

# Safety Planning

## Enhancing the Response to Trans Survivors of Sexual Assault

When working through a safety plan with a trans client, it is important to remember the unique and often intersecting factors that contribute to their risk of experiencing further violence (e.g., lifetime violence, sex work, lack of social supports, hate crime). Some key tips for developing an appropriate safety plan with a trans client include:

<b>Helping</b>	them explore informal sources of support such as friends and supportive family members, if there are any.
<b>Supporting</b>	them in safeguarding hormones, prostheses, clothing, makeup, and identification, if they help them be perceived as their identified gender and have not been collected as evidence.
<b>Aiding</b>	them in identifying ways to maintain their safety and confidentiality within their trans networks, where others may know the perpetrator.
<b>Assisting</b>	them with contacting unfamiliar organizations to determine which ones may be most appropriately suited to meeting their needs.
<b>Connecting</b>	them with organizations that are explicitly trans-affirming in their approach.
<b>Assessing</b>	the client's level of comfort with accessing LGBTQI2S-positive services, should no trans-specific supports be available.

List adapted from FORGE (2013, p. 2)

As many trans persons are likely to avoid healthcare, social services, including shelters, and law enforcement because of experiences of stigma and discrimination, they may be less likely to have received professional support for experiences of abuse. Many may not be aware of any available resources or services or know that something can be done to ameliorate the impacts of current and past experiences of violence and abuse and prevent further victimization (FORGE, 2013). For these reasons, safety planning may be critical - not only in helping trans clients receive appropriate short-term follow-up care, but also in connecting them with longer-term sources of support that may mitigate some of their risks for revictimization.

For a more in-depth safety planning guide with suggested questions to ask and actions to take when working with trans clients, refer to FORGE (2013), *Safety planning with trans clients FAQ*.

### References:

FORGE. (2013). *Safety planning with trans clients FAQ*. Milwaukee, WI: Author. Retrieved from <http://forge-forward.org/wp-content/docs/FAQ-01-2013-safety-planning.pdf>

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