

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LETHALITY ASSESSMENT FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

*The lethality assessment should be administered when a current or previous **intimate relationship** is involved and the first responder: believes an **assault** has occurred, senses the potential for **danger** is high, is responding to **repeat** names or location, or simply **believes** one should be conducted.*

Officer	Agency	Date	Case#
Victim (Spanish only? <input type="checkbox"/> )		Suspect & Relationship to Victim	
Victim Phone(s)		Names/Phone #s of 2 people who can reach victim	

**Check here if victim did not answer any of the questions**

**► If the answer to any of questions (1-3) is YES, officers immediately call a domestic-abuse counselor/hotline and have the counselor confer with the victim.**

- |   |                              |                             |                                  |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Has your partner [or whoever the aggressor is] ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a weapon? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 2. Has he or she ever threatened to kill you or your children?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 3. Do you think he/she might try to kill you?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |

**► If the answers to the above questions are negative, officers can probe more deeply with additional questions to determine whether a referral may be needed:**

- |  |                              |                             |                                  |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 4. Does he/she have a gun or can he/she get one easily?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 5. Has he/she ever tried to choke you?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 6. Is he/she violently or constantly jealous or does he/she control most of your daily activities? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 7. Have you left him/her or separated after living together or being married?                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 8. Is he/she unemployed?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 9. Has he/she ever tried to kill himself/herself?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 10. Do you have a child he/she knows is not his/hers?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 11. Does he/she follow or spy on you or leave threatening messages?                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans |
| 12. Is there anything else that worries you about your safety? If yes, what is it?                 |                              |                             |                                  |

**Check here if the victim spoke to a domestic abuse counselor/hotline at the scene**

**Check here if the victim authorized follow up call from advocate** (if yes, write any safety notes/best call times)

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LETHALITY ASSESSMENT FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

## Purpose of the Lethality Assessment:

The Assessment is a user-friendly, straightforward instrument that predicts danger and lethality in domestic incidents between intimate or former intimate partners to a high degree. Research shows that **only 4% of intimate partner murder victims ever used domestic violence services**. This Assessment encourages victims in high danger to seek domestic violence program services to prevent serious injury or death.

## The phone call:

A key part of using this form/protocol is for a law enforcement officer who identifies a victim likely to be in "high danger" to make a phone call from the scene to a domestic violence hotline counselor (Esperanza Shelter) rather than simply referring victims to a hotline.

If a victim answers "Yes" to any question, he/she tells the victim that she/he is in danger and that in situations similar to the victim's, people have been killed. The officer says he/she is going to call the domestic violence hotline counselor, and would like the victim to talk to her/him. If the victim declines, the officer makes the phone call to seek advice, and encourages the victim again to speak with the counselor.

## The officer's response:

Depending on whether the victim chooses to speak with the hotline counselor, the officer proceeds with one of two responses to address the immediate safety of the victim.

**Response #1: When the victim chooses not to speak with the hotline counselor.** The officer reviews the factors that tend to predict homicide so the victim can be on the lookout for them, encourages the victim to contact the domestic violence program, provides the victim with police contact information and a Domestic Violence Victim Information Card (available from Carol Horwitz, Domestic Violence Liaison), and may follow other protocol measures designed to address the victim's safety.

**Response #2: When the victim chooses to speak with the hotline counselor.** The officer responds to the outcome of the telephone conversation between the victim and the counselor, and the officer or law enforcement agency may become involved in coordinated safety planning with the victim and the counselor.

## Follow-Up: