Notes:

- Adaptation: Organizations are welcome to adapt these sample materials to fit your needs and the work you do. You may change wording to match the language your organization prefers (e.g., “survivor” or “service participant”). Before using this template, be sure to remove all notes in blue and replace [Program Name] with you’re the name of your collaborative partnership.

-Additional references: The Positively Safe Toolkit has several other resources that can be useful in enhancing collaboration and sharing best practices. See the Collaboration Guide, the Collaboration Action Plan, and the Tip Sheets for DV and HIV/AIDS service providers for additional information.

##### I. Introduction

The partners in [Community Collaboration] who are governed by this policy recognize and understand that—

* Appropriate, secure partnering among governmental and/or non-governmental agencies can enhance safety f­or victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.
* The partners have a common goal of providing access to domestic violence and sexual assault victim services that enhance victim safety.
* Victim safety can be compromised by the failure to maintain the confidentiality of service participant information.
* Information sharing may increase the effectiveness of service delivery and increase victim safety and abuser accountability, but only when a victim, who is fully aware of the risks and benefits of sharing her/his personal information, authorizes the information sharing.
* Each partner continues to maintain its own legal and ethical obligations to honor victims’ confidentiality and privacy; or depending on the program, legal obligations to share information.
* The victims who use the services offered by the collaboration or any of its partners retain their right to confidentiality from agencies within the collaboration that have confidential relationships with victims.
* Victims, who use the services offered by the collaboration, determine when and how their information will be shared among the partners or outside of the partnership, consistent with the requirements of law.
* Releases of information should enhance services provided to the survivor, and not be used solely for the purpose of easing the program’s administration.
* The most protective privacy option will always be considered. Before a victim chooses to sign a release, the partner will determine if there is another way to accomplish the purpose without the advocate or program releasing the survivor’s personally identifying information.
* When releases of information are required, they will be written, informed, and reasonably time-limited.

##### II. Partner Roles, Responsibilities, Information Sharing, and Confidentiality Obligations

The partners to the [Community Collaboration Name] have created a multi-disciplinary partnership to provide access to domestic violence and sexual assault services that enhance victim safety and privacy. When there is a question about whether a certain approach should be taken by the [Community Collaboration Name] in a given situation, the determining factor will be whether the proposed action will enhance victim safety and privacy.

##### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAM

Roles and Responsibilities:

* Provide confidential services to victims/service participants.
* Identify and work to resolve problems that may impede victims’ access to resources in the social services network, civil and criminal justice system, and other systems.
* Educate other partners on domestic violence/sexual assault issues.
* Update partners on emerging issues/research regarding domestic violence/sexual assault issues.
* [Other specific obligations]

Confidentiality Obligations:

* Recognize that partners have different levels of confidentiality obligations in regard to victim/service participant information and the sharing of that information.
* The domestic violence/sexual assault program has a strict confidentiality obligation to the victim/service participant. The program will not share individual, personally identifying information about any individual who has received or sought services without the informed, written, and reasonably time-limited release of the victim/service participant except for the mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by state law.
* The domestic violence/sexual assault program limitation on sharing personally identifying information includes sharing of such information with any of the partner agencies in this agreement.
* The domestic violence/sexual assault program may share non-personally identifying information (demographics) about those who have used its services and information about systems and processes that affect the victim/service participants.

##### HIV/AIDS PROGRAM

Roles and Responsibilities:

* Provide confidential HIV/AIDS testing, counseling, and other services to victims/service participants.
* Identify and work to resolve problems that may impede victims’ access to resources in the social services network, civil and criminal justice system, and other systems.
* Serve as a liaison with the HIV/AIDS and health care community.
* Educate the partners in regard to current information from health care and HIV/AIDS testing, medication, and care.
* [Other specific obligations]

Confidentiality Obligations:

* Recognize that other partners may have different levels of confidentiality obligations in regard to victim/service participant information and the sharing of that information.
* Limit the sharing of personal health care information and any individual, personally identifying information about any individual who has received or sought medical services without the informed, written, reasonably time-limited release of the individual except for mandatory reports that may be required by law.
* The limitation on sharing of personal health care information and any individual, personally identifying information includes sharing of such information with any of the partner agencies in this agreement.
* The HIV/AIDS program may share non-personally identifying information (demographics) about those who have used its services and information about systems and processes that affect the victim/service participants.

**(Optional)**

##### FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Roles and Responsibilities:

* Provide confidential services to victims/service participants.
* Identify and work to resolve problems that may impede victims’ access to resources in the social services network and other systems.
* Educate other partners on domestic violence/sexual assault issues.
* Update partners on emerging issues/research regarding domestic violence/sexual assault issues from the faith-based and community organization’s perspective.
* [Other specific obligations]

Confidentiality Obligations:

* Recognize that other partners may have different levels of confidentiality obligations in regard to victim/service participant information and the sharing of that information.
* The faith-based and community organization partner has a strict confidentiality obligation to the victim/service participant and will not share confidential information about any individual who has received or sought services without the informed, written, reasonably time-limited release of the individual except for mandatory reports as required by law.
* The faith-based and community organization partner’s limitation on sharing personally identifying information includes sharing information with any of the partner agencies in this agreement.
* The faith-based and community organization partner may share non-personally identifying information (demographics) about those who have used its services and information about systems and processes that affect the victim/service participants.
* [List Other Partner Roles and Responsibilities and Confidentiality Obligations Here]

##### CONFIDENTIALITY MONITOR

The partners agree to appoint a confidentiality monitor whose job is to—

1. Review the partnership operation and identify areas where confidentiality can be strengthened.
2. Evaluate information flow.
3. Evaluate [Collaboration Program] partners’ roles and their individual confidentiality and information sharing requirements.
4. Evaluate the [Collaboration Program]’s own obligation to maintain confidentiality.
5. Ensure that confidentiality releases and acknowledgements/agreements are signed.
6. Know what resources are available to evaluate confidentiality questions (e.g., attorney general’s office, consultants, state coalitions, or other national experts on confidentiality such as NNEDV.)
7. Provide for periodic training and evaluation of confidentiality practices.
8. Initiate the [choose one: semiannual/annual] confidentiality audit.

DATED:

**Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Program**

Signature Printed Name

Title

**HIV/AIDS Program**

Signature Printed Name

Title

**Faith-Based and Community Organization Partner**

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Signature Printed Name

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Title