



JUNE 2021

Resiliency Center Victim/Survivor Assistance Navigator *Position Description*

*Enhancing the Response to and Resiliency of Survivors & Communities
 in the Aftermath of a Mass Violence Incident*

Merriam-Webster Thesaurus
 navigate
 na-və-,gāt

To operate or control the course of
 To make one’s way through, across or over

The National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center is located on the Medical University of South Carolina’s Charleston campus as part of MUSC’s Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, and receives funding from the Department of Justice’s Office for Victims of Crime. Learn more about us on www.nmvvrc.org

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This project is supported by Award No.2020-V7-GX-K002 awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, US Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice or the Office for Victims of Crime.

The Victim/Survivor Assistance Navigator (VAN) is a proactive “broker” of services and support for MVI victims/survivors and affected community members. The Victim/Survivor Assistance Navigator (VAN) bridges gaps between clients and needed services. The Victim/Survivor Assistance Navigator (VAN) partners with system- and community-based service providers at the local, state, Tribal, Federal and national levels.

AT-A-GLANCE

The Victim/Survivor Assistance Navigator (VAN) fulfills a critical position within Resiliency Centers. Created in the aftermath of mass violence incidents (MVIs), the Victim/Survivor Assistance Navigator identifies and provides guidance and referrals for quality, collaborative services and supports victims and affected community members.

The five key responsibilities of VANs include:

1. Case management
2. Help victims/survivors and clients to navigate, understand and access available resources
3. Help improve and expand community outreach and community relations
4. Contribute to program evaluation efforts and activities
5. Perform other duties, as needed and assigned

All VAN services and support can be provided in-person, virtually, online or via a hybrid strategy.



Specific and Essential Responsibilities and Duties

1. Case management

Create an in-person or online environment for client interactions that is welcoming, accessible (including *Americans with Disabilities Act* compliant), culturally-competent and safe.

Facilitate and provide responsive, sensitive and quality client services in a timely manner – both in person and virtually.

Promptly respond to victim/client inquiries in person, by telephone, online and virtually.

Address any client questions or concerns; build trust between the client and the center in order to facilitate effective service.

Conduct intake services with new clients that provide an overview of the scope of services available, hours of operation, and any confidentiality provisions that apply to all client communications.

Conduct the intake process and initial assessment to identify and categorize the hierarchal needs of the victim, document initial findings, match the client's needs to available services, and document all findings in the case management database.

Assess victims for their immediate-, short-term and long-term needs; identify any obstacles to obtaining services (such as socio-economics, language, transportation, etc.) and provide solutions to overcome such challenges; and problem-solve to co-develop appropriate and helpful solutions.

Utilize mental health first aid skills (such as Psychological First Aid [PFA] or Skills for Psychological Recovery [SPR]) where needed, and provide appropriate referrals to mental or behavioral health providers as needed.

Provide assistance with identification and completion of forms – both in person, virtually and online – that link victims/survivors to services and support.

Determine the degree of personal social support a victim may or may not have to contribute to effective strategies that build personal resilience; and help the client brainstorm possible social support strategies.

Actively participate in strategic meetings and planning sessions to ensure that overall case management activities fulfill the mission, vision, values and goals of the Center.

Conduct and document victim/client satisfaction surveys that directly link to their needs, as stated, in the initial assessment (described above).

Document all client communications, referrals and services provided for the purposes of overall program evaluation and meeting relevant grant requirements.

Provide feedback about the case management software/system's capacity to fulfill the agency's direct victim/survivor services, and to best serve victims.



2. Help victims/survivors and clients to navigate, understand and access available resources

Research and document governmental and non-profit agencies and organizations – at the local, state, Tribal, Federal and national levels – that offer direct services and support for clients and community members.

Identify relevant resources and points-of-contact for victim/survivor assistance (local, state, Tribal, national and Federal) within the community where the Center is located, and within communities where MVI victims reside nationally.

Develop an online database/resource directory that is updated quarterly, to include:

- Services that address basic needs, including but not limited to housing, transportation, food, interpreters, education support for children, etc.
- Direct victim/survivor services
- Available local, state and Federal public benefits
- Public health and physical health services
- Behavioral and mental health services
- Legal services and legal aid
- Human services
- Social services
- Holistic and wellness services

To better serve MVI victims and survivors who reside in other states and communities, it's helpful to identify victim service providers with whom you can coordinate to provide direct support and assistance.

[The USDOJ Office for Victims of Crime's Online Directory of Crime Victim Services identifies survivor services by location and type of services needed.](#)

Be aware of traditionally-underserved victims or survivors who live in marginalized communities, and who may experience barriers to accessing services. Consider partnering with community-based organizations that can help support survivors who may feel marginalized in order to strengthen your capacity, level of trust, and service delivery.

Provide all client services in a manner that is nonjudgmental and commensurate with the victim/survivor's age, gender, culture, ethnicity, religion, geography, dis/ability and sexual orientation.

Help victims complete various forms needed to access services, support and public benefits; and review forms and instructions with victims and explain what types of information is being sought, and for what purposes.

Coordinate directly with various service providers/referrals to ensure that forms and other requested information that are submitted are accurate, compliant and complete.

Help the client navigate various available resources to ensure that his/her needs are being met, including initial contact and/or follow-up with providers or resources as needed, based upon the client's ability and needs.

When identifying relevant resources for victim assistance, provide a "warm hand-off" that personally links victims to other agencies, organizations or programs. Follow-up as needed and appropriate.

In cases involving criminal justice proceedings, explain relevant victims' core rights under appropriate jurisdictional law – Federal, Tribal, state and/or local – including the rights to victim compensation; information and notification; reasonable protection; participation in investigative and justice processes (including victim impact statements); restitution; and compliance with victims' constitutional and statutory rights.



3. Help improve and expand community outreach and community relations

Develop and maintain working knowledge of the status of programs, engagement, and initiatives to fully participate in community partnerships that enhance victim/survivor and community services.

Seek, establish and maintain strong, positive community partnerships to improve responses to and help victims build resiliency with local service providers, law enforcement and justice officials, and potential supporters through ongoing convenings of partners, communications, gap analyses, problem-solving and resource development (both in-person, virtually and online).

Document successful strategic partnerships and personal relationships with all partners.

Provide resources and referrals to community members who seek support in the aftermath of the MVI.

Plan and facilitate community and group events that are easily accessible to the public, in partnership with local stakeholders including city/county/Tribal/state officials; civic organizations; schools, colleges and universities; youth programs; and mental/behavioral health organizations (among others). Such events can be provided in-person, virtually or online.

Represent the Center as the face of community recovery and resiliency efforts related to the MVI.

Represent the Center at any local, state, regional and/or national conferences, forums or meetings – both in-person and online – as needed and appropriate.

Support the Center's efforts to promote its resources and services on its website and social media platforms (i.e., Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, etc.).

4. Contribute to program evaluation efforts and activities

Collect, track, document and report data related to the usage of Center resources and services provided.

Provide specific data required by the Center's grants and other fiduciary obligations.

Document and summarize cumulative findings from victim/client satisfaction surveys, to evaluate overall program effectiveness and any needs for program/services improvement.

Provide time framework, updates and progress reports to the Center about direct client services; and services provided to community members; and other critical VAN activities.

5. Perform other duties, as needed and assigned

"Other duties" depend upon the individual Resiliency Center, its mission and goals, and capacity to fulfill them.



Required and Demonstrated Skills, Knowledge & Abilities

Strong leadership, communications and interpersonal skills.

Cultural competence that includes awareness of difference cultures and Faiths in order to provide services that are respectful and holistic, and to address any cultural barriers to accessing services.

Work effectively with diverse individuals and groups; and listen and communicate sensitively and patiently with persons in crisis.

Capacity to multi-task, efficiently coordinate and lead multiple projects, staff and volunteers.

Ability to contribute to strategic activities and plans that strengthen and support the Center's mission, vision, values and goals.

Capacity to work cooperatively in a dynamic team environment, both internal to the Center and external in the community.

Skilled in the provision of Psychological First Aid (PFA) and basic victim advocacy.

Familiarly with victims' core rights, including the rights to victim compensation; information and notification; reasonable protection; participation in investigative and justice processes (including victim impact statements); restitution; and compliance with victims' constitutional and statutory rights.

Thorough understanding of the principles of program evaluation, and the application of performance measurement strategies and techniques.

Intermediate knowledge of MS Office applications (or any other applications or software specific to a Center).

Intermediate knowledge of social media platforms (i.e., Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok).

Ability to work a flexible schedule, with periodic early morning, evening and weekend work.

Proficiency in languages other than English that is used in the community.

Required and Demonstrated Personal Attributes

Demonstrates compassion and caring for clients and community members who have been detrimentally affected by the MVI.

Embodies personal attributes of honesty, integrity, professional behavior, tact and a sense of humor.

Works well and respectfully with other people and populations who are diverse by age, gender, culture, ethnicity, religion, geography, dis/ability and sexual orientation.

Works effectively and collaboratively in a dynamic, innovative and changing environment.
Pays attention to detail, accuracy and quality assurance.

Works independently and takes initiative to develop effective strategies and accomplish tasks.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks are extended to the following for providing information and resources for this Tip Sheet:

United Way of El Paso County
Vegas Strong Resiliency Center
Members of the NMVRC Resiliency Center Directors' Forum

