

Clarification: Homelessness and Domestic Violence – March 2008

References: ORS 411-117; OAR 461-135-1215; FSM – TANF

**Related Programs: TA-DVS K – Housing Related Payments – HSP
A – Program Intent**

Domestic violence is frequently the cause of homelessness for women and children, so it's not surprising that we may have clients applying for TA-DVS that are homeless. Being homeless due to domestic violence does not automatically make someone eligible for TA-DVS. To be eligible the person's "safety must be at risk because of domestic violence or the current threat of domestic violence. (461-135-1215)" If the client has been homeless for several months and has had no contact with the abuser or someone acting on behalf of the abuser (i.e. someone making threats on behalf of the abuser or who is likely to tell the abuser where the client is) and the client's safety is not currently at risk from the domestic violence or the threat of domestic violence, then the person would not be eligible for TA-DVS.

Since safety threats are not always obvious we need to explore with the client what risks they may be experiencing. Risks related to homelessness and not domestic violence would not constitute a safety risk for TA-DVS eligibility. If the abuser continues to try to locate the client, is calling the client or harassing the client, is making threats towards the client, is using family or friends to try to locate the client, etc., then it is likely the client's safety continues to be a risk due to domestic violence even if there has been no direct contact.

Proximity to a domestic violence occurrence is also important to consider in determining eligibility for TA-DVS. For example if the client was homeless or in a shelter due to an occurrence of domestic violence that happened within the last month or so...it is likely the person would still be eligible for TA-DVS. Without some time passing it would be hard to determine if the abuser intends to continue pursuit of the client or the relationship.

The center for disease control and domestic violence service providers state that it generally takes about 90 days to stabilize from a traumatic event. So if the event happened within the last 90 days and the client continues to experience fear or issues (including homelessness) related to domestic violence, then they would likely meet the safety risk eligibility requirements for TA-DVS.

Alternative Resources:

If a client is homeless and does not have a current safety risk you would want to refer them to any local housing resources including to your local Community Action Agency for the *Housing Stabilization Program*. This program offers up to \$7200.00 over a 12 month period to help families that are homeless or at risk of homeless to stabilize their living situation. Eligible families include those that are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to domestic violence.

Your local domestic violence service provider may also be able to offer support for a victim and their children to locate housing. They often work with landlords who are willing to help survivors. Some DV service providers also have transitional housing available.

If a victim of domestic violence was wrongfully evicted or at risk of eviction due to domestic violence, legal aid may be able to offer assistance to the client. The legal aid web page at WWW.OREGONLAWHELP.ORG provides information about laws in Oregon that are in place to protect survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. The web site also contains information on other landlord tenant issues.

If you have questions about this clarification, contact Carol Krager at 503-945-5931 or through e-mail: carol.krager@state.or.us .