

P-2201 APPLICATION (continued)

P-2201C Domestic Violence (Reach Up rule 2207)

The Department is committed to helping Reach Up families experiencing the effects of domestic violence to address those effects and begin to overcome economic barriers to independence. The following information and script are designed to help workers when interacting with potential victims of domestic violence.

Guidelines for Interacting with Victims of Domestic Violence

Most victims of domestic violence find it very difficult to talk about it. For some victims, it is not safe to talk about domestic violence unless the discussion is very private.

These are guidelines to follow whenever talking about domestic violence with anyone who might have experienced it.

DON'T —

- Don't ask them how they can put up with it, don't ask why they don't just leave, and don't imply that they have brought the abuse on themselves or their family in any way.
- Don't press them to talk about domestic violence more than they are willing to, even if you are sure they have been abused.
- Don't pressure them to take steps that may lead to more violence. For example, don't pressure them to talk to a domestic violence program specialist, file a police report, or petition for a restraining order.
- Don't question their judgment or their value as a parent or blame them for the domestic violence.
- Don't slip a referral card or other information about domestic violence into their bag or tell them to take the handout Domestic Violence – You Don't Have to Face It Alone (form [ESD201DV](#)) with them. If their abuser sees that they have information about abuse, it might trigger more violence.
- Don't send them mail or leave messages for them that relate to domestic violence.
- Don't try to talk to their abuser about domestic violence.

DO —

- Do allow them to ask questions without assuming they are a victim.
- Do treat them with respect; allow them to maintain their dignity and be mindful of your words.
- Do make information available about services that may help them deal with domestic violence.
- Do take steps to protect their privacy and safety by offering to meet in a private office and keeping the information confidential.

REMEMBER—

- Their abuser may become more violent when they try to improve their situation by going to work or training. The abuser may make it difficult for them to work or attend training.
- For a variety of legitimate reasons, they may not know that they are a victim.
- Even if they are not experiencing domestic violence now, they may still be experiencing the effects of it. Children who have only witnessed domestic violence, for example, may have trouble learning or relating to other people.

Domestic Violence Script

Each household must be informed of the right to request a child support waiver (Reach Up rule 2235.2) and work requirements deferment (Reach Up Services rule 2360). Offer the parent the [ESD201DV](#) and follow the script below. Please note that, for simplicity's sake, the directions in the script refer only to parents, however, the script will be followed for all Reach Up applicants and participants, whether they are parents or other caretakers.

1. The department recognizes that domestic violence occurs at all income levels, including in families receiving benefits from us. We want the families we serve to know that we're aware they may be affected by domestic violence and are here to listen to them. We understand that some people don't know what domestic violence is and may not realize that what is happening in their life is considered to be domestic violence. So, we have prepared this brief information sheet for everyone to read.

[Hand the 201 DV to the parent (or other caretaker). If both parents are present give a copy to each of them. If anyone, including a child, accompanies the parent, continue to 2, which does not encourage discussion. If the parent is alone, skip to 3.]

2. I'll give you a few minutes to read it. *[Pause while the parent reads]*

[If the parent does not express a clear desire to discuss the notice or domestic violence, stop the discussion and continue with other interview topics unrelated to domestic violence.

If the parent does express a clear desire to discuss domestic violence, skip to 4.]

3. I'll give you a few minutes to read it here. Then, if you have any questions, we can talk about them. *[Pause while the parent reads it.]*

4. I can answer questions you have about the information you've just read or give you more information about the local domestic violence program and the services it offers to families affected by domestic violence. If you want to talk about your situation, everything you say will be kept strictly confidential unless it involves child abuse. I am required by law to report child abuse.

[If you are not in a private office, say the following.] If you'd be more comfortable talking about this in a more private space, tell me, and I'll arrange for us to move to one. [If the parent wants to talk in a private space, stop the discussion immediately and follow your district office's procedures to move the interview to a private space before going on with the discussion.]

Would you like to ask any questions or talk about this some more so that I can recommend some other agencies for your needs?

[If the parent indicates no, continue to 5. If the parent indicates yes, skip to 6.]

5. All right, that's fine. I would like you to know that we do have information about domestic violence programs here. You can request a waiver of the requirement to pursue child support. You may also talk to your case manager about a deferment from the work requirements because of domestic violence.

[Then stop the discussion and continue with other interview topics unrelated to domestic violence, unless the parent, upon hearing about the child support waiver and work requirements deferment, has questions about either of them.]

6. If you are requesting or thinking about requesting a child support waiver, it would be beneficial for me to learn more about your situation. What would you like to talk about?

[Allow the parent to lead the discussion, following the guidelines in this section for interacting with people who may have experienced the effects of domestic violence. If, at any point, the parent indicates a desire to stop the discussion or appears uncomfortable with the subject, stop the discussion and continue with topics unrelated to domestic violence.]

Provide the parent with information about the domestic violence programs, the child support waiver and Reach Up. Advise the parent that they may further discuss the work requirement deferment with their case manager. Talk about the child support waiver if it applies to the parent's situation, regardless of whether the parent asks about it. If, at any point in the discussion, the parent indicates that any member of his or her family may have experienced the effects of domestic violence, continue to 7 immediately.]

7. Are you safe now?

[If they are not safe, follow your district procedures for handling unsafe domestic violence situations. If you don't know what they are, ask your supervisor.]

Domestic Violence Script Flow

The department recognizes that domestic violence occurs at all income levels, including in families receiving benefits from us. We're very concerned about this and want the families we serve to know that we're aware they may be affected by domestic violence and are here to listen to them. We understand that some people don't know what domestic violence is and don't realize that what is happening in their life is considered to be domestic violence. So we have prepared this brief information sheet for everyone to read.

If anyone, including a child, accompanies the parent, continue to 2, which does not encourage discussion

1. Hand the 201 DV to the parent (or other caretaker). If both parents are present give a copy to each of them.

If the parent is alone, continue to 3

2. I'll give you a few minutes to read it.
[Pause while the parent reads it.]

3. I'll give you a few minutes to read it here. Then, if you have any questions, we can talk about them.

If the parent does not express a clear desire to discuss the notice or domestic violence, stop the discussion and continue with other interview topics unrelated to domestic violence. If the parent does express a clear desire to discuss domestic violence, skip to 4.

4. I can answer questions you have about the information you've just read or give you more information about the local domestic violence program and the services it offers to families affected by domestic violence. If you want to talk about your situation, everything you say will be kept strictly confidential unless it involves child abuse. I am required by law to report child abuse.

If you are not in a private office, say the following:

If you'd be more comfortable talking about this in a more private space, tell me, and I'll arrange for us to move to one.

If the parent wants to talk in a private space, stop the discussion immediately and follow your district office's procedures to move the interview to a private space before going on with the discussion.

Would you like to ask any questions or talk about this some more so that I can recommend some other agencies for your needs?

No

5. All right, that's fine. I would like you to know that we do have information about domestic violence programs here. You can request a waiver of the requirement to pursue child support. You may also talk to your case manager about the deferment from the work requirements because of domestic violence.

Then stop the discussion and continue with other interview topics unrelated to domestic violence, unless the parent, upon hearing about the child support waiver and work requirements deferment, has questions about either of them.

Yes

6. If you are requesting or thinking about requesting a child support waiver, it would be beneficial for me to learn more about your situation. What would you like to talk about?

Allow the parent to lead the discussion, following the guidelines in this section for interacting with people who may have experienced the effects of domestic violence. If, at any point, the parent indicates a desire to stop the discussion or appears uncomfortable with the subject, stop the discussion and continue with topics unrelated to domestic violence.

Provide the parent with information about the domestic violence programs, the child support waiver, and Reach Up. Advise the client that she may further discuss the work requirement deferment with her case manager. Talk about the child support waiver if it applies to the parent's situation, regardless of whether the parent asks about it. If, at any point in the discussion, the parent indicates that any member of his or her family may have experienced the effects of domestic violence, continue to 7

7. Are you safe now?

If s/he is not safe, follow your district procedures for handling unsafe domestic violence situations. If you don't know what they are, ask your supervisor