a qualified interpreter is not available in person or via the telephone, an advocate may step in to interpret if they feel it is appropriate. Examples: Emergencies (safety or medical), walk-in clients, etc.
- 2. Video Remote Interpreting (VRI): VRI is available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week to assist DVCAC staff in effectively communicating with Deaf individuals. VRI provides on-demand sign language interpreting service delivered over a live Internet video connection on a tablet device. This provides the services of a qualified interpreter who is located off-site at a call center. VRI is used when live/on-site sign language interpreting services are not immediately available. VRI allows individuals/clients to communicate in sign language thereby removing linguistic and cultural barriers, providing more equitable access.
 - a. DVCAC maintains three (3) tablets with VRI capability (also referred to as "devices"):
 - One (1) at the Community Services Building
 - One (1) at Shelter
 - One (1) at Safe & Sound Supervised Visitation Center
 - VRI is also currently available at the Cuyahoga County Family Justice Center
 - b. Procedures for VRI use:
 - i. VRI may be used in any situation in order to take immediate action.
 - ii. VRI should not be used if the situation requires a lengthy or complicated interaction. If the interaction will be lengthy or complicated, the VRI can be used to schedule a follow-up appointment when a live/on-site interpreter can be present.
 - iii. VRI must not be used in place of a live/on-site interpreter for provision of service. In the event that a Deaf client requests a live/on-site interpreter, staff shall provide one for them.
 - iv. Once it is determined that VRI is appropriate, staff should locate the device closest to their respective location.
 - v. Staff will document the use of the VRI by filling out the log included with the device.
 - vi. Staff must facilitate effective communication when using the device by:
 - 1. Ensuring the Deaf individual and the VRI interpreter have constant eye contact and are able to see each other's signs at all times.

2. Placing the device in a location that encourages effective communication and eliminates possible distractions such as:
 - a. Lighting that may cause a reflection or reduce the ability to see the device.
 - b. Background noise and activities that could be distracting.
 - c. Other individuals that may influence the communication between the Deaf individual, interpreter, and staff person.
 - vii. Staff must inform their supervisor of any issues they encounter while using the device or if the device is not in working order.
 - viii. Staff must inform their supervisor and complete an internal incident report if the device is lost, stolen, or damaged.
 - ix. Supervisors shall ensure their staff are adequately trained on how to use the device.
 - x. The manual for how to use the device shall remain with the device at all times.
3. Documents and Materials: DVCAC will develop and secure sustainable language resources as needed in both oral and written form so that no individual will be denied access to information or services.
 - a. DVCAC is committed to presenting information using plain language/plain English whenever possible.
 - b. DVCAC will make available vital forms and materials in the most frequently encountered language(s). These languages will be determined on an on-going basis by evaluating staff experience with LEP clients, community partnerships, and the top languages present in Cuyahoga County.
 - i. DVCAC will use qualified translators to translate forms and materials.
 - ii. For forms or materials that are needed by a client but not translated into their primary language, staff should use an interpreter to sight translate the document.
 - c. DVCAC will maintain a resource and referral guide for racially and ethnically diverse communities.
 - d. Agency staff will have access to “I Speak” cards in the languages most prevalent in the community to assist in language identification.
4. Notice of Language Services
 - a. Signage will be placed in visible locations notifying individuals of the right to request an interpreter or auxiliary aids and services at no cost to them.
 - b. DVCAC’s website will include information regarding language access services available.
 - c. DVCAC staff and volunteers will inform members of the public that language assistance services and/or auxiliary aids are available and provided free of charge.

5. Interpreters and translators

- a. Professional, qualified interpreters and translators will be used for all agency services when requested by clients or staff.
- b. Staff are prohibited from using minor children to interpret, outside of emergency situations.
- c. Interpreters and translators are expected to uphold a professional code of ethics in all interactions with DVCAC or DVCAC clients. Issues with interpreters should be reported immediately by staff to their supervisor.
- d. Interpreters must sign a confidentiality form when working with DVCAC staff and clients.

C. Grievance Process

A complaint regarding the denial of language accessible services or auxiliary aids and services or quality of language accessible services or effective communication can be made in accordance with the DVCAC Client Rights and Grievance policy. This document is provided to all clients at the first face-to-face contact or upon request. This document is available in English and Spanish.

Client Rights & Grievances

DVCAC strives to provide high quality services for clients in our community. DVCAC upholds the rights of clients as established by Ohio Administrative Code 5122-26-18 and will inform clients of these rights.

Client Rights:

1. The right to be treated with consideration and respect for personal dignity, autonomy and privacy;
2. The right to reasonable protection from physical, sexual or emotional abuse and inhumane treatment;
3. The right to receive services in the least restrictive, feasible environment;
4. The right to participate in any appropriate and available service that is consistent with an individual service plan (ISP), regardless of the refusal of any other service, unless that service is a necessity for clear treatment reasons and requires the person's participation;
5. The right to give informed consent to or to refuse any service, treatment or therapy, including medication absent an emergency;
6. The right to participate in the development, review and revision of one's own individualized treatment plan and receive a copy of it;
7. The right to freedom from unnecessary or excessive medication, and to be free from restraint or seclusion unless there is immediate risk of physical harm to self or others;
8. The right to be informed and the right to refuse any unusual or hazardous treatment procedures;

9. The right to be advised and the right to refuse observation by others and by techniques such as one-way vision mirrors, tape recorders, video recorders, television, movies, photographs or other audio and visual technology. This right does not prohibit an agency from using closed-circuit monitoring to observe seclusion rooms or common areas, which does not include bathrooms or sleeping areas;
10. The right to confidentiality of communications and personal identifying information within the limitations and requirements for disclosure of client information under state and federal laws and regulations;
11. The right to have access to one's own client record unless access to certain information is restricted for clear treatment reasons. If access is restricted, the treatment plan shall include the reason for the restriction, a goal to remove the restriction, and the treatment being offered to remove the restriction;
12. The right to be informed a reasonable amount of time in advance of the reason for terminating participation in a service, and to be provided a referral, unless the service is unavailable or not necessary;
13. The right to be informed of the reason for denial of a service;
14. The right not to be discriminated against for receiving services on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, color, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, physical or mental handicap, developmental disability, genetic information, human immunodeficiency virus status, or in any manner prohibited by local, state or federal laws;
15. The right to know the cost of services;
16. The right to be verbally informed of all client rights, and to receive a written copy upon request;
17. The right to exercise one's own rights without reprisal, except that no right extends so far as to supersede health and safety considerations;
18. The right to file a grievance;
19. The right to have oral and written instructions concerning the procedure for filing a grievance, and to assistance in filing a grievance if requested;
20. The right to be informed of one's own condition; and,
21. The right to consult with an independent treatment specialist or legal counsel at one's own expense.

Clients who believe that their rights have been violated or who are dissatisfied with any service, situation, or provider at DVCAC, may file a complaint or grievance within a reasonable amount of time with the Client Rights Officer (CRO). It is the responsibility of the CRO to accept and oversee the process of any filed grievance. A client's decision to file a complaint or grievance will not result in retaliation or barriers to service.

Client Rights Officer:
Britany King, LPC
Helpline Coordinator
Community Services Building

Alternate Client Rights Officer:
Molly Kaplan, MPH
DV High Risk Team Coordinator
Community Services Building

Hours of Availability: 8:45am –
4:45pm
Telephone: 216-229-2420 ext. 209

Hours of Availability: 9:00am –
5:00pm
Telephone: 216-229-2420 ext. 228

All staff, volunteers, and interns must follow the Client Rights & Grievance Policy and will sign an acknowledgment stating they have received a copy and agree to abide by it. This will be completed as part of the initial employee orientation.

A. Client Rights Procedure

1. The Client Rights & Grievance Policy will be posted at all DVCAC sites in a conspicuous place that is accessible to clients and the public.
2. Client Rights brochures will be available at each site and clients will be given the brochure at intake and upon request.
3. Staff will explain and maintain documentation of explanation of rights prior to or when beginning assessment or treatment services. In a crisis or emergency situation, or when the client does not present in-person, staff may verbally advise the client of at least the immediately pertinent rights; full explanation will then be provided at the first subsequent meeting.
4. Clients may have a copy and explanation of the Client Rights & Grievance Policy upon request.

B. Complaint/Grievance Procedure

Definitions:

- Complaint: a concern raised by an individual that does not violate their rights.
- Grievance: a written (signed) complaint of a violation, denial, or abuse of any of the client rights as outlined above.

Actions:

1. Clients are encouraged to discuss any concerns they have with a staff person responsible for the program in which the issue occurred. Staff, in consultation with their supervisor, will attempt to resolve the issue.
 - a. Attempts will be made to resolve the issue at the lowest level first.
 - b. Staff must advise clients or any person with a concern, the right to file a complaint or grievance and the name and availability of the CRO.
2. If this process does not produce an acceptable resolution, or if the client so chooses, a complaint or grievance may be filed with the CRO.
 - a. Complaints or grievances can be filed within a reasonable period of time from the date the issue occurred.
 - b. The grievance procedure will be posted at all DVCAC sites in a conspicuous place that is accessible to clients and the public and written copies will be distributed upon request.

3. If the CRO is the subject of the complaint/grievance, the alternate CRO will process it.
4. The CRO will track all complaints and grievances they receive in a spreadsheet on the private Incident Reports drive.
5. Complaint and grievance information will not be kept with a client's file.
6. Any client wishing to file a grievance will have the option to have an appointment with the CRO within two (2) business days of the request. If the CRO is not available, the alternate CRO will be available to hear the grievance.
7. A grievance must be put into writing and given to the CRO.
 - a. The grievance can be made verbally and the CRO will be responsible for preparing a written text of the grievance.
 - b. The written grievance must be dated and signed by the client, individual filing the grievance on behalf of the client, or have an attestation by the CRO that the written grievance is a true and accurate representation of the client's grievance.
 - c. The CRO will assist the client with filing a grievance if needed.
8. The grievance must include, if available, the date, approximate time, description of the incident, and names of individuals involved. It is the responsibility of the client to provide information that is accurate, complete, and recollected in good faith.
9. A written acknowledgment of receipt of the grievance must be provided to the grievant within three (3) business days from the receipt of the grievance. This must include:
 - Date the grievance was received
 - Summary of grievance
 - Overview of investigation process
 - Timetable for completion of investigation and notification of resolution
 - Treatment provider contact name, address, and telephone number
10. The client may have outside representation during the grievance process and may bring another person of their choosing into the process at any time.
11. The CRO will investigate on behalf of the grievant and, if desired by the grievant, represent the griever at an agency hearing.
12. The CRO will take all necessary steps to assure compliance with the grievance procedure.
13. The CRO will respond to the grievant in writing (via certified mail, if safe) and explain the findings of the investigation and the resolution/remedy of the grievance.
 - a. The resolution must be made within twenty (20) business days from the receipt of the grievance.
 - b. Any extenuating circumstances that extend the time period beyond twenty-one (21) days must be documented in the grievance file and written notification given to the grievant.
14. If the grievant does not agree with the results of the investigation findings or the resolution/remedy, they may appeal the decision to the CEO of DVCAC or any of the entities listed below.
15. The CRO will keep documentation records of all grievances which will be maintained for at least two (2) years from resolution. Documentation includes:
 - A copy of the grievance and date it was received

- Agency provider contact name, address, and telephone number
 - Overview of the grievance investigation process and the timetable for completion of the investigation
 - Documentation, if applicable, of extenuating circumstances for extending the time period for resolving the grievance beyond twenty-one (21) days
 - Investigation findings
 - Resolution/remedy of the grievance
 - Any documentation of the grievance resolution
16. Clients have the option to initiate a complaint with outside organizations, including but not limited to:
- Alcohol, Drug Addiction & Mental Health Services Board of Cuyahoga County: 2012 West 25th Street, 6th Floor, Cleveland, OH 44113 | 216-241-3400
 - Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services: The James A. Rhodes State Office Tower, 30 East Broad Street, 8th Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3430 614-466-2596 or 1-877-275-6364
 - Disability Rights Ohio: 50 W. Broad Street, Suite 1400, Columbus, Ohio 43215-5923 | 614-466-7264 or 1-800-282-9181
 - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Office for Civil Rights, 233 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 240, Chicago, IL 60601 | 800-368-1019
 - Ohio Civil Rights Commission: 615 W. Superior Ave., Suite 885, Cleveland, OH 44113 | 216-787-3150
 - Ohio Counselor, Social Worker and Marriage and Family Therapist Board: 50 West Broad Street, Suite 1075, Columbus, OH 43215 | 614-728-7792
 - Ohio Attorney General's Office: 30 E. Broad St., 14th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215 614-466-4986
 - The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland: 1223 West Sixth Street, Cleveland, OH 44113 216-861-5500
 - Cleveland Tenant's Organization: 5700 Broadway, Cleveland, OH 44127 216-432-0617
17. DVCAC will provide all relevant information regarding the grievance to any outside organization with which a complaint has been filed.
- a. This request must be made in writing and accompanied by a "Release of Information" form signed by the client.
 - b. If the client is unable or unwilling to write, the request may be made verbally but a "Release of Information" must still be signed.
18. Grievances/incidents will be reported by DVCAC to the appropriate agency(ies) as required.
19. The CRO will prepare an annual summary of grievances for review by DVCAC Leadership.
- a. This will include the number of grievances received, type of grievances, and resolution status.
 - b. This report will be forwarded to the mental health board.

20. Agency records will be available for review by the community mental health board and department of mental health upon request.

Incident Reports

An incident is an event that may pose a danger to the health and safety of clients, staff, volunteers, or visitors of DVCAC and is not consistent with the routine care of clients or routine operations of the agency. Incidents may involve staff, clients, volunteers, board, contractors, visitors, property, and/or equipment.

DVCAC staff must complete and submit an incident report form for all incidents to the Client Rights Officer (CRO) within twenty-four (24) hours of the occurrence of the incident.

DVCAC tracks and keeps records of all incidents. DVCAC records, reports, and analyzes incidents to identify and understand causes, implement improvements, and continuously monitor the operational environment to reduce the risk of future occurrences.

A. Incident Reporting Procedures:

1. All incidents must be reported. Staff on scene of the incident must complete an Internal Incident Report form, available on the DVCAC drive, after the incident has been stabilized. The supervisor's section must be completed and signed by the next level supervisor.
2. Incident reports must be completed and submitted to the CRO within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident. The report may be submitted on the next work day if the incident occurs on a weekend or holiday.
3. Minor injuries sustained by staff while in the conduct of agency business, including any treatment submitted to Worker's Compensation, should be reported by the supervisor to the finance/human resources department.
4. Suspected Incidents of Abuse/Neglect:
 - a. Each occurrence of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect must be reported by staff to the appropriate agency in accordance with DVCAC's Abuse & Neglect Policy.
 - b. Upon making a report, staff must complete a Suspected Abuse and Neglect Report form, available on the DVCAC drive, and submit it to the CRO within twenty-four (24) hours. This form must detail the incident, reason for the report, and include supervisory comment and signature.
5. DVCAC reports incidents internally and externally.
6. Supervision serves as a forum for staff or volunteers to process personal reactions to incidents, if needed. An internal debriefing team and appropriate services will be made available to individuals(s) involved in incidents for support as appropriate.

I have reviewed this Volunteer Handbook and agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined.

Volunteer Name (Printed)

Volunteer Signature

Date

Staff Signature

Date