B. Application Process

1. Date of Request

The Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence Survivors (TA-DVS) application process starts with a request. The request may be in the form of:

- A phone call
- An office visit
- A home visit
- A written request

The *date of request* only establishes the date a request for TA-DVS is made. The date when a signed application is received (*filing date*) is when the application time frame starts. Please see section below, “Application time frames.”

When someone establishes *date of request* for TA-DVS, have a conversation about their immediate safety and next steps, such as getting them an application when they can come into the Department of Human Services (DHS) office, etc.

**Example 1:** Lawrence calls his Family Coach and expresses that he would like to apply for TA-DVS: this establishes Lawrence’s date of request for TA-DVS. His Family Coach asks if he is safe and what next steps he would like to do. Lawrence says he is safe tonight and would like to come into the office tomorrow to complete an application and an interview. His application time frames will start once he has completed and submitted a signed application. His Family Coach narrates this conversation.

2. Application time frames

The branch must assess the emergent need within eight working hours of receiving the application, narrate and address any immediate safety concerns identified:

**Example 2:** A client comes in at 4:00 p.m. on Friday afternoon: Assess what the safety concerns are and make sure that, at a minimum, the survivor is safe and is able to return for their TA-DVS intake next business day if there are no appointments currently available. DHS completes the TA-DVS Safety Screening form (*DHS 7802*), and narrates.

- Eligibility must be determined within 16 working hours after the application is complete.
Example 3: Amber’s application for TA-DVS was received 2/15 at 4:30 pm and reviewed for safety. Front staff notates that Amber needs her TA-DVS eligibility determined within 16 working hours. Amber is scheduled for 2/16 at 10:00 am. This is an acceptable scheduling of an intake because Amber will be seen and her eligibility will be determined within the 16 working hours.

- The one exception to determining eligibility within 16 working hours of application is when the applicant requests a specific date outside of the 16 working hours, if the application is not completed, or if they do not show to the interview. The 16 hours start at the time of the new intake appointment, if requested.

Example 4: Joseph is applying for TA-DVS on 4/1. Front staff asks Joseph if he is available for an intake later today. Joseph replies that he is safe and unable to come back to the office until 4/12. The worker schedules Joseph for 4/12 and narrates that Joseph requested his TA-DVS intake at a later date and he is safe.

On 4/12 the intake worker will need to determine Joseph’s TADVS eligibility within 16 hours of the date of intake time.

NOTE

If the survivor requests that the intake appointment be made outside the 16 working hours:

- Check with the survivor that they have a safe place to stay until the appointment can be scheduled.

- Schedule the appointment at the earliest date the survivor is available (and in time to meet any emergent needs).

- Narrate that the appointment is being delayed based on a survivor request.

The 16 hours to determine eligibility would then start from the intake date and time.
CAUTION

TA-DVS payments cannot be made without a signed application and the Self-Sufficiency Domestic Violence Assistance Agreement (DHS 1543) completed.

Application Requirements Rule

461-115-0020 — Application Requirements

TA-DVS; Application for Assistance and Effective Dates; Application Processing Time Frames Rule

461-135-1220 — TA-DVS; Application for Assistance and Effective Dates; Application Processing Time Frames

3. Incomplete application process

If a decision cannot be made because the survivor turned in an Application for Services (DHS 415f) and did not show at the appointment, try to contact the survivor to reschedule either by phone or mail (if we have a safe address). If unable to contact the survivor, hold the dhs 415f for 30 days, then fill out the decision notice denying the application and place in the file.

Example 5: Soto was meeting with her intake worker for TA-DVS. During the intake Soto became distraught and requested to leave. She did not want to continue with the interview and walked out. In this situation, because we do not have a completed interview, we do not have enough information to determine TA-DVS eligibility. Hold the application for 30 days and narrate the situation. We can try to call Soto to reschedule, if we have a safe phone number.

CAUTION

If it is not known whether the address or phone number is safe, hold any notice in the file and narrate and do not leave any detailed voice messages.
4. **When a new application is required**

- If an applicant has completed a [dhs 415](#) in the past 30 days and no eligibility determination was made, update the application as appropriate. Do not have the applicant complete a new one.

- If benefits were denied within 30 days and there has been no change of circumstances, have the applicant request a hearing as opposed to completing a new application and reapplying.

- If the applicant has had a change in circumstances, take a new application.

**Example 6:** An applicant comes in and is denied TA-DVS because there is no child in the home and we are unable to determine when the child will be returned. If the applicant returns a week later and the child is now in the home, the applicant needs to complete a new application.

5. **Interviewing the survivor**

In the TA-DVS program, we are required to complete a face-to-face interview with the victim.

The requirement to complete a face-to-face interview can be waived if there is a safety risk due to domestic violence or, there is a hardship. Hardship follows the TANF rules and would be considered:

- Care of household member
- An individual’s age, disability or illness
- A commute of more than two hours from the individual’s residence to the nearest branch office
- A conflict between the individual’s work or training schedule and the business hours of the branch office
- Transportation difficulties due to prolonged severe weather or financial hardship

In these cases, where there is a safety risk due to domestic violence or a hardship, we can complete the interview via phone, home visit or offsite appointment. Please narrate the safety concern.
CAUTION

If we are completing interviews via phone, we must first ask the survivor if this is a safe time to talk. We want to be mindful that in a phone interview we are not able to confirm who is there during the intake. Phone interviews should be used rarely for TA-DVS due to safety concerns.

If completing an offsite appointment or home visit, confirm that the abuser will not be at the visit. We cannot complete a home visit if it is not safe for DHS staff. Before leaving, please make sure leadership in your office knows where you are going and what time you are expected to return.

Safety is our primary concern when interviewing a client:

- Never ask the survivor about domestic violence in front of or within hearing of the alleged abuser.
- Use strategies to build rapport, encourage conversations and support the survivor.
- Ask open-ended questions to start the conversation.
- Express concern about bruises or other injuries (e.g., “That looks like it hurts. Do you need to go to the doctor?”).
- If the survivor expresses positive feelings towards the alleged abuser, focus on the violence and controlling behaviors, not the abuser’s personality.
- Express concerns for the survivor.
- Ask the survivor what she/he needs to feel safe.

NOTE

The survivor’s sense of the most pressing matter may not be the same as yours. Show respect for the survivor’s priorities; this will help in developing rapport and trust.

The survivor is the best judge of their safety.

Consider the following:

- The survivor’s existing resources and capabilities
• Does the survivor have a good support system?

• What are the results of past efforts at problem-solving and seeking help? Questions that may help in the assessment include:
  - Who have you asked for help? What resources have you used or tried in the past? What happened? Did you find them helpful?
  - Do you have family or friends that can provide you support?

• Find out what she/he has done that made things safe or tolerable; see who has been helpful in the past, whom she/he trusts.

• The actual available and accessible community supports and resources.

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<thead>
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<th>Interviews Rule</th>
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<td>461-115-0230 — Interviews</td>
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6. Subsequent requests

Field Offices are to jointly staff approval or denial of application requests for TA-DVS with Central Office if:

• The applicant received TA-DVS benefits in the last 12 calendar months and TA-DVS funds were issued; or

• This is the third or fourth request for TA-DVS in the last 12 calendar months.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Request</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Request</td>
<td>YES or NO</td>
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NOTE

• Last 12 calendar months means the end of the 90-day eligibility period fell in the last 12 months.
Example 7: Karilyn was approved for TA-DVS in January. Her TA-DVS grant was approved from January to March. In February, Karilyn was approved to use $800 for first month’s rent. In March of the following year, Karilyn applied for TA-DVS again. The request would need to be staffed jointly with Central Office because she received payment in the last 12 months, due to the final month of her eligibility period.

If there is ever a case with multiple requests over many years or a case that the worker would like a second opinion, you can email TA-DVS Policy for guidance.

7. Authorized representatives

Authorized representatives are not allowed in the TA-DVS Program. Due to safety concerns, the TA-DVS Program does not allow authorized representatives or alternate payees.

If a survivor comes into a DHS office and needs assistance with an application, payment request, etc., DHS can have a conversation with the survivor to determine if an Authorization for Disclosure, Sharing and Use of Individual Information (MSC 3010) is appropriate.

The MSC 3010 is a tool that can be used to share needed and relevant information regarding DHS case information.

Have a conversation with the survivor about the information they want to share and the individual they want to share with. Determine if this is a safe person to be a contact for the survivor. If determined this is a safe person and sharing information would benefit the survivor, DHS can complete the MSC 3010 detailing the purpose of the disclosure, the exact person receiving the disclosure, and what information is being disclosed.

Example 8: Jason has open SNAP and TANF. Jason comes into the office to apply for TA-DVS. Jason explains he does not have a phone and wants his mother, not the abuser, to have access to his case information when he requests payments. His worker talks with Jason and determines his mother is a safe person for him and it could benefit him to have someone with a phone call in regarding the status of his payment requests.

Jason signs a Release of Information detailing that his mother can receive phone communication only from DHS regarding Jason’s situation with payment requests.
8. Verification of eligibility

To approve TA-DVS eligibility, survivor statement is an acceptable form of verification for financial and nonfinancial eligibility requirements. Verification is needed for payments.

**Example 9:** Talia comes into the office and applies for TA-DVS. Talia is five months pregnant, does not have any other eligible children, and does not have verification of proof of pregnancy. If Talia meets all other TA-DVS eligibility, we can approve her for the TA-DVS grant. No payments may be issued until we receive verification that Talia is pregnant.

- Accept the survivor’s statement of domestic violence
- Accept the survivor’s statement of emergent need (i.e., it is not safe to return home due to continued risk of domestic violence)

Waive verification of other items, if getting verification would delay meeting an emergent need. Timeliness is critical in domestic violence cases.

**Verification:**

TA-DVS is intended to provide support to survivors of domestic violence and their children, not to the perpetrator.

No verification is required that a person is a victim of domestic violence or that a domestic violence situation has occurred unless:

- You learn an individual applying for TA-DVS has been arrested for or was convicted of an act of domestic violence in the past and you are uncertain whether or not the individual applying is currently a victim of domestic violence, you may verify that the individual is not a perpetrator of domestic violence;

-OR-

- If two applicants apply against each other in the same eligibility period, you pend both cases to determine who the survivor is.

**Example 10:** Chelsea comes into the DHS office on Monday and applies for TA-DVS against her boyfriend, Joe. Chelsea meets TA-DVS eligibility and is approved. On Tuesday Joe comes into the DHS Office and applies for TA-DVS against Chelsea.

At this time, we need to determine whom the survivor is:

Joe’s TA-DVS application is pended with a DHS 210 for verification that he is not the perpetrator of domestic violence. His case will not be approved without verification.
Chelsea’s case is also pended, DHS 210A for verification that she is not the perpetrator of domestic violence. No payments can be made without verification. The case will close with the Notice of Decision and Action (DHS 456) taken if Chelsea does not respond to the DHS 210A timely.

Acceptable Verification of Domestic Violence

A statement or letter that the individual is not a perpetrator of domestic violence or is a self-defending victim from:

- A law enforcement officer
- A district attorney
- The court
- A batterer intervention program (BIP)
- A victim’s advocate
- A Child Welfare worker
- A mental health provider
- A health care or other medical provider
- A member of the clergy; or
- Other professional from whom the individual has requested assistance to address the domestic violence

Contact Central Office to identify other adequate types of verification. DHS can approve and issue payments on cases that provided appropriate verification.

CAUTION

Sometimes victims of domestic violence are arrested because at the time the police arrive they believe them to be the aggressor. Sometimes there are mutual arrests because the police officer is unable to determine who the primary or predominant aggressor is. Later it may be found that the person was a self-defending victim or the injury to the victim was not apparent at the time of the arrest. In some cases the perpetrator may be the one to call 911; they may access a restraining order before the victim or there may be mutual restraining orders. It is also common for abusers to claim to be the victim. If circumstances arise that lead you to believe that it is the
abuser is applying or that the person you are seeing is a victim who was arrested and you are unsure what to do next, you can staff the case with Central Office.

**NOTE**

In most cases, it is not appropriate to pend TA-DVS cases as we have only 16 working hours to determine eligibility. If the survivor is in agreement that they need more time to verify an eligibility requirement, and verification is necessary or the case will be denied, narrate in TRACS how long the survivor has stated they need to verify the information and provide a pending notice, Notice of Pending Status *(DHS 210)*, with the needed information and agreed-upon dates.

**Verification; General Rule**

461-115-0610 — Verification; General

**Specific Requirements; TA-DVS Rule**

461-135-1200 — Specific Requirements; TA-DVS

9. **Certification periods**

- The 90-day eligibility period begins the date the survivor is determined eligible for TA-DVS.
- There are no extensions in the TA-DVS Program.
- There is no periodic redetermination needed.
- TA-DVS 90-day eligibility periods may not overlap.
- The eligibility period is exactly 90 calendar days.

**Example 11:** Jaclyn contacts her worker on the 90th day of her TA-DVS eligibility period. She is wondering if her worker will extend her a few more weeks, so she can locate housing. She states that she has not had any luck finding a place to rent. The worker explains to Jaclyn that there are no extensions. Her TA-DVS is ending today and if there is still a safety concern, Jaclyn will need to reapply.

**Example 12:** Blake has an open TA-DVS case and the 90th day is in two months. Blake came in to the office today to request use of the $1200.00. He has located a safe house and is ready to move in. DHS makes
payment for the housing. A month passes and Blake returns to the office requesting more TA-DVS funds, because the home he has moved into is not safe anymore. The worker explains to Blake that he has accessed the $1200 fund and his 90-day eligibility period will not expire for another month. The worker offers Blake other resources in the area and again offers Blake the option to meet with the co-located advocate.

**Benefits; TA-DVS Rule**

461-135-1230 — Benefits; TA-DVS