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The rules are very adequate except for R9-20-208c1 which requires treatment assignment to be based only on the number of D V offenses This limited standard would allow DV offenders who caused injury or used a weapon to face the same treatment accountability as an offender who only engaged in a verbal conflict

2. How can the draft rules be improved?

R9-20-208c1 would provide more uniform offender accountability among treatment agencies if the degree of victim injury and offender weapon use were integrated into the criteria for intake assessment and sessions For example, 26 sessions would be limited to offenders who did not cause injury and used no weapon 36 sessions would be for first offenders who caused documented injury or second offenders who caused no injury and used no weapon 52 sessions would be for first offenders who used or threatened to use a lethal weapon or second offenders who caused physical injury or third time offenders

3. Has anything been left out that should be in the rules?

The rules establish the only standards in Arizona for DV offender treatment and therefore represent the only authority that can establish the coordinated community response that research has shown is so essential for reducing domestic violence and keeping our communities safe Please help save and protect the lives of victims and families by requiring more than 26 sessions for offenders who cause physical injury and/or who use or threaten to use weapons



Arizona Behavioral Counseling

September 5, 2012

Arizona Department of Health Services
Office of Behavioral Health Licensing
150 North 18th Ave., Suite 410
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Attn: Barbara Lang, Office Chief

Please accept the following topics, questions and suggestions for consideration in the development of revised draft rules for Misdemeanor Domestic Violence Offender Treatment:

1. R9-20-208 A.4. (Draft p. 5)

"Treatment for a client is scheduled to be completed in not less than four months and no more than 12 months after the client is admitted into treatment."

Why must we require a minimum of four months? Gondolf in his book Batterer Intervention Programs summarizes multi site research with the conclusion that treatment intensity (e.g. two or three sessions vs. one session weekly) results in fewer cases of D.V. recidivism than extended treatment duration (e.g. one session weekly for six or more months).

Therefore, I suggest either eliminating the minimum treatment duration requirement or reducing it to no more than 3 months (90 days).

2. R9-20-208 13.2 (Draft p. 6)

In addition to items a., b., c., and d., the following conditions have resulted in many court approvals of completion time extensions and would be helpful additions:

- Accommodation due to a qualifying handicapping or medical condition
- Financial hardship resulting in reduced attendance frequency

3. R9-20-207 G.3 (Draft p. 7)

In addition to items a., b., c and d., the following assessment topics are suggested to properly assess treatment need:

- The severity of injury inflicted on the victim
- The severity and history of control tactics used against the victim
- Weapon use, display or threat of weapon use during or prior to the conflict
- Evidence of domestic violence perpetrator indicators
- The degree of harm potential as revealed by a lethality assessment
- The number of prior charges and/or convictions for domestic violence, assault other than domestic violence and animal cruelty

The purpose of an assessment is to determine the type and severity of client need in order to achieve appropriate placement. A comprehensive assessment of offender issues rather than just the number of offenses would better provide appropriate placement.

An example of differential placement with assessment results determining the number of treatment sessions follows:



Arizona Behavioral Counseling

26 Session Treatment Program

This program is for the client who is a first offender, who caused no physical injury and who made no threat to injure.

Criteria for 26 sessions:

- The victim received no injury from the offender
- The victim received no current or prior threat of injury or abuse from the offender
- The victim was not abused prior to the conflict by the offender
- The conflict did not involve a weapon or threat of weapon use
- The conflict did not involve physical contact
- No prior charges or convictions

36 Session Treatment Program

This program is for the client who committed a second domestic violence offense or a first offense with threat to injure, threat to abuse, or a minor injury.

Criteria for 36 sessions:

- The offender did not use, display or threaten to use a weapon, and
- Threatened the victim with minor injury or abuse, or
- Caused minor injury to the victim that healed within 7 days, or
- Verbally abused the victim fewer than 5 times prior to the conflict, or
- Has one prior charge or conviction

52 Session Treatment Program

This program is for the client who committed a third domestic violence offense or any offense that involved a threat of weapon use, a moderate injury or repeated pattern of threats or abuse.

Criteria 52 sessions:

- The offender threatened weapon use or displayed a weapon without using it, or
- Caused a moderate injury that healed within 30 days, or
- Threatened weapon use, or
- Threatened serious injury or abuse prior to the conflict, or
- Verbally abused the victim 5 or more times prior to the conflict, or
- Has two prior charges or convictions

72 Session Treatment Program

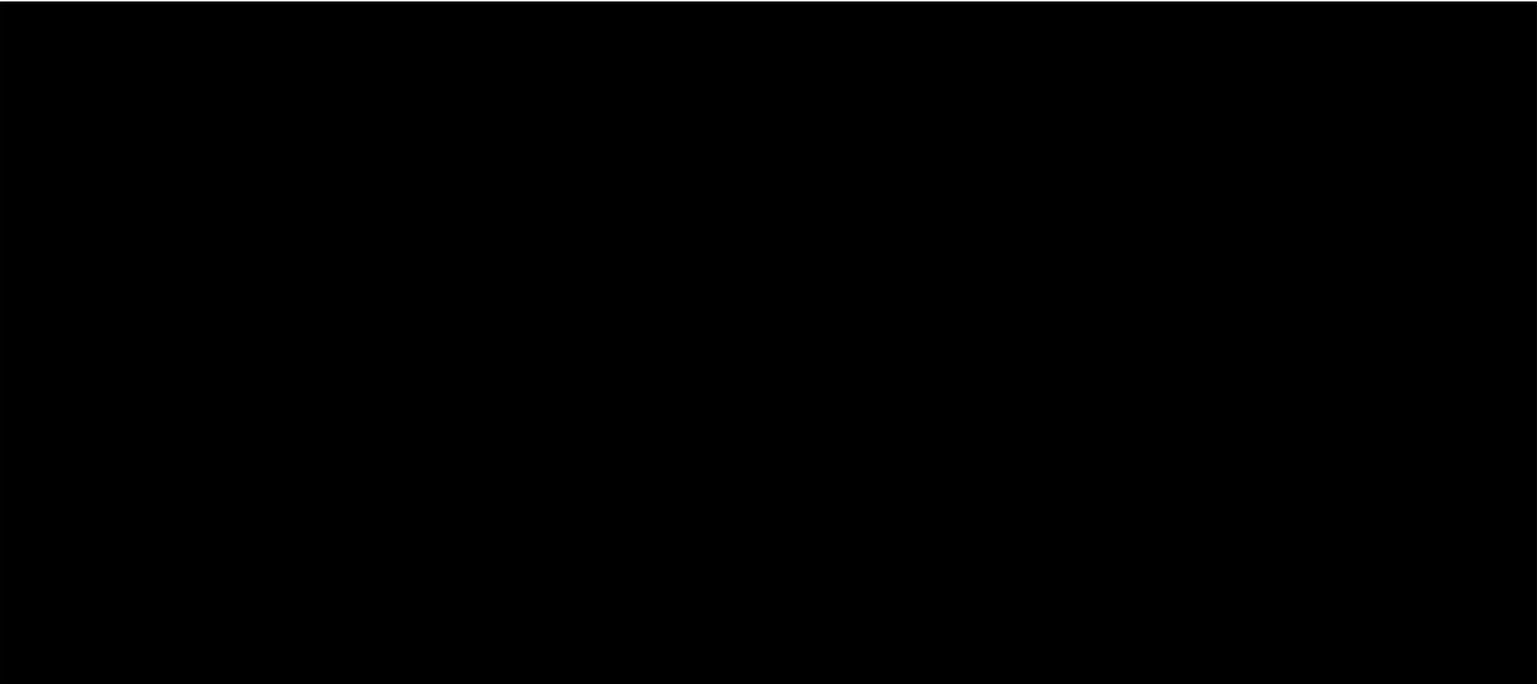
This program is for the client who committed more than three offenses or any prior offense with weapon use, serious or life altering injury or death threat.

Criteria 72 sessions:

- The offender used a weapon, or
- Caused a serious injury that required more than 30 days to heal or resulted in a disability, or
- Threatened death, or
- The victim was physically assaulted prior to the conflict, or
- Has more than three charges or convictions

Thank you for the opportunity of offering input.

Chris Peebles, Director

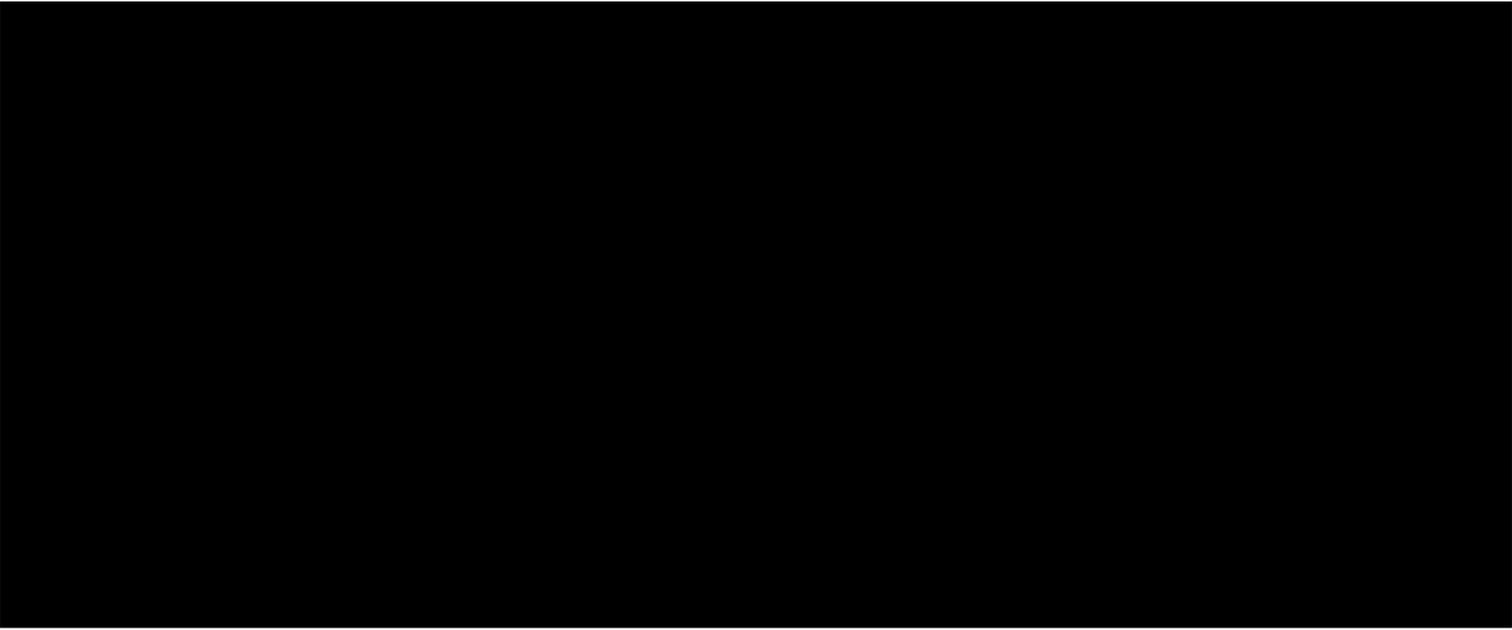


I am writing you to ask for your support for uniform standards and training levels for domestic violence issues in Arizona. As a member of the Coordinated Community Response Team (CCRT) in Prescott, I am concerned that unqualified individuals will be dealing with these very important and critical domestic violence issues.

Respectfully,

Pam Van Driel
Family Resource Coordinator and Homeless Liaison
Humboldt Unified School District
928-759-5104

Don't worry about the day you'll never see!



I recently attended a meeting of our local CCRT in Prescott Valley and heard about an opportunity to comment on upcoming changes to rules regarding Misd DV offender services. Of great concern to me was that there may be little or no requirements to be a DV offender counselor. Without specific training in DV issues, a counselor will not understand the issues specific to an offender. Also of concern was the lack of differential between offenders of varying levels of frequency and/or violence. It seems that by putting more effort on those offenders who are more violent, use weapons, or offend more frequently the services your agency provides would have better yield. I appreciate the opportunity to provide this feedback to you, and hope you will use it to make a good decision on these rules.

Thank you,

James Edelstein
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