

## **Frequently Asked Questions About New Jersey's Domestic Violence Specialist Certification**

### **Who can be a Domestic Violence Specialist (DVS)?**

Anyone who meets the criteria set forth by the Board of the New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals (NJADVP) can become a DVS. We have certified individuals of all educational levels and professional backgrounds, including shelter workers, clinical therapists, attorneys, police officers, and health care providers.

### **Where can I get training?**

There are 29 domestic violence programs in the state of New Jersey, one or more of which may offer training in your county. The New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women (NJCBW) offers a variety of trainings through its Training Institute in Trenton. Community colleges and universities sometimes offer continuing education programs which may be pre-approved for DVS education hours. Since training opportunities are often displayed on the NJCBW's website, it is always a good idea to check the postings frequently.

### **From what organizations does NJADVP accept education hours?**

- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)
- National Network to End Domestic Violence
- National Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Family Violence Prevention Fund
- Praxis International
- New Jersey Anti-Trafficking Initiative
- National Organization for Women
- Feminist Majority
- National Organization of Men Against Sexism
- New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women (NJCBW)
- Other State Coalitions Against Domestic Violence

Additionally, DVS education hours may be awarded on a case-by-case basis for training provided by other organizations.

### **How many Non-DV and Non-Approved education hours can be accepted towards initial DVS certification?**

A total of 20 non-DV and/or non-approved education hours will be accepted towards initial certification in the following Core Curriculum Areas:

<u><b>Core Curriculum Area</b></u>	<u><b>Number of Non-DV and/or Non-Approved Hours</b></u>
Intervention Skills	4
Race and Culture	6
Confidentiality/Ethics	3
Special Populations	2
Group Counseling Skills	6
Substance Abuse	6
Sexual Abuse	3
Community Organization	3

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**Can I receive education hours for attendance at New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women's meetings/forums?**

At the conclusion of the meeting/forum, complete the verification of attendance form and present it to the Coalition staff member for signature. You can be approved for one DVS education hour for the meeting/forum. You are permitted to select the DVS core curriculum area to apply the training. You can earn a limit of 10 DVS education hours by attendance at meetings/forums for application towards your DVS initial certification and 5 DVS education hours towards your DVS recertification.

**How do I get experience?**

If you currently work or volunteer, in a social service environment, your hours may serve towards the task hour requirements. If you come into contact with victims or perpetrators of domestic violence in any work setting, for example, law enforcement or health, your work may also meet this requirement. Alternatively, completing a volunteer training course and volunteering at your local domestic violence program may give you both education and task hours towards your certification.

**How can I arrange a site visit to a domestic violence shelter and/or a courthouse?**

You can contact your local domestic violence shelter to arrange for a visit. Also, the court visit can be scheduled in conjunction with your local domestic violence program's legal advocacy staff. You may contact NJADVP for assistance.

**If I have a degree or other licensure will my credits transfer?**

Some of your credits may transfer, but you will still need additional training and/or experience that is specific to the field of domestic violence.

**Do I need a DVS in order to work at a domestic violence program?**

It is not currently a requirement; however, programs may be more likely to hire a DVS-credentialed individual. In addition, all programs are required to encourage their staff to obtain the DVS.

**Will other states accept my NJ DVS?**

It depends on the state. New Jersey was the first state to develop a domestic violence credential and several other states have patterned their own programs after ours. Contact the domestic violence coalition in the state you are interested in for more information.

**How often will I need to be recertified?**

NJADVP requires Domestic Violence Specialists to obtain 21 DVS education hours every two years.

**Is there a fee to become certified?**

The fee for initial certification is \$250. There is an application by which qualified individuals may apply for a reduction of this fee. The recertification fee is \$50.

**Who can I contact if I have questions about the application process?**

The New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals (NJADVP) is a program of NJCBW.

NJADVP c/o NJCBW, 1670 Whitehorse-Hamilton Square Rd., Trenton, NJ 08690-3541.

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