



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES

DFS Division of  
Family Services

# Voluntary Services

## Rights and Responsibilities

### What is it?

#### **Rights and Responsibilities**

A service model where survivors' participation in domestic violence programming should be voluntary and not conditional. Rules should be minimized to promote survivor self-determination and collaborative advocacy practices.

### Why is it important?

#### **Survivor-centered**

It is an empowerment-based, survivor-centered model build on the belief that survivors are competent and capable and have the right to make their own decisions.

### Is it required?

#### **Maybe!**

If your agency receives funds through VAWA or FVPSA, you are required to use the voluntary services model. It is also referenced in the Professional Standards – Standard #8.

### How do we make it happen?

#### **Reflection and Support**

Agencies can regularly reflect on existing rules and make reductions and changes as needed. Staff can be supported with ongoing training and resources and find alternative ways to meet the need without a rule. Clearly articulate rights and responsibilities to all clients.