



Enhancing Court Access for Domestic Violence Survivors from Diverse Communities Training

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Project Partners

Esperanza United

Jose Juan Lara Jr., MS
Senior Manager of Community and
Capacity Building

Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence

Purvi Shah, MA
Independent Consultant

Ujima, Inc.: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community

Gretta Gardner, JD
Deputy Director
Ayana Wallace, MS
Training Specialist

Center for Court Innovation

Nida Abbasi, JD
Associate Director

Judicial Consultant

Hon. Judge Rosa Figarola

Purpose of the training

Domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking are underreported crimes that require specific attention in the courts. For historically underserved and marginalized racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States, the struggle for equal representation in the courts has been a perpetual challenge. An individual's class, age, race and ethnicity, immigration status, sexual orientation, and cultural identity impacts their help-seeking decisions. As a result, victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from diverse cultural backgrounds will have different approaches to reporting crimes. They will experience courts and systems in disparate ways.

Because of these challenges, it is essential to build trust and understanding among court personnel, advocates, and survivors to strengthen the overall process, improve future problem-solving, and increase safety for entire communities. Consequently, courts must address bias, build responsiveness to diverse communities, and enhance access to justice to strengthen their cultural capacity to address sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking issues.

The Enhancing Court Access to Survivors from Diverse Communities Training provides an opportunity to study and interact with court personnel and family violence and sexual assault advocates who aim to improve their provision of culturally responsive approaches to domestic and sexual violence victims in the courts.

Primary audience for the training

The primary audience for the training is judges, court administrators, advocates, and lawyers who aim to improve their provision of culturally competent responses to domestic and sexual violence victims in courts and who are interested in enhancing their court's ability to deliver culturally competent responses in domestic violence and sexual assault cases.

Faculty note

Participants are encouraged to register in teams of 3-4 staff, which may include court staff, judges, domestic violence advocates, attorneys, and service providers from the same jurisdiction.

Overall Training Goals

- Assess additional barriers and challenges to accessing justice that survivors from diverse communities may face in the court and justice systems.
- Identify solutions and design strategies for reducing barriers based on promising practices rooted in promoting procedural justice, strengthening collaboration, and enhancing coordinated community response efforts.
- Facilitate more significant access to justice by fostering more culturally responsive practices in the courts.
- Develop action plans, additional access resources, and technical assistance to facilitate increased access to safety and justice in domestic violence cases.

How to use the training

Training topics are in bold with expected time.

Actions that the faculty takes during the training are written in blue.

The course outline is the schedule suggested for your ease. It can help determine how much time is needed to present each section. However, times will vary based on the experience and engagement of the audience.

The total content of the material is two days (approximately 5.5 hours each day), with two 15-minute breaks and one and half hour lunch built-in for an 8-hour day.

Faculty guidelines

The training content should be facilitated by a team with expertise in presiding, advocating, and representing survivors of domestic and sexual violence. The faculty team should consist of a judge, two culturally specific advocates, and a lawyer who can skillfully moderate sensitive discussion topics. In addition, faculty need to be able to:

- Carefully and respectfully redirect conversations to avoid traumatizing participants.
- Promote emotional self-regulation and a mutually respectful discourse amongst everyone.
- Be inclusive and compassionate but also skillful at enforcing appropriate professional boundaries in a timely and responsive manner.
- Hold the space and skillfully facilitate a respectful dialogue between and among participants, especially around potentially uncomfortable comments and content.
- Embody a culturally responsive intersectional approach so that each participant will bring their unique values, opinions, and experiences.

Presentation Engagement Strategies	The following instructional strategies are used: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lecture segments• Interactive exercises (self-reflection and experiential exercises)• Question and answer• PowerPoint slides
Materials and Equipment	The following materials and equipment will be needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laptop and projector• Internet• Microphones (two handhelds, two lavaliers)• USB or other storage devices with the slide presentations• Easel/flipchart paper/markers/highlighters• Attendee packets• Registration/sign in sheets• Name tags/names tents• Evaluations
Training Manual	This manual (here) includes the course overview, introductory and instructional activities, and reference materials.



Training Day 1

Day 1 - Training outline

Content	Materials	Time
Welcome, Introductions, and Overview	Flip chart and markers	60 minutes
Mingle Huddle: Icebreaker and Setting the Stage	Audio speakers, music playlist	45 minutes
Break		15 minutes
Cultural Responsiveness and the Courts	Flip chart and markers, Court Culture and Bias Worksheet	90 minutes
Lunch		90 minutes
Mentor Court Panel	Flip chart and markers	90 minutes
Break		15 minutes
Systems Mapping: Barriers and Opportunities	Flip chart and markers, Systems Mapping worksheet	90 minutes
Wrap up and Evaluations	Evaluation form	15 minutes

Teaching strategies

Faculty will use a diverse methodology of the following forms of instruction while conducting their session to enhance the learning process:

- Lecture
- Discussion
- Group problem solving
- Idea generation
- Teaching aids – PowerPoint, in-class activity, flip chart, video

Day 1

Welcome, introductions, and overview



Time: 60 minutes



Materials needed: Flip chart and markers, microphone

Housekeeping (15 minutes)

- There will be two 15-minute breaks and an hour for lunch today.
- Identify the location of restrooms and indicate the location of gender-neutral bathrooms, if available.
- Instruct participants to set their handheld devices on silent or vibrate to minimize disruption of the sessions. If a participant must make or receive a call, ask them to please exit the training room and return as quickly as possible. Check the course outline to see what you have missed.

- Instruct participants to use the microphone for all conversations in the large group; everyone must wait for the mic to ensure equal access for those who may not hear as well as others.
- Remind participants to sign in and complete evaluations at the end of each session.

Faculty notes

The faculty welcome participants and introduce themselves.

During the general housekeeping, remind participants of the importance of punctuality, silencing their handheld devices, and completing evaluations; this is a safe space for learning and maintaining respectful communication.

Explain the general format and objectives of the upcoming program

- The format is interactive, informed by the fact that each participant brings rich background and expertise to enhance the learning experience for everyone.
- The program will start and end on time, with close attention paid to time limits for each section, in deference to the latter parts of the program and the participant's expectations. Ask that everyone be in their seats and ready to go at times indicated on the curriculum.
- Remind participants that although anyone can be a victim or perpetrator of domestic violence, it is statistically more likely that a female will be a victim and a male will be a perpetrator. As such, for simplicity in learning, the victim may be referred to as "her" or "she" and the batterer as "he" or "him."

Introductions (15 minutes)

- Ask participants to briefly introduce themselves including name, pronouns (e.g., she/her/hers), job title, organization/location, and a one or two sentence response to the following question: If you weren't a (current position), what would you be?

Group agreements (30 minutes)

- STEP 1: Begin with a list of expectations, focused on what participants hope to take away from the training. Generate a list based on the input of participants. Ask clarifying questions and record the responses as briefly as possible on the flip chart.
- STEP 2: Move on to agreements. The trainer will prompt the group with questions like, "What can we as a group agree to do to have a successful convening together and meet these expectations? What kind of an environment do we want to create to maximize our time together?" Ask the group for contributions, ask clarifying questions, and restate the participants' contributions as briefly as possible while retaining the original message. If the group has difficulty coming up with a list of agreements, you can propose the following: listen attentively, be open-minded, be honest, be present, minimize distractions, etc.
- STEP 3: Ask for group consensus. Can everyone in the room agree with every item on the list? If not, open the items in question up for discussion. Lead the conversation to a conclusion where the original agreement is clarified, and the consensus is reached or altered so that everyone is content with it.
- STEP 4: Wrap-up. Let participants know that the finalized lists will be revisited throughout the training or session. New agreements can be added as the session or

training progresses if that serves the learning environment. Post the lists in plain sight so participants can quickly review the agreements and expectations throughout the session or training. The following are some suggestions for group agreements in case needed:

- › Respect
- › Be open-minded
- › Listen attentively (and limit any distractions such as cell phones)
- › Don't judge
- › Step up and step back

Faculty note

Group agreements are a valuable tool for getting the training off to the right start and keeping it on track. They help a group to agree on how it will work together respectfully and effectively and enables people to interact more cooperatively and maintain respect for each other.

Mingle - huddle: Icebreaker and setting the stage

 **Time: 45 minutes**

 **Materials needed: Audio speakers, music playlist, microphone**

Learning objectives

- Help create a relaxed environment where participants share ideas and engage more fully in the session.
- Encourage participants to share ownership of the learning environment.
- Build rapport among participants and foster a productive learning environment.

Faculty note

The Mingle Huddle icebreaker activity lays the groundwork for active learning and incorporating take-aways into actions. It also allows participants to become familiar with each other and build connections.

Activity instructions

- Faculty script: We'll turn on some music in a moment. While the music is playing, mingle amongst yourselves. When the music stops, we will call out a number and ask you to get into groups with that number of people. Then we will read a statement or question, and you will have three-four minutes to discuss your responses as a small group. We will ask a couple of volunteers to share after each round.
 - › One faculty will assist by starting/stopping the music under the direction of the lead trainer for the session. The other trainers will help by asking questions and asking for a couple of volunteers to share.
 - › As participants move through the activity, faculty will model responding to each prompt, sharing a personal response to each question before participants share.

Timeline for activity

Questions/statements (20 minutes)

- One thing you can't tell by looking at me is...
- The last time I talked about gender, cultural, and/or racial bias was...
- When discussing gender, cultural, and/or racial bias, I feel...
- I have seen gender, cultural, and/or racial bias issues in my courtroom/court when...

Debrief (25 minutes)

- How was that experience?
- What did you feel comfortable/uncomfortable sharing?
- What connections can you make between this activity and how court users might experience addressing issues of gender, cultural, and/or racial bias in the courtroom?

Break

 **Time: 15 minutes**

Faculty note

During this time, faculty can meet and quickly check in to address any emerging trends that may have surfaced during the morning sessions. The training team must continue evaluating any issues that may arise to maintain a safe learning environment.

Cultural responsiveness and the courts

 **Time: 90 minutes**

 **Materials needed: Flipchart and markers, microphone, and Court Culture and Bias worksheet**

For legal systems to strive towards justice they must be accessible to all individuals. However, survivor litigants may face challenges when courts are not responsive to their cultural identity. For survivors of gender-based violence, these challenges present additional barriers towards accessing justice and obtaining fair outcomes. Recognizing and respecting individual cultural differences are important to sensitive and effective work with survivors. In addition, differences in concepts of suffering and healing can influence how individuals may experience the effects of gender-based victimization and interaction with courts.

Learning objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to do the following:

- Enhance access to justice by fostering more culturally responsive courts, court staff, and judges.
- Identify role-specific responsibilities in implementing culturally responsive practices in the courts.
- Assess culturally specific barriers survivors may face in the criminal and civil justice systems and design strategies for overcoming those challenges.

Timeline for the activity

Small group discussion: 15 minutes

Have people break out into pairs and discuss the following questions:

- What are some examples of cultural humility you have seen in your lives or in your jobs?
- Where do you think your court is as a whole in the spectrum of culture competence to humility?
- What could you do to have more cultural humility in your personal life or in your job at the courts?

Debrief: 10 minutes

- What did you think you could do individually?
- What could your court do?

Question and answer: 5 minutes

Faculty note

This session introduces the importance of striving for cultural responsiveness and humility in the courts. Define terms and importance of striving for cultural humility.

“Cultural competence” is:

- About both individual and institutional practice.
- Characterized by the acceptance of and respect for differences.
- About continuous self-assessments and assessments of the court regarding culture with special attention to and respect for the dynamics of difference.
- Not about knowing everything about a culture. It is instead, respect for difference, eagerness to learn, and willingness to accept that there are many ways of viewing the world.
- Not over-generalizing or characterizing cultural groups in a rigid, uni-dimensional, or static way.

“Cultural responsiveness” happens when we incorporate cultural competence into our responses - when we recognize our privilege and adapt our responses to the needs of culturally specific communities.

The process of “cultural humility” is to:

- Learn to recognize and reject your pre-existing beliefs about a culture
- Focus on understanding information provided by individuals with the context at hand
- Forgo the temptation to classify or label persons

Lunch



Time: 90 minutes

Faculty note

During this time, trainers can meet and quickly check in to address any emerging trends that may have surfaced during the morning sessions. The training team must continue evaluating any issues that may arise to maintain a safe learning environment.

Panel discussion with mentor court staff

 **Time: 90 minutes**

 **Materials needed: Audio speakers, microphone**

In this session, a panel with different members of a mentor court will share their experiences and perspectives on addressing challenges and systemic barriers that survivors from diverse communities encounter. They will also highlight solutions and promising practices that foster collaboration, partnerships, and increased access to justice.

Learning objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to do the following:

- Identify areas of potential opportunities for courts to engage culturally specific organizations to enhance access to survivors from diverse communities.
- Describe specific examples of collaborations undertaken in the mentor courts jurisdiction and how to explore such opportunities.
- Make proposals as to how such opportunities may be further developed to enhance access to survivors from diverse communities.

Panelists will respond to these critical questions:

- What additional barriers and challenges to justice impact survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault from diverse communities in your area?
- In what ways have you sought to address these challenges to increase access to assistance and justice in the courts? What proactive steps have been taken, and what are some critical lessons learned in the process?
- What challenges have you encountered in the process, and what has helped to address or overcome these challenges?
- What strategies for collaboration, cultural responsiveness, and reducing bias would you recommend to courts and court staff?
- How would you describe your court's culture now compared to ten years ago? Can you provide examples of one or two situations during that process where in hindsight, you recognized that things could have been done better and lessons learned from those experiences?
- What other goals do you have in efforts to increase access to safety and justice for victims from marginalized communities?

Timeline for the activity

Panel questions (60 minutes)

Welcome and introductions: 5 minutes

- Welcome attendees
- State overall purpose of the panel and what attendees will learn
- Describe the format/flow of the panel, including how and when the audience will interact with the panelists.
- Introduce each panelist by providing a snapshot of their experience (name, title, and organization/department/agency).

Panel questions: 55 minutes

- Ask each panelist to respond briefly to the same question (nine-minutes per question).
- Pose questions, rotating between panelists to allow each panelist a chance to answer a question first, followed by responses from the other panelists. Every panelist does not need to answer each of the questions if they don't feel they have anything to add to the discussion.
- Ask additional questions as time permits to ensure that all aspects of the questions are covered.

Discussion (30 minutes)**Question and answer: 20 minutes**


- Thank the panelists and turn to the audience to solicit comments, reactions and/or questions regarding the discussion they have just heard.
- Audience members can ask questions of individual panelists or of the panel as a whole; ensure the questions are focused on the session topic and clarify the question, if needed, before you ask the panel to answer.
- Encourage the audience and the panelists to keep their comments brief so you can fit in as many questions or comments as possible during this section of the session.
- Panelists can also continue to react in response to each other's comments during this time.

Closing panel discussion: 10 minutes

- Thank the audience for their comments.
- Summarize some of the key points, common themes or ideas that have arisen during the discussion. If possible, summarize a point or two within each aspect of the panel questions, "barriers and challenges to justice," "challenges to increase access to assistance and justice in the courts," and "strategies for collaboration, cultural responsiveness, and reducing bias."
- Thank the panelists for their time and their willingness to share openly with the group.
- Thank the training participants for their interest and attention. Begin break and remind them about when to return from break.

 **Faculty note**

Panel facilitator will allow participants to ask questions, share their feedback, and facilitate an open dialogue with the larger group. The panel should consist of a judge who has presided over domestic violence cases, system-based victim witness advocates, community based and culturally specific domestic violence/sexual assault advocates.

Break
 **Time: 15 minutes**
 **Faculty note**

During this time, trainers can meet and quickly check in to address any emerging trends that may have surfaced during the morning sessions. The training team must continue evaluating any issues that may arise to maintain a safe learning environment.

Systems mapping: Barriers and opportunities

 **Time: 90 minutes**

 **Materials needed: Flip chart, microphone, Systems Mapping Worksheet**

In this session, participants will develop a system map to create a visual representation of their communities' criminal justice systems, noting key decision points and the processes resulting from those decisions. Mapping allows participants to identify what is happening as survivors from diverse communities move through the justice system, how policies and practices may or may not align with research related to desired outcomes, and what data is collected by various organizations within the system about survivors from diverse communities and actions at crucial decision points.

Learning objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to do the following:

- Explore ways survivors encounter additional barriers in accessing assistance from civil, family, and criminal legal systems in the local community.
- Understand that cultural responsiveness is more than just language access.
- Explore how culturally specific community-based programs can help inform efforts to improve access to justice by sharing information on how different groups are accessing civil, family, and criminal legal systems.
- Develop strategies for engaging culturally specific programs that can help courts be more culturally responsive, improve access to procedural fairness, and strengthen a more coordinated community response.

Timeline for activity

Instructions: 5 minutes

In small groups, participants will discuss the steps a survivor takes after a domestic violence incident – both in the courthouse and in their community. Using the provided scenarios, each group will map how the survivor would navigate the justice system in their jurisdiction.

Creating a system map: 30 minutes

1. Map your jurisdiction on the flipchart paper. Be sure to include all the locations you think a survivor would access after a domestic violence incident, including the courthouse, police station, hospital, workplace, etc. You can use basic shapes to depict locations and remember that the map does not need to be accurate.
2. Once you've created a map, identify the first step in the process from the time of the incident. Draw arrows to each subsequent step.
3. List the individuals that survivors interact with at each location. Discuss what the interaction might entail and what decisions the survivor is making.
4. Go back through your map and add culturally responsive services relevant to survivors, such as bilingual officers, culturally specific service providers, legal services, etc.
5. Identify areas that need improved services and partnerships.
6. Identify areas for improved training for court personnel and others in coordinated community response teams.

Discussion questions: 55 minutes

Once the map is completed, discuss the following four questions with the team. Faculty will ask participants to report their team responses.

- What would happen with this case before the court system is created? What happens now?
- What challenges and barriers did you notice? What about gaps in the system?
- What are strategies for overcoming those challenges and barriers? What about strategies for filling the gaps?
- Did anything surprise you while you did this exercise?

Scenarios

Survivor in a Faith Community - Maya

Name: Maya

Age: 35

Racial/Ethnic Identity: Arab Muslim

Victimization: Domestic violence

Scenario:

Maya arrives at the center to discuss her options. Her husband started calling her as soon as he made bail. He is still trying to control her. His brother had packed his belongings and delivered them to him. He keeps calling the survivor for more things that he says he needs for work. She packs them and delivers them to a nearby mosque.

Maya's family supports her and does not want her to take him back. They promise to help her. Her case manager advised her to use the two months she has (due to protective order) and not rush into any decisions, giving him time to cool off and her to think as well. She is still considering taking him back.

Maya calls an Imam at the Mosque they all attend and her husband's friend to set up a meeting with her husband with all present. They all meet, and Maya brings an audio recording she had secretly made during one of her husband's violent outbursts. The Imam hears both sides of the story and tells the husband he has no right to assault his wife. Having presented the Imam with what she believed was sufficient evidence, she was hopeful they'd acknowledge her husband's violence and swiftly grant a divorce.

Instead, the tape was dismissed and she was told to give the relationship another chance. She is now in the process of trying to drop all assault charges against her husband and to have the protective order lifted.

Culturally specific issues:

Maya is in the US on a bride's visa.

Muslim women face intense social ostracism if they leave their husbands or press charges.

In many Muslim societies, women are protected by men for their entire lives—first their fathers and then their husbands—and if they date or live alone, they risk being labeled prostitutes. Devout Muslim women may believe that God forbids them to leave abusive situations and that it is their Islamic duty to remain home and respect their husbands.

Getting an Islamic divorce can be a complex and protracted process, especially for women, who face stricter requirements for initiating divorce than men, depending on the laws of their cultural community.

Since their marriage, the husband has hidden important papers from Maya, including her immigration and financial documents. She's forced to ask her husband for money to buy essential items and has no idea how much they have saved. When the husband is especially upset, he threatens to interfere with Maya's immigration status. Maya is terrified of what will happen to her children if they are separated.

Sensitivity to negative images about the Muslim religion and fear of perpetuating stereotypes can also silence battered Muslim-American women.

Discussion questions:

- What specific barriers have already been encountered related to the survivor's situation?
- What additional barriers do you anticipate the survivor may encounter as their situation continues to unfold and if they seek protection and relief from the court?

Immigrant Survivor – Lisa

Name: Lisa

Age: 30

Racial/Ethnic Identity: Afro-Latina (people identify her as black)

Victimization: Domestic violence

Scenario:

Lisa has left Tom due to domestic violence.

There is a custody dispute, and Tom has threatened her that he will get custody and that she could be deported since he never completed the process to adjust her status to a U.S. citizen.

Tom's family owns a small chain of businesses and lives in an affluent area, but he has cut off Lisa's access to any money. Lisa cannot hire a lawyer and has faced challenges accessing help from Legal Aid.

Lisa had not previously called the police during incidents of violence because she was afraid of what might happen. She has been referred to a shelter but does not want to go.

Culturally specific issues:

Lisa was born in Nicaragua but moved with her family to the U.S. when she was only two and does not speak Spanish. Partner (Tom) is a U.S. citizen, and they have two children, ages 4 & 7.

Lisa's current partner is a white woman.

Potentially impeachable due to a petty theft when she fled the house without access to funds and tried to shoplift some items for the baby.

Lisa's neighbor can serve as a witness to the violence she saw and heard, but her English is very limited. She is worried that if Tom has access to passports for the children, he might take them to Thailand and leave them there with his mother, who disapproves of her.

Discussion questions:

- What specific barriers have already been encountered related to the survivor's situation?
- What additional barriers do you anticipate the survivor may encounter as their situation continues to unfold and if they seek protection and relief from the court?

Transgender Woman Survivor – Dana

Name: Dana

Age: 25

Racial/ethnic identity: White

Victimization: Domestic violence

Scenario:

Dana just walked into your courthouse hoping to find out about her legal options, having been recently assaulted by her partner. The advocate asks if Dana feels safe and needs shelter, but Dana quickly refuses and states she's had bad experiences with them.

Dana meets with an advocate at the domestic violence center in the courthouse, sharing that her partner has been abusive for years but is anxious about applying for a protection order. She says that when they lived in another jurisdiction, court staff told her that because they were not married, their relationship did not fall under the definition of domestic violence.

Dana wants to apply for an order of protection but fears how the court staff might treat her based on her past experiences with other judicial systems and help systems.

Dana had previously called the police but was not taken seriously by law enforcement, and kept referring to her in male pronouns.

Culturally specific issues:

Dana identifies as a transgender woman.

Dana is not out, and her partner has threatened to tell her employer she is transgender.

Dana is also afraid to come out to the court advocate because of how they might treat her.

Discussion questions:

- What specific barriers have already been encountered related to the survivor's situation?
- What additional barriers do you anticipate the survivor may encounter as their situation continues to unfold and if they seek protection and relief from the court?

Faculty notes

A system map is one of the most fundamental ways to develop a critical analysis of a jurisdiction's justice system, enhancing access to survivors from diverse communities. Each group will receive a scenario, discuss each situation, and devise a plan of action. To enhance the experience as the participants work through the scenarios, introduce a different culturally specific issue, further revealing the complexities of navigating court systems. This approach accomplishes an additional educational goal of getting participants to engage with each other seriously and in detail about survivors from diverse communities - something still very difficult for most people in our culture. Small groups also tend to generate well-thought-out responses. Don't be surprised if participants get some answers that are better than the ones provided.

Faculty will be dispersed – walking by each table, observing the discussions, and noting important points brought up by each group. Groups should be organized according to jurisdictions/geographical regions (rural/urban/resources level, etc.). Court teams should remain together.

And a word of caution! These examples are based on real situations that are complex and require full consideration of individual circumstances.

In addition to the questions provided as part of the activity, faculty should consider the following guiding questions to help participants further analyze their process and engage in a deeper dive into enhancing culturally responsive approaches and procedural fairness.

1. Focus your analysis on how to enhance cultural responsiveness and access to justice in the court. Identify two to five critical problems:

- › Why do they exist?
- › Who is responsible for addressing these issues?

2. Uncover possible options that are culturally responsive:

- › Review readings, discussions, outside research, and your experience.
- › Outline possible alternatives (not necessarily all of them).
- › Explain why alternatives were rejected.
- › Explore what constraints exist and how to address them.
- › Ask, why are alternatives not being sought at this time?

3. Select the best solution:

- › Explain why a particular solution was chosen.
- › Determine and discuss specific strategies for accomplishing the proposed solution.
- › If applicable, recommend further action to resolve some of the issues.
- › Ask, what should be done and who should do it?

Wrap-up and adjourn for day 1

 **Time: 15 minutes**

 **Materials needed: Microphone**

 **Faculty notes**

Faculty will summarize critical points, allow for any final thoughts from participants, briefly review highlights of Day 2 of Training, and hand out evaluations. Key learning points include:

- Survivors from diverse communities often encounter additional barriers that undermine their access to procedural fairness and access to justice in civil and criminal legal systems in your area.
- Cultural responsiveness is more than just language access. But language access is critical.
- Culturally specific community-based programs in your area can help you better understand how different groups may encounter barriers to accessing civil and criminal legal systems.
- Engaging these culturally specific programs can help your court be more culturally responsive by eliminating structural barriers and providing a sense of safety and belonging that will lead to better outcomes for people.



Training Day 2

Day 2 - Training outline		
Content	Materials	Time
Welcome Back and Reflections		30 minutes
Court Culture, Access to Justice, and Bias	Flip chart and markers	75 minutes
Break		15 minutes
Cultural Responsiveness: Concept and Strategies	Flip chart and markers, Cultural Responsivity Worksheet	90 minutes
Lunch		75 minutes
Team Building Activity – What’s in a Name?	Paper and writing utensils for all participants	15 minutes
Goal Setting/Next Steps and Problem-Solving: Overcoming Barriers	Action Planning Worksheet	60 minutes
Share Out of Action Steps	Flip chart and markers	45 minutes
Wrap-Up, Final Reflections, and Adjourn Training	Evaluation form	15 minutes

Teaching strategies

Faculty will use a diverse methodology of the following forms of instruction while conducting their session to enhance the learning process:

- Lecture
- Discussion
- Group problem solving
- Idea generation
- Teaching Aids – PowerPoint, in-class activity, flip chart, video

Day 2

Welcome back and reflections

 **Time: 30 minutes**

 **Materials needed: Flip chart and markers, microphone**

Welcome back (5 minutes)

- Faculty welcome participants back and make any necessary announcements. Ask for and then offer some additional comments about highlights from Day 1. Give participants a brief outline of the upcoming sessions and current session objectives.

Reflections (10 minutes)

- Lead faculty will help facilitate some reflections instructing participants to get into dyads, taking five minutes each to answer two questions provided to them from the list below:
 - › Share if there was anything complicated or that made you feel uncomfortable during Day 1 of the training. If so, why?
 - › What questions came up for you that you would like to explore further or learn more about?
 - › What are some things you learned yesterday that was helpful or that you might want to share with your court team?

Report back (15 minutes)

- Participants will be asked to share their insights based on their responses to the questions.

Court culture, access to justice, and bias

 **Time: 75 minutes**

 **Materials needed: Flip chart and markers, microphone, and Court Culture and Bias worksheet**

This session will identify institutional biases that may be a barrier to accessing civil and criminal legal systems for survivors of intimate partner violence from diverse communities. Key concepts that will be explored are neutrality, court culture, and bias.

This session will define the concept of court culture and how it impacts court staff, explain the intersection between court culture and access to justice for litigants, and recognize the role of neutrality specific to domestic violence cases.

This segment will also offer promising practices rooted in promoting procedural justice, strengthening collaboration, and enhancing coordinated community response efforts.

Learning objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to do the following:

- Identify ways a court can collaborate and serve diverse cultural communities.
- Recognize existing justice system barriers for cultural communities.
- Explain targeted strategies for overcoming barriers.

Activity instructions

Faculty will be dispersed at each table to facilitate discussion. Participants will get into groups, each responding to a different scenario, mixing the participants from other jurisdictions/geographical regions (or rural/urban/resources level, etc.).

Faculty note

Using the Court Culture and Reducing Bias Worksheet the participants will work independently, share out responses in a small group, and problem-solve collectively to determine strategies for reducing bias and fostering cultural responsiveness by responding to the following questions:

- What's working for cultural communities in your court/jurisdiction? What is not working?
- How would your court/jurisdiction implement culturally responsive practices while collaborating with community groups/partners?
- What barriers to access for underserved communities could you overcome with cultural responsiveness and how?

Break

 **Time: 15 minutes**

Faculty note

During this time, trainers can meet and quickly check in to address any emerging trends that may have surfaced during the morning sessions. The training team must continue evaluating any issues that may arise to maintain a safe learning environment.

Cultural responsiveness: Concept and strategies

 **Time: 90 minutes**

 **Materials needed: Flipchart and markers, microphone**

This session will define cultural responsiveness and highlight to participants the importance of language access as an initial step toward increasing access to justice for survivors of diverse communities and offer strategies to work with community-based organizations.

Learning objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to do the following:

- Identify ways courts can collaborate to serve survivors of diverse communities better.
- Promote awareness of varying cultural norms for addressing judges, testifying, court demeanor, past behavior, etc.
- Collaborate with culturally specific organizations in the community.

Faculty note

Using the Cultural Responsivity Worksheet, participants will complete the activity individually and then gather in small groups and problem-solve collectively by responding to the questions:

- What's working for cultural communities in your court/jurisdiction? What's not working?
- How would your court implement culturally responsive practices while collaborating with community groups and partners?
- What barriers to access for underserved communities could you overcome with cultural responsiveness, and how?

Lunch

 **Time: 75 minutes**

 **Faculty note**

During this time, trainers can meet and quickly check in to address any emerging trends that may have surfaced during the morning sessions. The training team must continue evaluating any issues that may arise to maintain a safe learning environment.

Team building activity - What's in a name?

 **Time: 15 minutes**
 **Materials needed: Microphone, paper, pen/pencil**

This team-building activity will enable participants to center cultural responsiveness and prepare for identifying the next steps in their work. The exercise focuses on names and what they mean to individuals. This also encourages participants to ask meaningful questions and learn more about their peers.

 **Faculty note**

Begin the activity by explaining to participants that one of the first things we are given after birth is a name. Knowing a name can mean knowing a person.

Activity instructions

1. Have all participants take a sheet of paper and write their full name on the top – this can include middle names, hyphenated names, given names, nicknames (usually in parenthesis), religiously assigned names, cultural adaptations of our names, etc.
2. Instruct participants to pair off with someone they do not know well (in a small group, the entire group can share immediately).
3. Ask the following questions, allowing pairs to share their answers after each:
 - › Does your name have any special meaning? What is it?
 - › Where does your name come from?
 - › What does your name mean to you?
 - › Do you have any nicknames? What do they mean to you?
4. Allow participants to switch partners. (Repeat steps 2-4.)
5. Allow two-four participants to share their responses to the questions with the group if they like.

Suggested debriefing questions

- What are one or two words that describe what this activity was like for you?
- How did it feel to answer questions you may never have been asked?
- Was there information that you left out? Why?
- Did any of your peers' responses surprise you? Why?
- Did you have any preconceived notions or assumptions about anyone's name before the activity?

Goal setting/next steps, and problem-solving: Overcoming barriers

 **Time: 60 minutes**

This session will facilitate discussion on identifying and setting goals specific to their immediate concerns, including identifying available, culturally responsive resources to increase access to victims of diverse communities.

Learning objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to do the following:

- Discuss the purpose and benefits of setting goals.
- Identify and discuss goals and plan to achieve them.

Activity instructions

- STEP 1: To motivate team members to think meaningfully about goal setting, have them answer two questions:
 - › Why does this team exist?
 - › What is the best-case scenario to describe what this team would accomplish—our ideal future?
- STEP 2: Considering the reasons for your team's existence and your vision of its ideal future, individually write out three things that you would personally like the team to accomplish by the end of next year (adjust the timeframe to fit your team's situation). In other words, what would you like to see as team goals?
- STEP 3: Have each share their desired team goals. List them on a flip chart paper and then select, group, and prioritize them. Then test your top goals against SMART criteria: Are your goals Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely?
- STEP 4: Activate your selected goals by completing the Action Planning Worksheet.

Faculty note

Using the action planning worksheet, teams will work together to determine the next steps for fostering cultural responsiveness.

Team goals are statements that guide teams to meet their responsibilities and business needs. If goals are clear and doable, they not only serve as a team's blueprint for action but also as its energy. Goals are essential on many levels:

- Goals set standards for improvement.
- They focus on activity.
- They measure progress.
- They connect the team to the organization.
- They motivate and energize.
- They are the basis for decision-making.
- They shape the “truth” and purpose for a team.

The best goals are SMART goals. This means they should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely.

Share out-of-action steps

 **Time: 45 minutes**

 **Materials needed: Microphone, flipchart, markers**

This session will engage participants in discussions of the action steps they identified and share some of the goals and how they will effectively implement them to enhance access to survivors from diverse communities.

Learning objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to do the following:

- Identify ways in which their court can collaborate and serve cultural communities.
- Recognize existing justice system barriers for cultural communities.
- Explain targeted strategies for overcoming barriers.

Activity instructions

How to implement culturally responsive practices - Action steps (worksheet-guided discussion)

- Using the [Action Planning Worksheet](#) as a guide, each participant will individually fill out the responses (10 minutes). Then region-based teams will work together to determine what culturally responsive practices looks like in their courts and what barriers they can overcome to collaborate with culturally-specific groups (10 minutes)
 - › What's working with cultural communities in your courts? i.e., "We have bilingual staff that can help litigants with their forms."
 - › Where could access be better? Where might bias need to be addressed? i.e., "Our translated materials are only in Spanish. We could add other commonly spoken languages in our jurisdiction."
- Share out learnings, strategies, and action steps for overcoming barriers with cultural responsiveness (25 minutes)

Faculty note

Each participant will share one key learning observation or question from the sessions, and the tables will discuss it. Teams will share key next steps from the [Action Steps Worksheet](#) and conversations. Faculty will be dispersed – one at each table to facilitate discussion. Groups should be organized according to jurisdictions/geographical regions (or rural/urban/resources level, etc.). Court teams should remain together.

Wrap-up, final reflections, and close training

 **Time: 15 minutes**

Faculty note

Faculty will summarize critical points, allow for any final thoughts from participants, and hand out evaluations. Key learning points include:

- Not all survivors can access your area's civil and criminal legal systems.

- Cultural responsiveness is more than just language access. But language access is critical.
- Culturally specific community-based programs in your area can help you see how different groups are accessing civil and criminal legal systems.
- Engaging these culturally specific programs can help your court be more culturally responsive.



Appendix

WORKSHEET:

Court Culture and Reducing Bias

Please respond to the following questions. After everyone has had a chance to work independently, you will share out responses in a small group and problem-solve collectively.

1. How would you describe your court's culture?

2. Who does your court culture work for and not work for? And why?

Our court culture works for... (list populations) and why	Our court culture does not work for... (list populations) and why

3. What strategies can you or your staff use to reduce bias and enable dignity in the court for three or four of the groups you mentioned above?
Please identify the group(s) and strategies.

Population	Strategy	Potential impact

WORKSHEET: Courts and Cultural Responsibility

Please respond to the following questions. After everyone has had a chance to work independently, you will share out responses in a small group and problem-solve collectively.

1. What’s working for cultural communities in your court/jurisdiction? What’s not working?

Our court culture works for... (list populations) and why	Our court culture does not work for... (list populations) and why

2. How would your court implement culturally responsive practices while collaborating with community groups and/or partners?

3. What barriers to access for underserved communities could you overcome with cultural responsibility and how?

Barriers to overcome	Strategy	Potential impact

System Mapping Worksheet:

Your Agency and/or Jurisdiction

System mapping involves diagramming all of the steps a litigant takes during their community's response to a domestic violence incident, beginning with an arrest or filing and ending with the closing of a case. System maps help to develop an understanding of current practices and processes and identify problem areas such as information flow, capacity issues, delays, or resource gaps. Once identified, this knowledge provides a solid basis from which to develop a responsive court plan.

Use the scenario below to map out how a survivor would navigate the legal system in your jurisdiction.

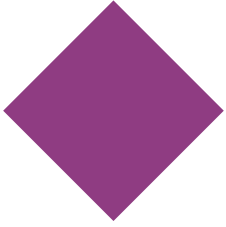
Survivor with a Disability – Maria

Maria is originally from Honduras, she is married to Rick, and they have a 10-year-old son. Maria has multiple sclerosis and uses a wheel chair. Rick is helping her become a permanent resident in the U.S. Maria explains that Rick has thrown her from the wheel chair and left her on the floor several times. He also damaged the wheelchair during one of his outbursts. In the most recent incident, Maria saw him checking her phone. He then threatened to throw her from the wheel chair but stormed out of the house, not acting on it. He accused her of having an affair. Maria's neighbor brought her to your court. When Maria met with an advocate, she asked how she could help Rick get his anger under control. She explained to the advocate that despite his outbursts Rick was mostly a nice person and a great support to her.

Create your System Maps

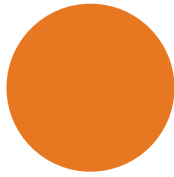
- 1. Identify the first step in the process from the time of the incident.** Place this at the beginning of the map inside the appropriate shape.
- 2. Continue discussing and drawing each subsequent step** (and placing them in the appropriate shape) until the entire process is diagrammed. **Draw arrows from one step to the next.**
- 3. Identify each decision point on the system map. List the decision makers involved at each of these points,** which may involve advocates, attorneys, etc. This step will help you identify additional stakeholders who may not currently be part of your planning team.
- 4. Go back through your map and add culturally responsive services relevant to the survivor,** such as bilingual officers, culturally-specific service providers, immigration services, etc.
- 5. Identify areas that need improved services and partnerships,** such as LGBTQ service providers, greater range of interpreters, collaboration with Indigenous and faith-based leadership, etc.
- 6. Use this map as a planning tool** to help guide decisions regarding staffing, resources, protocols, and policies. The primary objective is to make the chart clear so the process under review can be readily understood and improvements easily identified.

Shape Key and Definitions



Input

The initial step in the process.



Process

Each step in the process that is not a decision point.



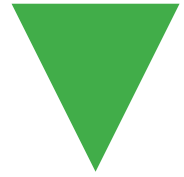
Decision Point

Steps in the process with more than one outcome possible.



Services

Areas for services and/or partnerships relevant to litigants.



Terminus

The final step in the process that ends all other actions

System Mapping Worksheet:

_____ Your Agency and/or Jurisdiction

System mapping involves diagramming all of the steps a litigant takes during their community's response to a domestic violence incident, beginning with an arrest or filing and ending with the closing of a case. System maps help to develop an understanding of current practices and processes and identify problem areas such as information flow, capacity issues, delays, or resource gaps. Once identified, this knowledge provides a solid basis from which to develop a responsive court plan.

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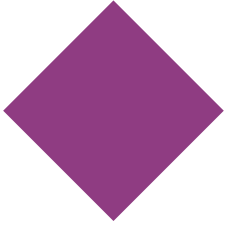
Survivor in a Faith Community - Maya

Maya arrives at court to find out about her options. Her husband started calling her as soon as he made bail, trying to control her whereabouts. Some of Maya's family is supportive and does not want her to take him back. They promise to help her. However, other relatives and community members tell her that it's her "religious duty" to remain his wife, which confuses Maya. Her case manager advised her to use the two months she has (due to a protective order) to think and not rush into any decision. She is still considering taking him back. Maya calls a leader from the religious institution they all attend and her husband's friend to set up a meeting with her husband. They all meet. The leader hears both sides of the story, and tells the husband that he has no right to assault his wife. He tells her that she should not argue with her husband. She is now in the process of trying to drop all assault charges against her husband, and to have the protective order lifted.

Create your System Maps

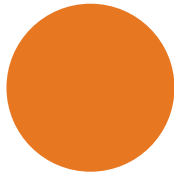
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- 4. Go back through your map and add culturally responsive services relevant to the survivor,** such as bilingual officers, culturally-specific service providers, immigration services, etc.
- 5. Identify areas that need improved services and partnerships,** such as LGBTQ service providers, greater range of interpreters, collaboration with Indigenous and faith-based leadership, etc.
- 6. Use this map as a planning tool** to help guide decisions regarding staffing, resources, protocols, and policies. The primary objective is to make the chart clear so the process under review can be readily understood and improvements easily identified.

Shape Key and Definitions



Input

The initial step in the process.



Process

Each step in the process that is not a decision point.



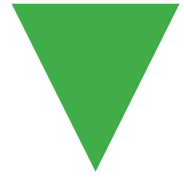
Decision Point

Steps in the process with more than one outcome possible.



Services

Areas for services and/or partnerships relevant to litigants.



Terminus

The final step in the process that ends all other actions

System Mapping Worksheet:

_____ Your Agency and/or Jurisdiction

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Use the scenario below to map out how a survivor would navigate the legal system in your jurisdiction.

Immigrant Survivor- Ana

Ana is from Guatemala, where she was married to a much older and abusive man. Once after a particularly severe incident there, she went to the police to make a report. The police took her back to her husband and told her that she needed to respect him. After that incident, Ana decided that she would never ask for help again.

Later, Ana moved to the U.S. and met Jose, an American citizen. When Ana asked Jose if he could help her with immigration papers, he told her that due to being undocumented, she would never be able to live in the U.S. legally. Instead, Jose provided Ana with a false passport and got her a job at a local hotel.

At the beginning of their relationship, Jose was kind to Ana. She worked and sent money to her children and parents in Guatemala. After a few months, Jose became increasingly jealous and controlling of Ana, and he demanded to be informed at all times of her whereabouts. She even had to video call him every hour to show her surroundings so that he could be satisfied that she was not cheating on him.

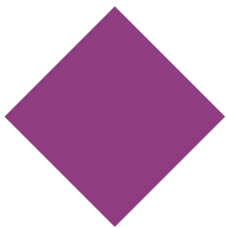
One day, Ana received a phone call from a woman that claimed to be Jose's wife. When Ana confronted Jose with it, he told her that he did not love this other woman and that they got married in Mexico, so it did not really count. When Ana told him that she was leaving him, Jose assaulted her and called the cops, alleging that she was illegally in the U.S. and selling drugs. When law enforcement arrived, they had already alerted ICE. They arrested Jose for domestic assault causing injury. Ana was helping the prosecutors but while in the courthouse, she was arrested by ICE and charged.

Create your System Maps

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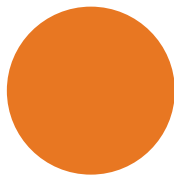
4. **Go back through your map and add culturally responsive services relevant to the survivor**, such as bilingual officers, culturally-specific service providers, immigration services, etc.
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6. **Use this map as a planning tool** to help guide decisions regarding staffing, resources, protocols, and policies. The primary objective is to make the chart clear so the process under review can be readily understood and improvements easily identified.

Shape Key and Definitions



Input

The initial step in the process.



Process

Each step in the process that is not a decision point.



Decision Point

Steps in the process with more than one outcome possible.



Services

Areas for services and/or partnerships relevant to litigants.



Terminus

The final step in the process that ends all other actions

System Mapping Worksheet:

Your Agency and/or Jurisdiction

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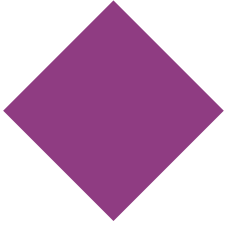
Transgender Woman Survivor - Dana

Dana just walked into your courthouse hoping to find out about her legal options. She is a transgender woman and was recently assaulted by her partner. She went to a local battered women's shelter a few days ago, but they refused service because her legal gender is male. Dana meets with an advocate at the domestic violence center in the courthouse. She tells the advocate that her partner has been abusive for years, but she's anxious about applying for a protection order. She says that when they lived in another jurisdiction, court staff told her their relationship does not fall under the definition of domestic violence.

Create your System Maps

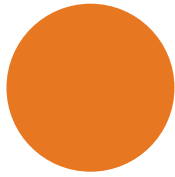
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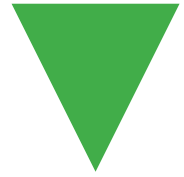
Decision Point

Steps in the process with more than one outcome possible.



Services

Areas for services and/or partnerships relevant to litigants.



Terminus

The final step in the process that ends all other actions

Action Planning Worksheet: _____

Your Agency and/or Jurisdiction

Discuss the training sessions with your team. Select two goals based on the sessions that you would like to pursue as a team. Identify the specific actions you will take and outline how it will be achieved.

<p>GOAL 1: What culturally responsive practice will be implemented in the 6-12 months following this training?</p>				
<p>How will you measure success?</p>				
	<i>Step 1</i>	<i>Step 2</i>	<i>Step 3</i>	<i>Step 4</i>
<p>Action steps What steps will your team take in order to effectively implement this goal?</p>				
<p>Responsibility Which team member(s) will complete this step?</p>				
<p>Timeline When will this step be completed?</p>				
<p>Resources What resources are needed for this step?</p>				

Action Planning Worksheet: _____

Your Agency and/or Jurisdiction

<p>GOAL 2: What culturally responsive practice will be implemented in the 6-12 months following this training?</p>				
<p>How will you measure success?</p>				
	<i>Step 1</i>	<i>Step 2</i>	<i>Step 3</i>	<i>Step 4</i>
<p>Action steps What steps will your team take in order to effectively implement this goal?</p>				
<p>Responsibility Which team member(s) will complete this step?</p>				
<p>Timeline When will this step be completed?</p>				
<p>Resources What resources are needed for this step?</p>				