



## SCDC POLICY

**NUMBER: PS-10.26**

**TITLE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

**ISSUE DATE: October 17, 2024**

**RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: DIVISION OF VICTIM SERVICES**

**POLICY MANUAL: PROGRAM AND SERVICES**

**SUPERSEDES: NONE-NEW POLICY**

**RELEVANT SCDC FORMS/SUPPLIES: 26-9A, 26-9B, 26-10, 26-11, 26-12.**

**ACA/CAC STANDARDS:**

**STATE/FEDERAL STATUTES: SC Code Ann. § 17-22-90: Agreements required of offender in program and SC Code Ann. § 23-3-85: Confidential Communication.**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to outline Domestic Violence Intervention Programming (DVIP) that are available to SCDC offenders that meet agency program requirements, and to provide guidelines for the DVIP available to the male and female institutions. SCDC recognizes that domestic violence is a problem in our state and that this program is something offenders currently serving time for domestic violence or other related charges could benefit from. Providing this program for SCDC offenders is critical in ensuring that they have more skills to re-enter society in order to reduce the risk of re-offending.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** The DVIP within the South Carolina Department of Corrections shall provide effective, evidence-based programming for offenders who have domestic violence or other related assault charges against members of their family.

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**SPECIFIC PROCEDURES:**

**1. GOAL AND INTENT:**

**1.1** The Division of Victim Services has developed a DVIP within the South Carolina Department of Corrections for offenders who have charges related to domestic violence, other assault related charges, any other family violence deemed appropriate by Domestic Violence Program Manager in order to reduce the future risk of domestic and family violence while promoting healing through trauma.

**1.2** The program will use trauma-informed, evidenced based curriculum and practices to promote healing through trauma, reduce the consequences of future domestic violence instances, and to promote healing within SCDC for increased success with integration into the community.

**1.3** Any deviations to this policy must be approved by the Division Director of Victim Services, the Assistant Deputy Director of Programs, Reentry and Rehabilitative Services and the Deputy Director of Programs, Reentry and Rehabilitative Services.

## **2. ELEGIBILITY CRITERIA:**

### **2.1 Male offenders who are considered for DVIP services must meet the following criteria**

- Have an identifiable domestic violence or assault related conviction, or court order to Domestic Violence Programming.
- Have less than 5 years left in custody prior to the start of groups, with priority given to those closest to release.
- Must reside in a dorm/program area that would not affect their ability to attend groups.
- Any other charge may be admitted with priority to those with related domestic violence criminal histories.
- Any other specialized group using the trauma informed approach through use of the curriculum must be approved by Domestic Violence Program Manager and Division Director of Victim Services.

### **2.2 Female offenders who are considered for DVIP services must meet the following criteria:**

- Can have any conviction, not required to be domestic violence or an assault charge.
- Will need to be within 5 years of release.
- Will need to send staff request to DVIP Program Managers to request being added to the wait list.
- Must reside in a dorm/program area that would not affect their ability to attend groups.

**2.3** Referrals can be made by any staff, volunteer, or other individuals that have prior or current contact with offender and is knowledgeable of the offender needing programming. Offenders who have undocumented domestic violence history may request admission into the program and will be assessed according to standard operating procedures when space is available. The referral can be sent to the Domestic Violence Program Managers or other staff within the Division of Victim Services.

**2.4** It will be the responsibility of the Domestic Violence Program Managers or designee to manage and monitor all offenders pending approval or admission to DVIP.

## **3. SERVICES OFFERED:**

**3.1 Offenders identified as appropriate for DVIP will collaborate with Domestic Violence Program Managers or designated staff to complete the following documentation for Male offenders:**

- SCDC Form 26-12, DVIP Survey of Beliefs Form.
- SCDC Form 26-9B, Domestic Violence Male Offender Interview Form.
- SCDC Form 26-11, DVIP Screening Instrument.
- SCDC Form 26-10, DVIP Offender Recommendation Form.

**3.2 The following forms to be completed for female offenders and be completed by the Division of Victim Services staff:**

- SCDC Form 26-12, DVIP Survey of Beliefs Form.
- SCDC Form 26-9A, Domestic Violence Female Offender Interview Form.

**3.3** The Program Managers will be in contact with institutional staff to get all appropriate approvals for group materials prior to beginning the class.

**3.4 The group sessions will be structured as outlined below, unless approved by the Division Director of Victim Services through Domestic Violence Program Managers.**

- The group sessions will be conducted twice weekly for a minimum of 90 minutes, and a maximum of 120 minutes.
- The maximum number of participants in group will be 12 unless otherwise approved by Program Manager/Division Director of Victim Services.
- Groups will be closed groups, meaning there will be no participants added after the group begins.

**4. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS:**

**4.1** SCDC's DVIP will work to satisfy court ordered domestic violence programming through teaching skills to break the cycle of family violence through curriculum specifically designed to work with those offenders dealing with domestic violence.

**4.2** SCDC Program Managers will work to identify those that need this programming, by executing surveys to them during their incarceration time.

**4.3** SCDC's DVIP will be based on the Family Peace Initiative which has been proven effective, as well as approved as a core program.

**4.4** SCDC DVIP will provide services to both male and female offenders. The male offender program being named Battering Intervention Program, and the female being named Peaceful Families Program, both using curriculum coming from Family Peace Initiative.

**5. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM FACILITATORS:**

**5.1 The SCDC Division of Victim Services shall determine the final selection of DVIP facilitators. To be eligible to become a facilitator one must:**

- Must be an SCDC employee, have prior experience facilitating programs within SCDC.

- Must complete all 3 levels of training provided by Family Peace Initiative, unless otherwise approved by Division Director of Victim Services.
- Staff must have written supervisory approval and follow the facilitator confidentiality guidelines.
- Facilitators also must not have any active domestic violence going on inside the home within the past 5 years.
- Must also commit to facilitate at least 1 program cycle per year.

**5.2** DVIP facilitators will be afforded the opportunity to debrief with other DVIP staff facilitators after each session to promote self-care and wellness while reducing the risk of vicarious trauma.

**5.3** Should a DVIP facilitator have a personal/and or professional conflict of interest while performing their duties, they must notify the Division of Victim Services or Domestic Violence Program Mangers to discuss and resolve the conflict.

## **6. CONFIDENTIALITY/VICTIM CONTACT:**

**6.1** Communication in the capacity of DVIP shall be considered confidential, information as permitted by applicable state and federal laws (SC Article 1, Chapter 3, Title 23, Section 23-3-85). Information can only be shared on a need to know basis.

**6.2 DVIP staff are mandated reporters and must report any behavior that is deemed unsafe for the individual, victim, and others around them. Confidentiality is vital to DVIP, sharing that we are mandated reporters with the participants is important. Informing them that we may break our confidentiality agreement in the following situations.**

- When the offenders consent to release the information.
- When offenders present a clear intent of harm to self or others.
- When behaviors, actions, or statements of the DVIP staff indicated their own personal safety is at risk, and the security of the workplace facility is at risk.
- When offenders are violating laws.
- When the information must be discussed within the Division of Victim Services, or information must be disclosed to third party agencies.

**6.3 Victim Contact: Safety of the victims is of primary importance for the DVIP. Any victim contact will be made through the Domestic Violence Program Managers, if staff facilitators find contact to be appropriate with the victim they will need to notify Program Managers, who will make the decision and contact. ANY VICTIM CONTACT WILL BE MADE THROUGH THE DIVISION OF VICTIM SERVICES:**

- Information about the Domestic Violence Intervention Program including program structure, content, and philosophy.
- The limitations of the program including a clear statement that participation in an offender program does not ensure that the participant will stop any or all of their abusive behaviors and that the responsibility for change lies with the offender alone.
- A statement that the victim is not required or expected to help the participant complete the program is not contingent in any way on the victim's participation.

- Contact information for the local domestic violence program and an encouragement to develop a safety plan.
- Caution should be used with victim contact/notification when offender has been incarcerated for longer than 5 years, as this might be more harm than helpful.
- Notification of imminent threat to health or safety should occur IMMEDIATELY. Attempts at immediate notification should be made by phone. When the DVIP, in good faith, believes there is a real or perceived threat to another person or the public, no authorization is required to release the information to the appropriate authorities.

**6.4 Victim Initiated Contact:** If a victim contacts Victim Services, staff should be assured that they are not required to provide any information and that if they choose to do so, it will remain confidential unless program receives express authorization to share the information or is ordered to do so by a court of law. Program staff shall not inform the participant about the contact or any other information shared by the victim. Victims who report further threats of violence should be encouraged to report to appropriate authorities and seek safety planning. All victim contact should be documented and must be kept separate from offender information.

## **7. CASE MANAGEMENT:**

**7.1** The DVIP Program Managers will be responsible for the maintenance of all DVIP files. Files will be maintained and kept within the Division of Victim Services.

**7.2** Progress notes must be completed on all participants after each session and stores within their files.

**7.3 The following forms will be required to be in the Male offenders' files and be completed by the Division of Victim Services staff:**

- SCDC Form 26-12, DVIP Offender Survey of Beliefs.
- SCDC Form 26-9B, Domestic Violence Male Offender Interview Form.
- SCDC Form 26-11, DVIP Screening Instrument.
- SCDC Form 26-10, DVIP Offender Recommendation Form.

**7.4 The following forms will be required to be in the Female offenders' files and be completed by the Division of Victim Services staff:**

- SCDC Form 26-12, DVIP Offender Survey of Beliefs.
- SCDC Form 26-9A, Domestic Violence Female Offender Interview Form.

**7.4** It is the responsibility of the DVIP Program Managers to develop record keeping protocol, for hard and electronic copies. All protocols must be approved prior to implementation by Division Director of Victim Services.

## **8. DISCHARGE/TERMINATION PROCESS:**

**8.1 Offenders may be staffed for termination or discharge for one or more of the following reasons:**

- Noncompliance with group rules.
- Missing more than 3 group sessions without prior authorization.
- Parole.

- Successful completion.
- Classification change that would impact their ability to attend group.
- Request by inmate to be removed from the program.

**8.2** When DVIP offenders appears appropriate for termination or discharge, the DVIP facilitators will discuss and staff their recommendation with DVIP Program Managers. If termination/discharge is granted the offenders will not be able to return for a minimum of 90 days, which will need to be approved by DVIP Program Managers. The entire process will need to be documented in the offender’s case files.

**8.3** When a offender is being released from SCDC custody, the Program Managers will communicate discharge needs with Program Managers/re-entry staff that are responsible for discharge planning.

**9. RESEARCH:**

**9.1** Research shall be incorporated into DVIP and completed to demonstrate any impact the program is having on offenders.

**10. DEFINITIONS:**

**Domestic Violence: Abuse or aggression that occurs in a romantic relationship.**

**Victim: A person harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or accident.**

**Offender: Those currently incarcerated at the South Carolina Department of Corrections.**

**Core Program: An evidenced based program approach that uses cognitive behavioral intervention to address a criminogenic need.**

**Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP): A program designed to prevent and avoid domestic violence.**

**Family Peace Initiative: The certified battering intervention program out of Kansas that developed the curriculum and will have oversight of DVIP with SCDC.**

**SIGNATURE ON FILE**

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**s/Bryan P. Stirling, Director**

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**Date of Signature**

