

FOUNDATIONAL BUILDING BLOCKS FOR INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (IPV) RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION: TRAUMA INFORMED ENGAGEMENT

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

1

Recognize that people with lived experiences of intimate partner violence (IPV) often have compounded or multiple experiences of trauma and this could affect the risk assessment implementation. For example, not only have survivors experienced trauma from IPV, but they may also experience trauma from personal mistreatment and/or historical mistrust by system agencies.

2

There are numerous reasons why a survivor may not feel safe or comfortable responding to questions on a risk assessment, especially immediately after an incident. For some survivors, they may never have been asked the questions on a risk assessment before, and could find it confrontational or overwhelming.

3

Trauma responses such as memory gaps, withdrawal, and difficulty concentrating may impact responses by the survivor on the risk assessment, which could lead to inadequate services or interventions being offered. This is further compounded for survivors who experience language barriers.

4

A trauma-informed approach places priority on restoring the survivor's feelings of safety, choice, and control. It is important to create a safe space, explain why the risk assessment is being completed and what will be done with the information, and obtain informed consent.

5

A trauma-informed approach is also important when administering recidivism risk assessments with people who cause harm. This involves ensuring unbiased application of the assessment, considering their trauma histories, and recognizing both consistent and changing risk factors to determine appropriate supervision and programming.