

## Recommendations for Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Officers

Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Officers are uniquely positioned to impact safety for victims and accountability for perpetrators of domestic violence.

The Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project has developed recommendations geared to reduce incidents of domestic violence and domestic violence-related homicide. To affect change, local communities must work diligently to implement these recommendations, which were developed by fatality review teams across the state. Acting on established best practices and calls to action from the Project's 15-year history is how Georgia will see real change in the future.

### Supervising Offenders

- + Ensuring officers have a dynamic understanding of the problem of domestic violence and how to intervene is vital. Develop staff expertise in identifying and responding to intimate partner violence. Because officers are often an ongoing point of contact victims will have with "the system," how their case is handled often sets the tone for future requests by the victim for assistance or intervention. Providing any additional resources and support officers need to do their job effectively is imperative.
  - Ensure all officers have the resources, training and information they need to respond to domestic violence-involved cases.
  - Obtain training on the dynamics of domestic violence and lethality indicators, victim behavior, impact of trauma, identifying mental health issues and intervention strategies.
- + Supervision conditions and case plans should be based on an offender's risk level and potential threats to victim safety.
  - If an offender has utilized stalking or abuse against an intimate partner, ask the court to amend conditions of supervision to require attendance at a State-certified Family Violence Intervention Program (FVIP).
  - Add FVIP to an offender's rehabilitative plan to supplement the standard conditions of supervision, if FVIP was not added.
- + Expedite enforcement of technical violations completed by abusive offenders.
- + To comprehensively address the problem, systems responders must assess their unique position to determine how they can impact change. All stakeholders must take immediate steps to address abusers' issues of non-compliance with court orders or new incidents of abuse.



# FATALITY REVIEW PROJECT

- + Partner with your prosecutor or law enforcement agency to review or receive incident reports and pertinent history pertaining to the offender's history of abuse.
  - + Determine the presence of civil orders which may address an offender's behaviors, and monitor their compliance with those provisions, in addition to the criminal sentence.
    - o Past civil orders should also be considered a risk factor for ongoing abuse by the offender.
    - o Partner with the local domestic violence program or Clerk of Court to request and receive copies of relevant civil orders, including Temporary Protective Orders (TPOs).
  - + Consider developing a specialized caseload of intimate partner violence and stalking cases within your agency.
- 

## Victim Contact

- + Interview the victim, when possible. Explain you are concerned for the victim's safety, explain your role, and encourage follow-up should any abusive behaviors develop.
- + Assure victims you will maintain their privacy and confidentiality and will not share their concerns with the offender directly.
- + Provide warm referrals to domestic violence advocates for ongoing supportive services and safety planning. Provide a referral to the local domestic violence program, even if it is likely the victim has previously received a referral.
- + Make contact information for domestic violence programs available on a widespread basis in all of Georgia's communities.
  - o Both traditional and non-traditional systems will benefit from referral information for supportive services such as the statewide domestic violence hotline 1 (800) 33-HAVEN [1 (800) 334-2836] and local domestic violence programs.
  - o Georgia teens experiencing relationship violence can contact the Breaking Silence Teen Textline any time at (706) 765-8019 for confidential support.
  - o Posters and other awareness resources are also available for download at [GeorgiaFatalityReview.com](https://www.GeorgiaFatalityReview.com).
- + Secure basic safety planning training for all responders and service providers. Training on safety planning provides an excellent opportunity to bridge the gap between domestic violence programs and other agencies in contact with victims, and enhances the coordinated community response to intimate partner violence.



# FATALITY REVIEW PROJECT

- Request assistance from your local domestic violence program to ensure that any staff, including administrative staff who may receive contact from a potential victim, have been trained on the basics of how to provide triage when safety issues arise.

---

## Address Firearms Access

- + Develop countywide protocols to establish how each agency will cooperate to restrict access to firearms by domestic violence offenders and protective order respondents. Georgia's communities must carry the torch for this important issue until legislative and legal system actions catch up with the risk firearms pose to citizens of our state. Develop a plan to address abuser access with your local task force or coordinated community response.
  - Ensure firearms restrictions and surrender are specifically incorporated into terms of probation and are enforced.
  - Ensure firearms access is restricted for abusers subject to Temporary Protective Orders.
- + Conduct immediate search for firearms in cases that have a Fourth Amendment Waiver, where possession is restricted and guns are believed to be present.
- + Collaborate with prosecutors to initiate contempt of court proceedings upon an offender's refusal or failure to surrender firearms and ammunition.
- + File a petition to revoke probation when an offender refuses or fails to surrender firearms or ammunition, or is found with a firearm or ammunition in his possession.
- + Receive training on how to help probationers at risk of suicide and their families reduce access to lethal means, particularly firearms. Consider the free, two-hour course through the Suicide Prevention Resource Center on Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) by registering at [www.training.sprc.org](http://www.training.sprc.org)

---

## Address Stalking Behaviors

- + Ensure all officers receive training on the issue of intimate partner stalking. The training should incorporate both the identification of stalking behaviors and how to respond to intimate partner stalking in accordance with best practices.
- + Assess all offenders as possible stalkers when there has been any report of harassing behavior or prior intimate partner violence and determine if the offender has previously engaged or is now engaging in stalking behavior.



# FATALITY REVIEW PROJECT

- + When offenders are engaging in stalking behavior, focus on victim safety, changing the behavior of the stalker, and providing accountability.
- + When new acts of stalking occur, consult the recommendations for law enforcement on page 35 of the Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project's 2017 Annual Report (available at [GeorgiaFatalityReview.com](http://GeorgiaFatalityReview.com)) to build and document your case.
  - o Immediately seek remedies such as additional criminal charges and revocation of sentence or supervision agreement.
- + Consult additional recommendations and suggestions for supervising probationers and parolees who engage in stalking behavior, highlighted in "[Responding to Stalking: A Guide for Community Corrections Officers](#)," developed by the American Probation and Parole Association, the Stalking Resource Center and the National Center for Victims of Crime.

---

## Use the Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project Annual Report

- + Read and Remember
  - o Read the fatality review reports and remember the stories of those who have lost their lives to domestic violence.
  - o Share victims' names and stories at events that honor domestic violence victims and survivors.
- + Share with Others
  - o Copies of this report and prior reports are available at [GeorgiaFatalityReview.com](http://GeorgiaFatalityReview.com). Email the link to coworkers, advocates, judges, police officers, mental health professionals, substance abuse counselors, attorneys, health care workers, religious leaders, teachers, family, and friends.
  - o Print the sections you think are relevant to others' work and share these sections with them.
  - o Print sections as handouts and use them in community presentations.
- + Discuss with Coworkers
  - o Discuss the report during a staff meeting at your workplace.
  - o Identify which recommendations are most relevant to your agency, and develop specific steps forward and work toward their implementation.
- + Incorporate into Strategic Planning



# FATALITY REVIEW PROJECT

- Use the recommendations as a tool for strategic planning.
  - Identify other agencies with which you want to collaborate, and discuss specific goals you can work toward together.
  - Use fatality review statistics and recommendations in grant proposals.
- + Develop Task Force Initiatives
- As a group, identify areas in which the community is doing well and areas in which improvement is needed.
  - Identify two to four recommendations that are priorities for your community and implement them.
  - Create a subcommittee for your priority areas and report your progress to the Georgia Commission on Family Violence.
- + Increase Community Awareness
- Create discussion groups in your community to talk about the fatality review reports and recommendations for change. These groups can be interdisciplinary groups of professionals or groups of community members interested in making their communities safer and healthier.
  - As a group, identify action steps toward implementing the recommendations in this report.
  - Contact the Georgia Commission on Family Violence or the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence for further conversations and presentations.
- + Alert the Media
- Alert the local media about fatality review findings, recommendations, and local work being done to help victims of domestic violence.
  - For additional suggestions about working with the media download our Domestic Violence and The Media tip sheet available at [GeorgiaFatalityReview.com/resources](https://GeorgiaFatalityReview.com/resources).

