

HOUSING-RELATED SERVICES AS PART OF SURVIVOR ADVOCACY



Housing-Related Services

As Part of Survivor Advocacy

Survivors of human trafficking often navigate a wide range of needs that evolve over time. Housing-related services may be one part of that support, alongside safety planning, legal advocacy, healthcare, transportation, financial assistance, economic empowerment, and other survivor-defined priorities.

Every survivor's journey is unique. There is no single path through services, no predictable timeline, and no universal set of needs. For some survivors, housing-related services become an important part of their advocacy journey. For others, different priorities may take precedence.

As those needs evolve, organizations benefit from documenting housing-related services within the broader continuum of survivor advocacy to maintain continuity and provide a more complete picture of the support being provided.

Why Housing-Related Services Matter

Housing alone does not eliminate the systemic barriers survivors face, nor is it always the most immediate priority. However, for many survivors, access to safe and stable housing can be closely connected to safety, recovery, and long-term well-being.

Without reliable housing, it may become more difficult to:

- Access healthcare and behavioral health services
- Maintain employment or pursue education
- Engage with legal advocacy and community resources
- Establish routines that support long-term goals
- Reduce vulnerability to future exploitation

Because every survivor's circumstances are different, housing-related services should always be understood within the context of each individual's goals, choices, and broader support network.

Documenting Housing Services Over Time

Housing-related services may be provided at different points throughout survivor advocacy. Depending on a survivor's goals and an organization's role, this may include documenting referrals, financial assistance, coordination with community partners, follow-up activities, survivor-led goals, and other services as needs change over time.

Maintaining this information within one secure advocacy record helps preserve continuity, provides valuable context for

the services being delivered, and supports a more complete understanding of the survivor's journey. Rather than existing as a separate process, housing-related services can be documented alongside the broader continuum of advocacy, helping organizations understand how different forms of support connect over time.

Supporting Complex Survivor Advocacy

Anti-trafficking organizations often coordinate services across multiple programs, funding sources, and community partnerships. Advocates balance direct services with documentation, reporting responsibilities, and confidentiality requirements while responding to the unique needs of every survivor.

When information is spread across multiple systems, spreadsheets, or disconnected notes, it can become more difficult to maintain continuity, coordinate across staff, and understand the full scope of services being provided. Technology should support this complexity by helping organizations maintain connected documentation without creating unnecessary administrative work.

Supporting HUD Reporting & Protecting Confidentiality

Some victim service providers also receive HUD funding, bringing additional data

collection and reporting responsibilities. These organizations must balance federal reporting requirements with their commitment to protecting survivor confidentiality.

For organizations with these requirements, Vela is a validated HMIS-comparable database that supports aggregate APR and CAPER reporting without requiring personally identifying survivor information to be entered into a shared HMIS. This allows organizations to meet HUD reporting requirements while maintaining the confidentiality protections that are foundational to victim services.

Technology Should Support Advocates

At Vela, we believe technology should support advocates, not create additional administrative work.

Vela enables organizations to document housing-related services alongside the broader continuum of survivor advocacy, including referrals, financial assistance, survivor-led goals, safety planning, legal advocacy, transportation, healthcare, economic empowerment, follow-up activities, and other services.

Keeping this information together within one secure advocacy record helps organizations maintain continuity, understand the full scope of services being provided, and respond more efficiently to reporting requirements.

When programs need to understand how grant funds are being used, housing-related financial assistance can be documented alongside the related services and funding sources. Saved reports and flexible exports help programs review their work and respond to funder requests without manually rebuilding information from multiple systems or disconnected records.

Technology cannot create affordable housing or remove the barriers survivors face. It can, however, reduce duplicate documentation, strengthen continuity across survivor advocacy, and simplify reporting so advocates can spend more time focused on the people they serve.

A Partner in Your Mission

At Vela, we believe technology should reflect the realities of advocacy: its complexity, its humanity, and the many ways organizations support survivors. Developed with input from advocates at every stage, Vela helps organizations document housing-related services within the broader continuum of advocacy while supporting reporting, protecting confidentiality, and maintaining one secure, connected advocacy record.

Whether your organization is looking for a more connected way to document advocacy or needs an HMIS-comparable solution that supports HUD reporting while protecting survivor confidentiality, we'd welcome the opportunity to learn about your work and explore how Vela can support your mission.

Want to learn new ways to simplify your work or explore features you may not be using yet? Visit veladirect.com or reach out to our team. We're always here to help.



Developed with input from advocates at every stage, Vela by Element 74 is a trauma-informed case management and reporting platform built specifically for domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking organizations.

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