



NMVC

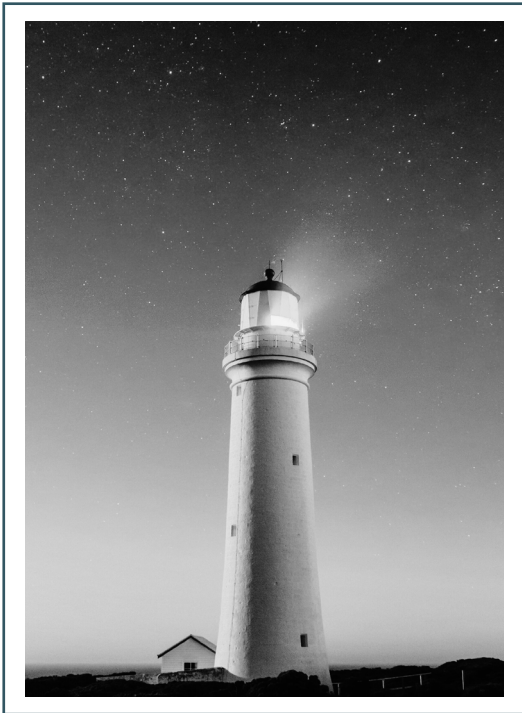
National Mass Violence Center

Providing Resources to Victims,
Survivors, & Those Who Serve Them

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Resiliency Center Victim/Survivor Assistance Navigator Position Description

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



Merriam-Webster Dictionary
navigate

na-və-,gāt

To operate or control the course of

To make one's way through, across, or over

5 Key Responsibilities of VANs:

1. Case Management
2. Help improve and expand community outreach and community relations
3. Contribute to program evaluation efforts and activities
4. Perform other duties, as needed and assigned

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 effectively and collaboratively in a dynamic, innovative and changing environment.
- ⇒ Works well and respectfully with other people and populations who are different by age, sex, culture, ethnicity, religion, geography, dis/ability and sexual orientation.
- ⇒ Pays attention to detail, accuracy and quality assurance.
- ⇒ Works independently and takes initiative to develop effective strategies and accomplish tasks.



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

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.

[USDOJ Directory of Crime Victim Services](#)

[Victim Compensation & Assistance by State](#)

- ⇒ Help victims complete various forms needed to access services, support, and public benefits; review forms and instructions with victims and explain the types of information being sought, and for what purposes.
- ⇒ Coordinate directly with various service providers/referrals to ensure the forms and other requested information submitted are accurate, compliant and complete.
- ⇒ Help the client navigate various available resources to ensure their 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 and help victims build resiliency with local service providers, law enforcement, and justice officials. Partnerships can also be established 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; 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 used to evaluate overall program effectiveness and any needs for program/services improvements.
- ⇒ 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 understanding 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 different 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.
- ⇒ Familiarity 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 Microsoft 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.

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

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Members of the NMVRC Resiliency Center Directors' Forum