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AGENCY OF GENDER EQUALITY**

KOSOVO SHELTER OPERATIONAL BUDGETING & DESIGN GUIDELINES



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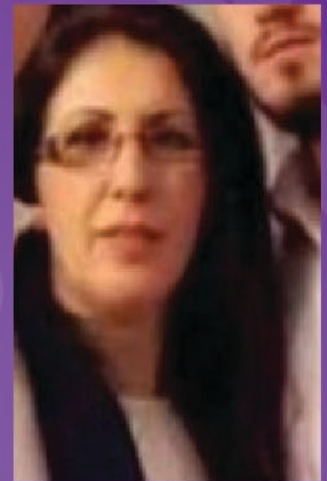
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Miradije Hetemi
Prishtinë, 2016



Hysnije Kamberi Krasniqi
Prishtinë, 2019



Makfire Zuka
Viti, 2020



Arianita Zahiti
Vushtrri, 2017



Shkurte Veseli
Ferizaj, 2017



Armenda Aliu
Prizren, 2019



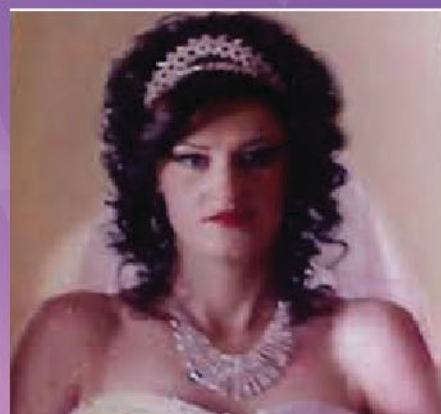
Dr. Igballë Llalloshi
Prishtinë, 2008



Flora Omuri
Ferizaj, 2016



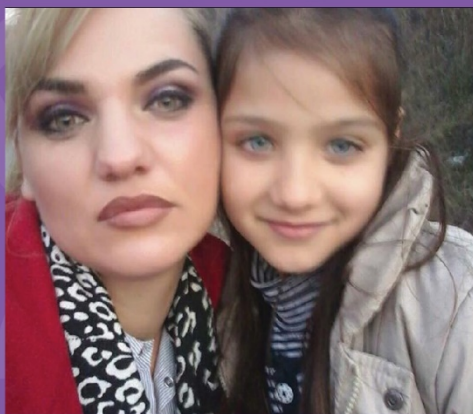
Donjeta Pajaziti
Deçan, 2015



Antigona Morina
Rahovec, 2011



Sevdije Berisha
Pejë, 2017



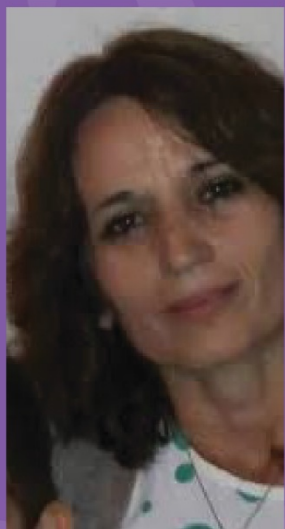
Valbona Marku dhe Kiara Marku
Gjakovë, 2018



Sebahate Morina
Prishtinë, 2021



Marigona Osmani
Ferizaj, 2021



Zejnepe Bytyçi
Suharekë, 2015

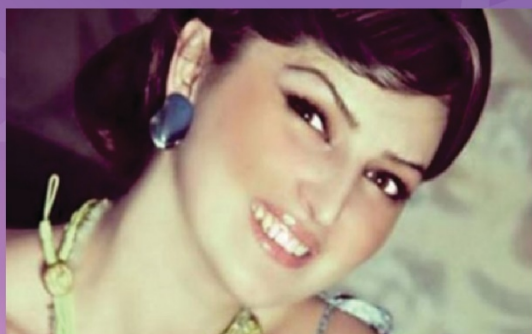
In Memoriam of Victims of Domestic Violence



Remzije Krasniqi
Prishtinë, 2019



Sabile Mavrovqani
Kamenicë, 2020



Diana Kastrati
Prishtinë, 2011



Dafina Zhubi
Prishtinë, 2016



Feride Prokshi
Skenderaj, 2017

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International Consultant

The opinions expressed in this work are the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Kosovo Agency for Gender Equality and GIZ.
The text of this document was initially written in English



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The background is a solid purple color with a repeating pattern of white ribbons. The ribbons are arranged in a way that they appear to be floating or overlapping, creating a sense of depth and movement. The word "INTRODUCTION" is centered in the middle of the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This document is designed in support and response to Kosovo efforts for the establishment of specialized support services for victims of violence against women, primarily shelter services, in line with the Council of Europe standards, as set out in the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence - Istanbul Convention (CETS No.210). The document aims to support the Kosovo Gender Equality Machinery led by the Agency for Gender Equality in the Office of the Prime Minister to provide the needed expertise and resources to sustain further the efforts of Kosovo public institutions, Kosovo shelter network, and other CSOs working in the field of domestic violence and international community working in Kosovo in their endeavor for comprehensive ratification of the Istanbul Convention principles and provisions in the Kosovo legal and policy development framework and operational actions of the implementing institutions. Therefore, the document is guided by and in reflection of the principles of the Istanbul Convention focusing explicitly on the cost of shelters for the victims of domestic violence and their building design standards.

The purpose of this document is not to assess the current situation of the Kosovo shelters for the protection of the victims of domestic violence, nor aims to evaluate the quality of the existing services and the missing ones, nor does it aim to set out the quality guidelines for the functioning of the shelters. These documents already exist and have greatly supported and contributed the work for the development of this document. The document aims to estimate the cost of the operationalization of Convention principles and set out standards for the functioning of the shelters, protection of the victims, and their empowerment in their quest for regaining their dignity and enjoying fundamental rights.

The provisions for shelters in the Istanbul Convention set out the minimum standards for the role of the shelters and the minimum baseline for service provision across all member states and provide aspirational levels that can work towards. They provide both the foundation and the overarching principles upon which the design, planning, and implementation of the shelters' operation and support services should be built upon and achieve the consistency of quality across all local services.

Presently, the Kosovo shelters do not meet the standards set out by the Istanbul Convention, and therefore, significant investments are needed to bring them to par with those standards. The presented shelter cost estimations should be read as start-up cost estimations for the most part, with few exceptions. For the most part, they are a one-time investment over a long period. They are investments of paramount importance and with profound effects on protecting the life and dignity of the victims of domestic violence. They assist them in coping with the extensive range of challenges (from physical and emotional consequences to financial, legal,

and social impacts), empower the victims, and promote women's rights. Also, equally important is to recognize the role of the shelter in promoting women's equality and in speaking out on systemic issues of discrimination, shedding light on women's multidimensional experiences as victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence and the conditions of women within society that give rise to violence against them.

There are no building design and construction standards for shelters in general and shelters for domestic violence, specifically in Kosovo. Few countries have set up such measures. This document aims to propose a cluster of principles and guidelines pertaining to building design and space arrangement. These proposed guidelines draw heavily on the emerging literature on shelter building and design standards of few countries that have already established building codes and standards for shelters and services for victims of domestic violence, gender-based violence, homeless, etc. Secondly, the document makes an effort to establish a link between the presented and adapted standards with the Istanbul Convention principles and the outlined standards for shelters.

This document is organized into two main parts. The first section of the first part focuses on the Council of Europe principles and standards on the delivery of shelter services and the significant impact on the treatment, support, and empowerment of victims of domestic and gender-based violence.

The second section provides a step-by-step approach on how the cost-benefit of the shelters can be calculated by focusing solely on the shelter protection role from battering, assaults, and potential injuries as an outcome, which is also the purpose of the shelter's existence. Also, in this section, challenges for estimating the shelter's social cost-benefit are presented and analyzed, shedding light on the steps to fill the data gap for permitting for cost-benefit analysis exercises in the future and compliance with mandatory provisions of the Istanbul Convention on data gathering.

The third section identifies the initial and ongoing operational costs of running specialist services such as shelters early in the planning process. Careful and realistic budgeting allows shelters, funders and service recipients, and policy-makers to better articulate expenses and remain cautious of potential underestimation or overlooking the necessary resources required to establish and manage the shelter infrastructure and related services. Sensitive, gender-oriented budget projections, grounded on the Convention principles, can inform shelter's decisions to improve and diversify their services and strengthen their fundraising efforts.

The second part of the document focuses on the **shelter design guidelines**. The standards set out by the COE Convention and in the COE document *Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services (2008)* cannot be fully achieved in a sterile, concrete

landscape and unimaginative protection house building. The role and impact of architecture highly affect both the society and the individual, and it is well-known its profound impact on its occupants. Everything from the layout to the material finishes can contribute to occupant health, mood, and productivity. These issues and the importance of victim's profile and protection housing accessibility and protection housing models are all part of the first section, namely, the **standards of COE Convention, victim's profile, and typology of protection housing**.

The second section of the document concentrates on the **building design and planning process**. The building or renovating facilities necessitates an in-depth preparatory work process with the participation of multiple stakeholders. This in-depth prior work is deemed necessary because of the shelter's mission that serves a diverse group of residents. They have both common and specific needs, with a length of occupancy that varies from few days to several months to several years, and require ongoing specialized support services. The section calls for an integrated approach to the development of the facility. It emphasizes the steps that the project team and all stakeholders should pursue in building design that achieves high performance and considers specific social goals, meets environmental principles, fulfills building standards, and combines them all within well-calculated budget means and scheduling deadlines.

The harmonization of guiding principles and design requirements constitutes the third section that highlights the importance of safety and security issues as elements of significant importance in the building design and its operational arrangements. The victims and their dependents should acquire a sense of safety and security when they move into the protection housing facilities. Equally important is to provide the same for the staff who run the shelter facility daily and provide services to the housed victims and those who come to receive benefits through support programs run by the shelter. Further, this section emphasizes that promotion of well-being is an essential focus of the shelters, the protection housing, and support programs and that the building design can be a critical promoter of the health and well-being of the victims and their children, and that design should be trauma-informed based, it should consider the presence and well-being of children, and it should provide a flexible space arrangement that minimizes conflict and enhances resilience.

The fourth section, **elements of design and space arrangements**, draws attention to the site design by focusing on identifying and selecting the neighborhood and its geographic location, outdoor surrounding, and outdoor recreational space. Also, it focuses on program area design that includes the space arrangement and design of shared rooms and private areas for the victims and their dependents and the services offered and staff offices.

Terminology such as shelter, protection housing, and special services have been used interchangeably throughout the document. While they share many common elements, they do not necessarily involve the same functioning, operating modalities, or offer the same services. In the document, as a rule, shelter is used in its generic term to connote any form or type of refuge where victims of domestic and gender-based violence receive protection and access other services. In contrast, two different definitions are used about a specific context and to denote outright a particular functioning and service modality. Their definitions can be found under the glossary section of the document.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used to develop was based on a desk review of various research conducted by Kosovo Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), international organizations between the 2008 to 2020 period, research of available online literature, and review of hardcopy journals and books.

Also, a questionnaire was distributed to all shelter protection service providers to get an overall understanding of the available physical infrastructure, space arrangements and design, and location. Further, a meeting with representatives of the Kosovo Shelter Network was held on June 2021. This meeting addressed issues and concerns primarily on funding modalities and operating costs vis-à-vis Istanbul Convention obligations and standards. In addition, previous research findings regarding shelter services and functioning conducted by Kosovo CSOs and international organizations were revisited to assess whether significant changes had taken place over the last decade.

This document was developed in line with Istanbul Convention principles and the *Quality guidelines for shelters for victims of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence - Enhancing services for victims in Kosovo*¹ developed with the Council of Europe office's support in Prishtina. Also, this document was designed and shaped by a victim-centered approach that aims to establish physical safety and protection and meet the "immediate" victim's needs, avoid and prevent secondary victimization by treating the victims with appropriate sensitivity and empower them to exercise their human and legal rights and the right to remedies outside the criminal context.

¹ Council of Europe (2021). Quality guidelines for shelters for victims of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. Enhancing services for victims in Kosovo*. Logar, R. & Qosaj-Mustafaj, A. Retrieved from: <https://rm.coe.int/shelter-guideline-eng/1680a24ced>

GLOSSARY

Accessible Design - Design with the objective of achieving full integration and participation for individuals of all abilities to access their environment indifferent of mobility, sight, hearing or cognitive disabilities. (Adapted from *City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines*.)²

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) - is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behaviour and nuisance activity through environmental design.³

Ensuite Washroom - A washroom that is entered from a sleeping room or within a *private unit*.

Inclusive Approach/ Inclusive Design Approach - A design approach that considers the individuality of those using the shelter system, the challenges they face, the connections between inequity and homelessness, and which seeks to create affirming, supportive spaces to assist in achieving social equity and enhancing access to the essential services that the shelter provides.⁴

Helpline - A free telephone line that provides advice, information, support and crisis counselling.⁵

Private Washroom - A washroom accessed from a corridor intended for the use of shelter users' one-at-a-time.⁶

Private Unit - A *private unit* is a grouping of one or more *sleeping areas*, a washroom and a kitchenette (or kitchen) within a securable perimeter intended for the exclusive use of an individual or *family*.⁷

Second Stage Housing - Safe, affordable short-term housing with support services. Independent housing typically in apartments or townhouses and length of stay is typically no longer than 18 to 24 months.

Trauma-informed Design - Design that recognizes that the physical environment can have physiological and emotional impact. Trauma-informed design creates a supportive environment that resists the re-traumatization of people. The goal of trauma-informed design is to create environments that promote a sense of calm, safety, dignity, empowerment, and

² Hilditch Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines.

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/8cea-shelter-design-and-technical-guidelines.pdf>

³ The International Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Association (2021). Webpage of CPTED Association. <https://www.cpted.net/>

⁴ Hilditch Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines.

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/8cea-shelter-design-and-technical-guidelines.pdf>

⁵ Council of Europe (2008). Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services. Kelley, L. & Dubois, L. [https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF\(2007\)Study%20rev.en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF(2007)Study%20rev.en.pdf)

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

well-being for all occupants. These outcomes can be achieved by adapting spatial layout, thoughtful furniture choices, visual interest, light and color, art, and biophilic design.⁸

Shelter/refuge - A safe house in which women and their children can stay. Such services also offer advice and support and should have specific services for children.⁹

User-Centred Design - This term is taken to mean a design where users of the building are not forced to change their behaviour and will be a design that accommodates and considers the primacy of their needs.¹⁰

2-piece washroom - A washroom containing a toilet and a hand wash sink, and a shower or bathtub.

3-piece washroom - A washroom containing a toilet, a hand wash sink, and a shower or bathtub.

⁸ Garcia, A.M. (2020). *Empathy in Architecture: Using Trauma-Informed Design to Promote Healing*. Published Environment for Health Architecture. <https://e4harchitecture.com/empathy-in-architecture-using-trauma-informed-design-to-promote-healing/>

⁹ Council of Europe (2008). Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services. Kelley, L. & Dubois, L. [https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF\(2007\)Study%20rev.en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF(2007)Study%20rev.en.pdf)

¹⁰ Hilditch Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/8cea-shelter-design-and-technical-guidelines.pdf>



PART ONE

SHELTER'S STANDARDS OF SERVICE DELIVERY & OPERATIONAL COST ESTIMATION

I. The Council of Europe Standards for Shelter's Service Delivery

In September 2019, Kosovo Assembly amended its Constitution and incorporated the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence - Istanbul Convention (CETS No.210). The incorporation of the Istanbul Convention in the country's Constitution without reservation establishes new obligations for Kosovo state institutions. These new obligations require various undertakings that involve amending and drafting new legal frameworks, redefining the existing institutional mandates, and setting up new ones. Further, they demand developing well-targeted policies, enhancing the quality and quantity of the current services and adding new ones, allocation of adequate resources, and increased coordination with multiple stakeholders at all levels.

The provisions for shelters in the Istanbul Convention set out the minimum standards for the role of the shelters and the minimum baseline for service provision across all member states and provide aspirational levels that can be worked towards. They provide both the foundation and the overarching principles upon which the design, planning, and implementation of the shelters' operation and support services should be built upon and achieve the consistency of quality across all local services.

These minimum standards set out by the Istanbul Convention serve as the lowest common denominator or basic standards that all states and services should aim to achieve.¹¹ These standards serve as benchmarks for all stakeholders, policymakers, and service providers alike. All the extended services should be offered, and their availability should be measured against these set standards. Their providers' performance should be evaluated against these standards, too. At the same time, many of these required services and serving capacities may not yet be available, or their availability is scarce, and their delivery and accessibility fall short of meeting these standards. In this respect, they are aspirational as they represent the levels and the provisions the states strive to attain and uphold within their policies, practices, and resources to maximize access, quality, and optimal results. Therefore, although aspirational, they are not optional but mandatory.

The minimum standards set out by the Istanbul Convention are informed from and have drawn upon a broad range of experiences and practices of many non-governmental organizations, which have proven effective in supporting victims in the aftermath of violence. The standards

¹¹ Council of Europe, Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs (COE 2008). Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services
[https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF\(2007\)Study%20rev.en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF(2007)Study%20rev.en.pdf)

not only can be adapted in the work of all state and non-state entities but at the same time they should be integrated into all interventions, operational policies, shelter staffing and capacity development, services' design and delivery and the shelter build design, its spatial planning and refurbishment. They should be viewed as interrelated and interdependent. They are laid out as follows:

1. Working from a gendered understanding of violence against women

The application of this standard requires that all services to in-house and out-of-shelter victims are provided with responsive support and services that are victim-centered and individually tailored. The application of these standards means that they should be offered within the recognition that violence against women is the most pervasive form of abuse, a universal phenomenon that cuts across all divisions of class, race, religion, age, ethnicity, capacity, and geographical location, and the understanding that violence against women is both cause and consequence rooted in the inherited societal inequalities, asymmetric gender roles, and power imbalance. From a human rights perspective, it acknowledges that violence against women in general and violence in families is explicit of structural nature and stems from:

- a. norms and notions that emphasize men's superiority versus women's inferiority,
- b. the assumption that men and women are not equal values and
- c. that power and violence are not ends in themselves but means of preserving masculinity hegemonic privileges.

It recognizes that specialist services should be provided by women NGOs, in safe women-only spaces, 'which have proved the most responsive and effective in enabling women to realise their rights to live free from violence and overcome its debilitating effects'.¹²

2. Safety, security and human dignity

Safety and security are equally important for the victims and staff of specialist services. Women must trust that they are safe and secure physically and emotionally as they seek refuge in the shelters and protection housing facilities. They should feel safe and secure as they receive services in the shelters or beyond them, and they are treated with dignity. The specialists' services staff should feel safe and secure as they conduct their work and provide their services. For the most part, shelter services staff are also women.

3. Specialist services

The knowledge and skills of staff and forms of provision are specialised, appropriate, and tailored to the specific needs of service users and staff, which may be complex. The first concern of victims' advocates in their work with victims is their physical safety and crisis

¹² Ibid.

intervention. This work and services offered to the victims should be informed by a thorough understanding of trauma. Advocates' work will be more effective and responsive to the needs of victims if they view domestic violence and violence against women in the context of trauma.

Of paramount importance is to realize that no two victims will exhibit the same response to the traumatic experience of domestic violence in the same way, including here the individual members of one family who experience the same traumatic event. Their response to trauma differs. Specialist services designed and delivered through a trauma-informed approach and trauma-informed care are not specific types of services. They share a set of principles that place trauma at the center of the work with victims, through sensitivity and respect, with supportive intent, and consciously avoiding re-traumatization of the victims.

Trauma-informed services characteristics:

- *Focus on understanding the whole individual and context of his or her life experience*
- *Infused with knowledge about the roles that violence and victimization play in the lives of women*
- *Designed to minimize the possibilities of victimization and re-victimization*
- *Hospitable and engaging for survivors*
- *Facilitates recovery*
- *Facilitates growth, resilience and healing*
- *Respect a woman's choices and control over her recovery*
- *Form a relationship based in partnership with the survivor, minimizing the power imbalance between advocate and survivor*
- *Emphasize women's strengths*
- *Focus on trust and safety*
- *Collaborate with non-traditional and expanded community supports (such as faith communities, friends and families, etc.)*
- *Provide culturally competent and sensitive services.*

(Trauma-informed care best practices and protocols for Ohio's Domestic Violence Programs)¹³

¹³ Ferencik, D. S. & Ramirez-Hammond, R. Trauma-informed care best practices and protocols for Ohio's Domestic Violence Programs, funded by Ohio Domestic Violence Network.
http://www.ncdsv.org/images/odvn_trauma-informedcarebestpracticesandprotocols.pdf

4. Diversity and fair access

The victims of domestic violence come from different backgrounds. Their multiple, complex and competing challenges and needs require diverse and intersectional service design and delivery orientation “that consider survivors’ multiple identities and priorities beyond victimization and safety”¹⁴.

Specialist services should be offered around the clock, 24/7, 365 days of the year, and should be equitable and accessible, free of charge to all demographics and backgrounds. Particular attention should be paid to peripheral, periurban, rural, and remote areas, informal settlements, minorities, and a minority within minorities, travelers, and asylum seekers.

5. Advocacy and support

Services should be designed and delivered through advocacy support approaches and mechanisms to ensure that the rights and the needs of the victims and the service users are accessed and promoted. The demands for systems change are actively advocated.

Support and advocacy should cover traditional areas such as shelter services, trauma management, social welfare, and sites such as through advocacy, education, and information on behalf of the victims. Advocates should educate professionals in systems and institutions to lift and deconstruct barriers that traditionally have reinforced discriminatory and disempowering practices towards women.

6. Participation and consultation

Specialist services should be a victim’s and user’s centered needs. All services, at all steps, should be delivered and rooted in each victim’s and service user’s immediate needs and priorities, preferences, and aspirations (sheltering, housing, legal aid, economic access, employment development, education, and vocational training).

Victims’ and users’ support services are also challenged to support advocate’s authentic engagement with the services users, to invest in organizational cultures where advocates can exercise their professional autonomy necessary to compassionately and respectfully meet the unique needs of all victims”¹⁵.

7. Empowerment

Tailor-made empowerment services inform victims and services users of their rights & entitlements, strengthen their self-esteem by treating them with respect, dignity, and sensitivity. Empowerment is based on the recognition that domestic and gender-based violence against women is a social injustice complex problem and not the women’s deficit and

¹⁴ Kulkarni, Sh. (2017). Intersectional Trauma-Informed Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) services: Narrowing the Gap between IPV Service Delivery and Survivor Needs. *Journal of Family Violence* 32(1)1-134

¹⁵ Ibid.

they are not a victim by choice, and when they are given adequate support, resources and opportunities they will choose violence-free lives for themselves and their children.

8. Confidentiality

Victim's rights to confidentiality should be respected at all times, and they ought to be timely and duly informed whenever the confidentiality be limited or may not apply, especially when children are involved.

9. A coordinated and multi-agency approach

Domestic violence, gender-based and violence against women are widespread phenomena rooted in unjust social structures "which the criminal justice system alone cannot unravel"¹⁶. The only effective design for combating domestic violence is an inter-agency response approach.

A coordinated agency approach seeks to provide the victims with a victim-center, comprehensive approach, responsive to all community-wide agencies such as police, legal system, social service providers (advocates), government, and health care system, educational and vocational programs. This kind of approach will reduce or eliminate violence from their lives, provide victims with the necessary resources. Contrastingly, in an uncoordinated system, victims are left to seek multiple services themselves. Many the victims may not know about their existence and availability, causing unnecessary strain and burden on victims.

10. Holding perpetrators to account

The perpetrators of violence should be held accountable whether they are provided or not with proper treatment services. Effective accountability is vital to hold perpetrators to account to ensure recognition for victims and to deter future crimes by identifying the risks earlier.

11. Governance and accountability

Specialist services staff should be fully trained and licensed and provided with equal access, continuous on-the-job training, and capacity development opportunities. Quality standards criteria on their hiring, roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and performance should be set up at the national level to ensure effective and efficient service delivery for all service users and standardized quality of services. Specialist services performance should be closely monitored by government entities in charge, and their work be examined whether their provided services positively impact victims' and service users' life.

¹⁶ Praxis International (2010). The Blueprint for Safety 12. https://www.stopvaw.org/inter-agency_response

II. Social Cost-Benefit Analysis of Shelters

There are many policy responses through which domestic violence complexities, their immediate effects, and long-term consequences are addressed. These policies involve fundamental response policies such as shelter refuge for battered women and children, counseling and advocacy services for the victims, and longer-term policy responses involving legal aid, housing, social welfare, identity protection, life skill training, job training, and employment referral and placement. Other policies target the training of police officers, judges and prosecutors, medical personnel, provide services for the treatment of violent perpetrators, and implement public awareness and educational activities on domestic violence that aims at altering the societal norms and values that tolerate domestic violence and violence against women phenomena.

In the past two decades, Kosovo has implemented many of the above-enlisted policies to various extents. Some of these policies and policy activity undertakings during the years have been evaluated extensively by civil society organizations ⁽¹⁷⁾, ⁽¹⁸⁾ and international organizations ⁽¹⁹⁾, ⁽²⁰⁾ and in many instances they have been evaluated at the request of the Kosovo government, namely AGE²¹. All the policy evaluations undertaken have focused chiefly on the direct operating costs of programs and policies as reflected in a budget, or they have conducted the primarily qualitative analysis. To date, no efficacy evaluation of the undertaken and implemented policies and programs have been carried out, and even those few conducted, rigorous policy evaluations have their limitations because they do not compare policy benefits with costs or facilitate the translation of policy impacts into returns of public investment.

Assessing the efficiency of such complex social policies becomes even more, pressuring in increasingly challenging fiscal conditions and the more difficult choices that lie ahead for policymakers about how to meet society's most urgent social needs with shrinking resources and in times of unprecedented pandemic crisis with long-term socio-economic repercussions. Meeting the obligations and fulfilling the services' standards deriving from the Istanbul

¹⁷ Kosovo Women Network (2012). At What Cost? Budgeting for the Implementation of the Legal Framework against Domestic Violence in Kosovo.

¹⁸ Kosovo Women Network (2009). More than "Words on Paper"? The Response of Justice Providers to Domestic Violence in Kosovo https://womensnetwork.org/resources_type/more-than-words-on-paper-the-response-of-justice-providers-to-domestic-violence-in-kosovo/

¹⁹ Open Society Foundation (2007). Violence against Women: Does the Government care in KOSOVO? <https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/20130510152804806.pdf>

²⁰ Council of Europe (2017). Mapping Support Services for Victims of Violence against Women in Kosovo*. <https://rm.coe.int/mapping-support-services-for-victims-of-violence-against-women-in-koso/168072d125>

²¹ Kosovo Women Network (2008). Security Begins at Home: Research to Inform the First National Strategy and Action Plan against Domestic Violence in Kosovo https://womensnetwork.org/resources_type/security-begins-at-home-research-to-inform-the-first-national-strategy-and-action-plan-against-domestic-violence-in-kosovo/

Convention for the operation of shelter services will involve vast start-up financing cost to meet the Convention's standards. An enormous start-up cost, combined with lack of evidence-of effectiveness and "a strong leaning towards ideologically grounded social policymaking, feeds into the mainstream thinking that a vast array of social programs are generally wasteful and neither benefiting the individuals they were intended to assist nor the larger society."²² This is especially true when it involves early intervention policies targeting specific groups that require multiple interventions, interdisciplinary in nature and multi-sectoral ones.

Arguably, not all social programs should be subject to efficiency tests as they provide benefits not only for their direct recipients but for society at large as well. They are not wasteful welfare spending policies as often viewed and misrepresented. Social policies under which interventions against domestic violence and shelter provisions fall require not only resources but also interventions that are equally responsive, efficient, and effective.

Measuring the efficiency of the social policies is not at odds with the goals and interventions of social policies. It is not at odds in the case of shelters in measuring how efficiently they fulfill their roles and mandate to protect the victims of domestic and gender-based violence. How efficiently are implemented the social values of equity, human dignity, protection of life, and all the values deriving from the Istanbul Convention specifically, and human rights convention in general, should be comprehensively measured. Finally, proposed policies that can demonstrate efficiency and equity are found to be politically appealing to broad coalitions of different ideologies²³.

One technique in assessing the efficacy of social policies is social cost-benefit analyses through which the societal costs and benefits of a shelter program can be identified and monetized. However, due to the lack of data accuracy and data deficiency, conducting a social cost-benefit analysis of a shelter program in Kosovo cannot be running. Therefore, the following sections will provide a descriptive model against which in the future Kosovo entities may conduct a social cost-benefit analysis to weigh the efficiency of the shelters, propose new interventions, modify or change current policy approaches, services, and resource allocation of the shelters and maximize the benefits for the victims of domestic violence and society in general.

It should be noted that the application of social cost-benefit analyses is not well researched in terms of battered victims, women and children. One primary reason for this is the broad range of impacts of these policies with different and various outcomes. As a rule, social cost-benefit

²² Wimer, D.L. & Vining, A.R. (2009) Investing in the Disadvantaged. Assessing the benefits and cost of social policies. Georgetown University Press. Washington D.C.

²³ Ibid.

analyses require accurate projections of the future effects. However, the potential consequences can be broad (trauma-related healing impacts/outcomes, behavioral, employment,) long term (affecting the rest of lives of victims i.e. ending of an abusive re²⁴ (impacts and outcomes may increase or decrease over time).

Also, many relevant impacts of social policy interventions are not well monetized with readily observable market prices and therefore require shadow prices.²⁵ For example, it is difficult to find a unit cost for reducing violence due to the information services that a shelter provides to the victims of domestic violence. They require time and resources to derive monetized values for such impact from scratch, while meantime without these shadow prices – essentially plug-in values – it is impossible to conduct a reasonably comprehensive (social) cost-benefit analysis.²⁶

As already noted, shelters programs and operations provide benefits to both victims and society at large. Kosovo shelters receive funds from Kosovo state institutions and international donor programs operating in Kosovo. Therefore, their cost and benefits should be considered from the gains or benefits' viewpoint of Kosovo society, as their cost and benefits impact society.

The only study found that attempts to measure the social cost benefits of the shelter program propose that:

- a) first, to calculate the net efficiency of the program (total social benefits minus total social costs), which will measure the total net economic effects of the domestic shelter,
- b) second, to calculate the benefit-cost ratio, which indicates how much economic benefit is gained from each dollar of investment in a program.²⁷ In turn, the benefit-cost ratio expresses economic efficiency that is easily understood and useful in policy deliberations.²⁸

Once the social cost-benefit is determined on how to be measured, the next steps concerns what outcome of the shelter programs, as a policy response should be measured? As it is already stated in this document, social policy interventions, and in this respect shelter programs too, produce a broad range of impacts and outcomes, of immediate and long-term effects. For this document, the outcome proposed to be measured is the shelter protection

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Chanley, Sh. A., Chanley Jr., J.J. & Campbell, H.E. (2001) Providing Refuge: The Value of Domestic Violence Shelter Services. Published in American Review of Public Administration, Vol. 31. No.4. December 2001

²⁸ Welsh, B.C., & Farrington, D.P. (2000) Monetary Costs and Benefits of Crime Prevention Programs, in Tonry, M. (editor), Crime and Justice: A Review of Research, volume 25, University of Toronto Press, Chicago, 1999b. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/652202>

role from battering, assaults, and potential injuries, which is also the principal purpose of the shelter's existence. Also, since the protection from assaults, damages and loss of life is a fundamental principle of the Istanbul Convention, Kosovo institutions should start with this proposed outcome which is far more straightforward, directly linked to the shelter's mandate rather than focus on other outcomes that are far more complex to be measured for various reasons, i.e., more than just one institution is in charge, unit cost calculations require complex calculations that should be preceded by rigorous research and well-defined methodologies, etc.

In terms of length of time, the estimation of costs and benefits should be conducted against one-year period of shelter's operation, which is deemed sufficient.²⁹

The figures that should be used for conducting the social cost-benefit analysis should primarily involve and be based on the figures estimated for the annual operation cost of a shelter that provides services for victims of domestic violence. However, the statistics should be based on what is currently available in Kosovo, in other words, the current costs of shelters. The figures should be found on the estimated costs of a shelter that reflects the principles and meet the standards of the Istanbul Convention for shelters, namely the operational and building design.

Presently, none of the shelters in Kosovo fully meet those standards. The figures should be estimated for a shelter service that offers ten bedrooms with bathrooms, for a total of 35 to 40 beds, a kitchen, and cafeteria, with one kids' in-door playground, one study & computer room, one training room, one counseling room, four administrative offices, one medical room, sanitation area, two staff bathrooms, and one laundry room. (For further details of the building design, consult the *Part Two* content of this document.)

The shelter operates 24/7, 365 days of the year, and should employ 12 full-time staff members. Also, the shelter maintains a 24 hotline, toll-free telephone service separately run from the shelter's official phone line. The shelter offers housing, food, personal care items and clothing. In terms of services, the shelter offers to the victims counseling and advocacy services, free legal aid and medical assistance and training services, education and schooling assistance services for children of victims of domestic violence. Also, the shelter staff coordinates with other local entities such as police, courts, health center, and center of social work and housing department of the municipality to address victims' needs accordingly. Further, shelter staff provides training and advocacy to the above-mentioned entities to enhance their capacities in addressing domestic violence according to their mandate and amend their approaches and

²⁹ Chanley, Sh. A., Chanley Jr., J.J. & Campbell, H.E. (2001) Providing Refuge: The Value of Domestic Violence Shelter Services. Published in American Review of Public Administration, Vol. 31. No.4. December 2001

responses as needed. Lastly, the shelter provides awareness-raising activities to the community that it serves.

The sheltering time spent by the victims of domestic violence, women and children alike, in a shelter varies. Based on the data obtained from the nine operating shelters in Kosovo, the victims spend between 24 hours to two years during the past three years. However, not all Kosovo shelters have been working for the same amount of years. Some have been working for a longer time, and some have been established and have been operating more recently. The figures needed to be used for the social cost-benefit analysis should be based on one shelter alone and for one-year period, with data drawn from a shelter that offers the most significant number of beds, treats the largest number of victims on an annual basis, and provides all services or the most considerable number of benefits, as required by the Istanbul Convention.

A significant program expense for a shelter operation is housing. As already mentioned, the present shelter buildings do not meet the Convention standards. Kosovo state entities, in line with Convention obligations, should provide the physical infrastructure for the shelters. They may give the building land and construction cost, or if land and an existing facility are already available and the physical space permits, the state should provide only the remodeling and renovating cost of the existing building, the transformation of which should meet the Conventions standards. In either case, the housing cost should be calculated separately: first, the land cost, if purchased or lent, should be added to the cost of construction or remodeling/renovation. Then that total amount should be divided for the asset's estimated useful life to calculate the amortization cost. So, for example, if the land and construction cost is estimated at €100,000 and the useful life of the building and land is estimated at 20 years, then the amortization price will be € 5,000 annually. This amount constitutes the operating cost for housing. Further, the literature notes that when land and buildings are well-maintained, they appreciate it. This accrued value should be added to the annualized estimated housing cost, and that will compose the social cost of the housing provided by the shelter.³⁰ However, since each shelter is located in different geographical areas and zones, the appreciation value of the immovable properties (land and building) may vary, and such variances should be taken into consideration and adequately calculated when the social housing cost is estimated for each shelter.

³⁰ Chanley, Sh. A., Chanley Jr., J.J. & Campbell, H.E. (2001) Providing Refuge: The Value of Domestic Violence Shelter Services. Published in American Review of Public Administration, Vol. 31. No.4. December 2001

The second significant operation cost of shelter is personnel salaries and benefits. Presently, Kosovo shelters staff are being paid below-market wages³¹ and much lower wages and prices used for specialized services of counseling, advocacy, physiotherapy, etc., cannot be used to measure the total social cost of staff and benefits of the shelter. From a cost-benefit perspective is the higher market wage or price that should be used to measure the total social cost of employment in services or materials for the shelter programs.³² Initially, the staff wages and services prices should be adjusted to the current market prices; it is proposed that they are adjusted to the salary levels of equivalent job categories in the public sector. The proposed adjustments reflect the social cost estimation requirements and address the existing wage and prices inequalities between two industrial labour markets (non-governmental vs. public sector) that require the same occupational categories with the same equal skills. Further, it addresses the horizontal occupational segregation phenomenon in industry where women have the highest participation and representation that requires an extensive labour engagement, where low wages and income inequalities are evident. Finally, it addresses the establishment segregation, where women employed in firms that hire only women into the occupational category earn less on average than those used in firms that employ both sexes.³³

Next, other essential costs to be included in the shelter operation budget are a) the employer retirement contribution and b) the injury insurance and life insurance for high-risk occupations. Both costs do not need to be adjusted for social costs as they constitute operational budget expenses, and the monies are expended in the regular market. Further, the operational budget should include the following costs: a) utilities & maintenance, b) equipment, c) material and services, d) auditing, e) bank fees, f) contingency funds (estimated at 3 percent of the total cost of the annual operational budget, g) training and traveling expenses for shelter staff. Presently, shelters' staff capacity development expenses are covered chiefly by international donors and occasionally by Kosovo budget. Development of staff (and, where relevant, volunteer) knowledge, attitudes, and skills are essential to establish and maintain quality services and ensure implementation of safety and practice protocols.³⁴ The costs, as mentioned earlier, also do not need to be adjusted for social cost, and the monies are

³¹ This conclusion was drawn after the review of the data obtained from grant application (budget cost estimation section) documents submitted by Kosovo shelters to the Ministry of Finance and Transfers in order to access the financial assistance to shelters to support services and programs for victims of domestic violence.

³² Chanley, Sh. A., Chanley Jr., J.J. & Campbell, H.E. (2001) Providing Refuge: The Value of Domestic Violence Shelter Services. Published in American Review of Public Administration, Vol. 31. No.4. December 2001

³³ Within occupations, the average wage of women employed in women-only firms will be less than the average wage of men employed in integrated firms, while the average wage of men employed in male-only firms will be above the average wage of men employed in integrated firms. For further reading, see: Blau, F.D. (2012). Gender, Inequality and Wages, Oxford, United Kingdom. Oxford University Press.

³⁴ UNWOMEN (2006). Shelter. Virtual Knowledge Center to end Violence against Women and Girls. <https://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/1384-staffing-and-management.html>

expended in the regular market. However, it should be noted that the training cost may require a social cost adjustment if the outcome in question constitutes a long-term impact or outcome of shelter services in the community they operate.

Another budget cost that should be included and adjusted to social cost are specialized services such as medical, legal, or any other assistance that is not covered by the shelter staff and is conducted on a case-by-case basis. If paid under the market value, these services shall be calculated at the market value and adjusted to their social cost following the same method applied for shelter staff salaries.

During the workshop held with the Kosovo shelters' staff network and the questionnaire completed by them, volunteering was not cited as a service from which the shelters presently benefit. However, volunteer labour is crucial for the shelter's ongoing services and programs, and it contributes to keeping the costs of services and programs low. Further, volunteerism helps diversify resources and programs that may prove beneficial to the victims of domestic violence in the short and long term. The monetization of the volunteers' work should be first estimated by the service being offered in tandem with the occupation wage in the labour market. So, for example, if a physiotherapist volunteers physiotherapy services to a shelter at the total amount of 20 hours per week, then the total amount of working hours should be multiplied by the hourly wage/fee of a physiotherapist in the regular market. This adjustment will constitute both the real wage and social cost of the offered volunteering service.

All the above estimations concern the program operating cost of the shelter. However, victims of domestic violence benefit from **the public assistance programs**. Most frequently, victims of low income and those with limited financial means or no income, constitute the leading group who benefit from the public assistance programs. It should be noted that in Kosovo public assistance program, the amount is limited to a **monthly income** of 110 euro per month which does not include other forms of public assistance such as medical care, food and clothing coupons and housing.³⁵ The existence of public assistance programs provides the victims with the means to leave the violent relationship. The **health care cost** should constitute not the medical care cost of injury treatments (this will be discussed in the following paragraphs of this chapter), but it involves health issues such as the cost of post-traumatic stress disorders, depression, anxiety, and other health care issues not necessarily related to the domestic violence psychological abuse and physical injuries. There are no data on what

³⁵ In most of the cases this monthly income support is chiefly collected by the victimizer and not by the victims of domestic violence. The Centers of Social Work cite difficulties in establishing different bank accounts for victims of domestic violence. Lack of actions on the side of Centers not only violates the rights of the victims but removes from the victims the opportunity to leave the violent relationship.

health care cost is incurred by the state as part of the support provided to the victims of domestic violence and their dependents.

Further, to proceed with the cost calculation of the public assistance programs for victims of domestic violence, two other estimates are needed: the lowest and the highest percentage of women who are likely to leave their partners with assistance from a shelter program.³⁶ These two figures will help to measure the lower and the upper estimate of the public assistance programs. Other factors that ought to be considered are the percentage of women with children who choose to leave their batterers and who are eligible for public assistance for one year period. The figures should be multiplied by the annual per-person public assistance cost. Regrettably, due to the lack of data concerning the lowest and the highest percentage of victims who choose to leave their batterer in Kosovo, these estimations cannot be computed, and subsequently, nor the lower and upper estimate of the program assistance cost can be established.

Other costs that should be estimated in order to establish the social cost-benefit of shelters, are the *justice system costs* and the *productivity costs*³⁷, the justice system costs cannot be established. On the bright side, it is thought that any increased cost will be more than offset by decreased justice system costs from averted domestic violence.³⁸ Meantime, *productivity cost* should include the productivity cost losses of the victims when they enter in the shelter and the productivity cost of the lost wages of the victimizers, as results of arrests or court proceedings resulting from shelter services. Again, these data are not available presently and it is impossible to establish whether the productivity cost experienced any loss or not. Shelter use may not produce equal productivity loss for both the victim and the victimizer. One caveat to bear in mind is the country and institutional contextuality and their impact on shelter services and their outcomes.

The last block of calculations concerns the *shelter program benefits*, which include the following components: *injuries averted*, mental health benefits, justice system costs, and *product cost*.

To estimate the *injuries averted* as a result of the shelter key role to provide a safe haven for victims of domestic violence, the following estimations should be run and are enlisted descriptively as data availability for all the enlisted areas either are absent or for methodological reasons cannot be used for this exercise:

³⁶ Chanley, Sh. A., Chanley Jr., J.J. & Campbell, H.E. (2001) Providing Refuge: The Value of Domestic Violence Shelter Services. Published in American Review of Public Administration, Vol. 31. No.4. December 2001

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

- data on women who entered the shelter uninjured vs. those who entered the shelter injured,
- percentage or number of women who entered the shelter and sought the shelter's assistance to end the abusive relationship,
- number of assaults per woman estimated on an annual basis, including the lowest and highest number of experienced assaults,
- calculating the number of assaults avoided by the women who entered the shelter and intended to end the abusive relationship,
- number of assaults experienced by the victims who sought shelter refuge and the percentage of which required medical care at a hospital due to assaults severity,
- number of assaults averted for children who accompanied their mothers and were housed in the shelter,
- combining the number of assaults averted by women and children,
- estimating the average cost of assaults resulting in injury (direct health cost + opportunity cost for forgone productivity + cost of pain and suffering experienced by the victim/s),
- applying this figure respectively to the highest and lowest numbers of the avoided assaults demonstrates the benefit of serious avoided assaults, and lastly
- a calculation for non-injurious assaults should be estimated, and applied to the lowest and highest number of non-injurious assaults avoided.

As shelters provide counseling services, the results of these services are expected to improve the emotional and psychological health of women and children. These services constitute the *mental health benefits* of shelter counseling services for the domestic violence victims that are cited as one of the most helpful services⁽³⁹⁾,⁽⁴⁰⁾ that shelters provide to the domestic violence victims. Monetizing the *intrinsic* value (greater well-being) and *instrumental* value (the ability to perform in daily life due to an investment) of mental health services provided by the shelter is not a straight trajectory. There are various methodologies and models. In this document, the monetization of the mental health services values is proposed to be estimated through the combination of two models cited from two literature resources ⁽⁴¹⁾, ⁽⁴²⁾that, in short ask what price people are willing to pay to be better off and look at the current market price. Concretely,

³⁹ Crabtree-Nelson, S. V. (2010) How Counseling Helps: An In-Depth Look at Domestic Violence Counseling. Loyola University Chicago. https://ecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1262&context=luc_diss

⁴⁰ Sullivan, C. M., Warshaw, C., Rivera, E. A. (2013). Counseling Services for Domestic Violence Survivors A Review of the Empirical Evidence. National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRC DV) <https://www.dvevidenceproject.org/wp-content/uploads/CounselingResearchSummary.pdf>

⁴¹ World Health Organization (WHO). (2021) MENTAL HEALTH INVESTMENT CASE: A GUIDANCE NOTE. <https://apps.who.int/iris/rest/bitstreams/1336737/retrieve>

⁴² Chanley, Sh. A., Chanley Jr., J.J. & Campbell, H.E. (2001) Providing Refuge: The Value of Domestic Violence Shelter Services. Published in American Review of Public Administration, Vol. 31. No.4. December 2001

the monetization of the counseling services of a shelter in Kosovo should be estimated by taking into consideration the market price of private psychological counseling from licensed counselors. The hourly counseling market price should be multiplied by the total number of hours of counseling per victim weekly. In addition to this, the counseling price for children's counseling services is calculated by the same method. The total amount obtained constitutes the cost of counseling services.

The monetization of *the justice system benefits* the reduced cost of interventions from the rule of law and justice institutions. In the absence of the figures for the estimated costs of police, court, and correction service systems, these benefits cannot be monetized at this time. In principle, if these figures were available, they should be measured against the total number of the avoided assaults in a year.⁴³

Finally, the calculation of *productivity benefits* is the last component for measuring the shelter services social benefits. The value of the social use of this benefit should be included in the estimated value of averting those assaults.⁴⁴

In the end, short-term costs and benefits ought to be compared. Typically, the total social benefits should exceed total social costs for lower and upper estimates of these values, demonstrating in both cases that the net benefit of the policy choice exceeds the costs. Therefore, support of shelters should be considered a robust policy intervention.

As noted throughout this section, due to data limitations, the estimation of the social cost-benefit of the shelters was impossible. The attempt to develop a descriptive model on how to run a social cost-benefit analysis reemphasizes the paramount importance of data gathering and the vital need for developing comprehensive methodologies for data gathering and establishing an information management system of interconnected and interrelated institutional databases, that are accessible and regularly updated.

The issue of missing data provides a good starting point for new data collection efforts. These efforts will help overcome service policy challenges and galvanize Kosovo's efforts to address violence actively. Further, they will develop practical policy interventions that support shelters' operations, ensure allocation of adequate resources, and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

III. Shelter's Operating Budget by Expense Category

Victims of domestic violence require support through every stage and step they undertake to break the violence cycle. This journey is, in most cases, a long one, and women and children require support at every stage of this journey: from reporting the abuse to accessing safety and support and coping with and recovering from the abuse. It is well-known that leaving a violent relationship or situation or reporting experiences of abuse can take a long time. Efficiency in shelters' operation is vital in assisting women and children through periods of violence, who "need various types of specialist support and services" that "should be well-tuned and coordinated."⁴⁵ Supporting them around the understanding and recognizing the violence and abuse dynamics, the victim's coping, and recovering mechanisms from violence require coordinated and comprehensive services.

In their role as specialist organizations, shelters are both agents of social change and services providers. As they provide support to the victims of domestic violence, they work relentlessly to change public attitudes, raise professional awareness, educate children and young people, hold perpetrators to account, and prevent violence in the future.

While men and women experience domestic and sexual violence and harmful practices, most victims are women, and the perpetrators are men. Men who have been victims of violence have different needs. Unquestionably, due consideration should be given to their needs without compromising the specialisms of women's services. However, the budgeting computations presented in this section refer to women's and children's needs.

There is no formula for the design and funding of services programs for anti-domestic violence shelters. However, it is crucial to identify the initial and ongoing operational costs of running specialist services such as shelters early in the planning process. Careful and realistic budgeting allows shelters, funders and service recipients, and policy-makers to better articulate expenses and remain cautious of potential underestimation or overlooking the necessary resources required to establish and manage the shelter infrastructure and related services. Sensitive, gender-oriented budget projections, grounded on the Convention principles, can inform shelter's decisions to improve and diversify their services and strengthen their fundraising efforts.

The budgeting projections presented below are computed based on a start-up cost approach, and many of them are one-time expenses. They include the following budget blocks:

⁴⁵ Council of Europe (2021). Quality guidelines for shelters for victims of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. Enhancing services for victims in Kosovo*. Logar, R. & Qosaj-Mustafaj, A. <https://rm.coe.int/shelter-guideline-eng/1680a24ced>

- Personnel and related costs (salaries, benefits, and training and orientation),
- Materials and supplies required to plan, initiate and manage shelter operations,
- Furnishing and equipment,
- Technology & security equipment.

The budgeting projections below do not include facility development costs such as land or building purchasing or rental, renovation, and remodeling costs. This issue should be addressed separately by taking into consideration the guidelines presented in Part Two of this document, in consultation with all involved stakeholders and regarding the Convention principles and standards and legal framework of Kosovo concerning the anti-domestic specialist services organizations, funding responsibilities, and Kosovo state institution responsibilities concerning shelter support actions.

The presented budget projections are calculated based on a shelter that offers 35 to 40 beds on a nightly basis, 24/7 and 365 days a year services. Also, during the budget projections process, three significant documents have served as guiding pillars on standards and quality criteria for running and managing shelters and reference materials that draw attention to shelter deficiencies and absent services; namely, they are:

- *Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services – developed by Council of Europe*⁴⁶,
- *Quality guidelines for shelters for victims of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. Enhancing services for victims in Kosovo*^{*47},
- *Mapping Support Services for Victims of Violence against Women in Kosovo*^{*. 48}

In addition, information gathered through the June 2021 meeting/workshop with the Kosovo shelter network representatives on the shelter needs due to the COVID-19 crisis or before it was incorporated and guided the budgeting projection process. All prices used for estimating the projections are based on the present average Kosovo market prices. The following estimations do not include the program and project budget-related projections. The shelters themselves should identify programmatic and project-related expenses to ensure a targeted response to the needs of the victims of domestic violence and community-related interventions undertaken by the shelters and avoid one-size-fits-all interventions. Most importantly, shelters

⁴⁶ Council of Europe (2008). Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services. Kelley, L. & Dubois, L. [https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF\(2007\)Study%20rev.en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/EG-VAW-CONF(2007)Study%20rev.en.pdf)

⁴⁷ Council of Europe (2021). Quality guidelines for shelters for victims of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. Enhancing services for victims in Kosovo*. Logar, R. & Qosaj-Mustafaj, A. <https://rm.coe.int/shelter-guideline-eng/1680a24ced>

⁴⁸ Council of Europe (2017). Mapping Support Services for Victims of Violence against Women in Kosovo*. <https://rm.coe.int/mapping-support-services-for-victims-of-violence-against-women-in-koso/168072d125>

should be funded for no less than three years. Their budget should be revised annually and nine months before the beginning of the new fiscal year and be adjusted accordingly if necessary. Funding shelters over long periods ensures effective, responsive, and uninterrupted services for victims of domestic violence, and this should be the ultimate goal of Kosovo state institutions as duty bearers.

The total budget amount to support basic operation activities of a shelter is estimated at € **231,671.10**

This estimation should be considered within the start-up cost boundaries. Many of the expenses projected below are not expected to occur over-time and should be considered as “non-recurring expenses”. Under this type of expenses fall categories such as office equipment and furniture, and resident living and support infrastructure.

A. PERSONNEL & SPECIALIZED ASSISTANCE

A.1. Salaries

Effective shelter services require a staff team with various roles and responsibilities that should be well defined and well managed. Effective planning of human resources, good management of staff responsibilities, and their workload are critical for the operation of shelters and providing quality services for the victims of domestic violence. As shelters in Kosovo provide 24/7 services to the victims, they should be able to employ an adequate number of staff members that are well trained, with different educational backgrounds, and can offer specialized services.

All shelter staff should receive and facilitate women's and children's needs once they reach or are brought into the shelter facility. All shelter staff should be well-versed in the intake procedures, completion of the initial paperwork admission, and provide information and orientation on services offered by the shelter and its counterparts. The staff should be trained on communication skills and demonstrate compassion, empathy, and understanding throughout the victims' assistance process, especially during the intake process of the victims, to establish trust with the victims. The salaries proposed are based on the existing salary scale of Kosovo public service employees. Adjusting shelters wages to the current salary scale of public administration ensures that shelter employees' salaries are commensurate with their workload, roles, and responsibilities and reflect their job complexity. Also, this adjustment reflects the long-existing issue that works compensation for shelter employees has consistently been underestimated and below the market salaries. Further, given that those who work in shelters are all women, these adjustments address the gender inequalities in the care sector and the "segregation within sectoral segregation" inequalities.

With a detailed job description of roles and responsibilities, and qualifications required for shelter employees, job descriptions should be standardized and constitute one of the many components for state license awarding requirements for shelters. Also, all shelter employees should undergo a thorough, test-based, and comprehensive training program before licensing. Shelter attendants are expected to work on a rotating shift schedule, five days per week. Other shelter employees are expected to work 24 hours on a weekend or weekday and be compensated with a day off. This will keep the staff cost low and ensure that the center functions 24/7 without disruption. The housekeeper is expected to work five days per week, while the guard position may be shared between two individuals, and they will always work on a third shift schedule. During the days, the shelter will be guarded through the shelter's complete surveillance system and the alarm system connected directly to the nearest police station. All shelter staff should be trained on security measures and have a security protocol in place, which considers the specific operational context of each center.

Table 1. Personnel salaries

Name/Position	Computation	Cost
Executive Director	€637.24/month x 12 months x 1 person	€ 7,646.88
Program Coordinator	€575.89/month x 12 months x 1 person	€ 6,910.68
Administrative Manager	€455.05/month x 12 months x 1 person	€ 5,460.60
Finance Assistant	€514.54/month x 12 months x 1 person	€ 6,174.48
Shelter attendant	€393.7/month x 12 months x 3 persons	€ 14,173.20
Advocacy specialist	€546.15/month x 12 months x 1 person	€ 6,553.80
Counsellor	€546.15/month x 12 months x 1 person	€ 6,553.80
Child care specialist	€546.15/month x 12 months x 1 person	€ 6,553.80
Housekeeper	€12/day x 22 days/month x 1 person x 12 months	€ 3,168
Guard/s	€15/day x 365 days	€ 5,475
Total		€ 68,670.24

The program coordinator shall be in charge of the day-to-day operation of the shelter and ensure its smooth operation and coordinate all the services provided by the shelter staff. Also, the program coordinator should support the executive director in fundraising matters for the shelter. The administrative manager should offer administrative services to all shelter staff as needed. She will be in charge of the management of shelter inventory, petty cash management and ensure that shelter attendants are provided with all the necessary resources during their shifts to give the arriving victims and the already sheltered ones all the needed services. The

description above should serve as guidance and are not definitive ones. Shelters staff job descriptions should be drafted with explicit considerations for both the victims as services recipients and shelter staff as a team with exceptional workload and emotionally draining.

A.2. Benefits

Cost estimation for occupational accident insurance, an insurance policy that provides benefits to shelter employees or the families of employees who are injured or killed in job-related accidents, could not be calculated during the preparation of this document. All contacted insurance providers, three in total, required detailed information to provide offer proposals. However, Kosovo state institutions should plan and budget the financial resources accordingly for purchasing occupational accident insurance for the shelter employees considering the high-risk exposure of the employees at the workplace of the shelter employees.

A.3. Professional Assistance

Table 2. Specialized assistance

Type of Specialized Assistance	Computation	Cost
Nurse	20hrs/week x 56 weeks x €2.58 (@454/monthly salary)	€ 2,889.09
Legal Assistance	20hrs/week x 56 weeks x €3.27/week (@€575.89/ monthly salary)	€ 3,664.75
Total		€ 6,553.84

A.4. Personnel Training

The personnel training cost covers and concerns the training cost of shelters staff to ensure their participation in in-country and regional training and capacity-building events. Presently in Kosovo exists an abundance of funds provided by the official development aid system that addresses capacity building projects and activities aiming at combating domestic violence and supporting Kosovo institutions in strengthening their institutional, organizational and human capacities. However, resources should be made available annually to enable the shelter staff participation in such events at a more significant representation number or to ensure that they are not held back due to the lack of resources. The training projected cost should not be confused with the training cost for all shelter staff before granting the operation license. Kosovo authorities in charge of granting social service licenses for special programs such as shelters should design a compulsory training and orientation program for shelter staff and cost its expense separately.

Table 3. Personnel training

Item	Computation	Cost
Hotel	€80(avg.)/night x 3 nights x 3 persons	€720
Per diem	€30(avg.) x 3 days x 3 persons	€270
Transportation	€10/person x 3 persons	€ 30
Adjustment for transportation	@50% x €10/person x 3 persons	€ 15
Total		€1,035

Total of Personnel: € 76,259.08

B. OFFICE SUPPORT

B.1. Office Equipment & Supplies

Advisably, Kosovo state entities should consider funding the shelter warranty fees for offices equipment and purchasing expenses for policy insurance plans.

Table 4. Office equipment, furniture and supplies

Office Equipment & Supplies	Computation	Cost
Computers	€900/units x 14 units	€ 12,600
Software	€1,200	€ 1,200
Photocopy Machine	€12,000/unit x 1	€ 12,000
Printers	€300 x 2 units	€ 600
Projector	€400/unit x 1 unit	€ 400
Fireproof Safe box	€200 x 1 unit	€ 200
Desks	€ 120 x 12 units	€ 1,440
Office Chairs	€110 x 12 units	€ 1,320
Shelves	€80/unit x 15 shelves	€ 1,200
Office supplies	€60/month x 12 months	€ 720
Maintenance & Warranty Fees for Equipment	€1,800/annually	€ 1,800
Insurance (Fire & Flooding)	€1,200/annually x 1 unit	€ 1,200
Folding chairs for training room	€11/unit x 40 units	€ 440
Training tables	€110/unit x 8 units	€ 880
Phone expenses	€120/month x 12 months	€ 1,440
Building maintenance	€100 x 12 months	€ 1,200

Disinfecting & Sanitation cost	€600 x 2/bi-annually	€ 1,200
Infrared Heater DR-122 Bedbug Heater	€200/unit x 1 unit	€ 200
Water deposit	€1,200/unit x 1unit	€ 1,200
Power Generator	€3,000 x 1 unit	€ 3,000
Video Cameras & Instalment Equipment	€900	€ 900
Vehicle	€20,000 x 1unit	€ 20,000
Vehicle Insurance	€700/annually x 1 unit	€ 700
Fuel	€200/monthly x 12 months	€ 2,400
Vehicle Maintenance	€80/month x 12 months	€ 960
Vehicle registration	€250 x 1unit	€ 250
Internet Service	€27/month x 12 months	€ 324
Website design	€3,000/unit x 1 unit	€ 3,000
Website maintenance and domain purchase	€80/month x 12 months	€ 960
Total		€ 73,734

B.2. Utilities

Kosovo state entities, in order to keep the cost of utilities low and the operation of shelters environmentally friendly should consider the use of low-cost energy equipment that rely on renewable energy technology and low maintenance.

Table 5. Cost of Utilities

Shelter Utilities	Computation	Cost
Water	€25/month x 12 months	€ 300
Heating	€250/month x 7 months	€ 1,750
Electricity	€70/month x 12 months	€ 840
Waste & Garbage Collector Fee	€3/month x 12 months	€ 36
Total		€ 2,926

**Total Office Support: €
62,860.00**

C. RESIDENT SUPPORT

The cost estimations of below budget line items reflect the services and the standards of those services that should be provided to the victims of domestic violence and their dependents from

the moment they step in in the shelter and throughout their stay, regardless of the duration of their shelter stay period. The services should be offered without disruption and by observing the established quality standards without interference. The costs need to be adjusted at least every three years and should be adjusted to inflation rate and cost-of-living changes.

The occupancy rate is estimated for a forty-bed shelter facility staffed and services 24/7, 365 days a year. The occupancy rate is set at 25% based on the assumption that a forty-bed shelter will have nightly occupied 25% of its total amount of beds.⁴⁹

C.1. Resident Care

Table 6. Care cost

Name of Assistance	Computation	Cost
Food	€8 persons/day x 10 persons x 365 days	€ 29,200
Medical Examination Couch	€400 x 1 unit	€ 400
Disposable Medical Supplies	€80/month x 12 months	€ 960
Personal hygiene supplies	€10/month x 1 person x 12 months x 10 persons	€ 1,200
Children hygiene supplies	€2,500/annually	€ 2,500
Total		€ 34,260

C.2. Resident Living & Support Infrastructure

Table 7. Equipment and furniture Cost

Equipment Name	Computation	Cost
Kitchen Equipment		
1. Microwave	€95/unit x 2 units	€ 190
2. Toaster	€30/unit x 2 units	€ 120
3. Kettle	€20/unit x 2 units	€ 40
4. Blender	€70/unit x 2 units	€ 140
5. Coffee-maker	€20/unit x 2 units	€ 40
6. Sets of pots and pans	€90/unit x 3 units	€ 270
7. Utensils	€150	€ 150

⁴⁹ Kosovo does not have an organized data collection and reporting system on bed occupancy rate, duration of the occupancy based on which exact estimations can be presently run. The proposed 25% occupancy rate for this cost estimation is based on the shelters' representatives' information in the June 2021 workshop and literature research.

Total		€ 950
Kitchen Furniture & Dinning Area		
1. Cabinets	€3,000	€ 3,000
2. Chairs	€35/unit x 40 units	€ 1,400
3. Dining tables	€80/unit x 10 units	€ 800
4. High chair with tray (children)	€40/unit x 4 units	€ 160
5. Seat shell for high chair	€35 x 4 units	€ 140
Total		€ 5,500
Kitchen Appliances		
1. Refrigerator	€1,100/unit x 1 unit	€ 1,100
2. Oven with stove	€300/unit x 2 units	€ 600
3. Kitchen ventilator	€100/unit x 2 units	€ 200
4. Dishwasher	€400/unit x 1 unit	€ 400
5. Cleaning products	€35 x 12months	€ 420
Total		€ 2,720
Bedroom Furniture and Bed linens		
Bedframe (90cm x 200cm)	€90/unit x 35 units	€ 3,150
Bedside table	€40/unit x 20 units	€ 800
Wardrobe	€130/unit x 12 units	€ 1,560
Mattress	€250/unit x 35 units	€ 8,750
Blanket (summer)	€25/unit x 35 units	€ 875
Blanket (winter)	€50/unit x 35 units	€ 1,750
Duvet	€35/unit x 35 units	€ 1,225
Bed flat sheet with elastic fitting	€5/unit x 70 units	€ 350
Mattress protector sheet	€15/unit x 40 units	€ 600
Pillow Protector	€3/unit x 40 units	€ 120
Pillows	€7/unit x 40 units	€ 210
Bed sheet flat (summer)	€12/unit x 70 units	€ 840
Set pillowcase + Duvet case sheet	€15/unit x 40 units	€ 600

Mirror	€25/unit x 10 units	€ 250
Baby crib	€140/unit x 4 units	€ 960
Baby crib sheets and blankets set	€50/unit x 8 units	€ 200
Cloth hangers	€100 (bulk purchasing)	€ 100
Folding bed	€120/unit x 5 units	€ 620
Shoe storage	€50/unit x 5 units	€ 250
Total		€ 23,110
Living room & Kids' Creative Room		
Sofa (custom made)	€3000	€ 3,000
armchair	€120/unit x 10 units	€ 1,200
TV set (55 inch)	€650/unit x 1 unit	€ 650
TV set (43 inch) @ kids' room	€400/unit x 1 unit	€ 400
Shelves & organizers for kids' room	€500	€ 500
Kids' desk	€60/unit x 8 units	€ 240
Toys and working/creative materials	€ 2,000	€ 2,000
Books	€ 1,000	€1,000
Storage boxes	€3/unit x 10 units	€ 30
Stools	€6/unit x 32 units	€ 192
Total		€ 9,212
Bathroom & laundry		
Towels (face)	€3/unit x 80 unit	€ 300
Towels (body)	€6/unit x 80 unit	€ 240
Drying hangers	€25/unit x 8 unit	€ 200
Ironing board	€30/unit x 4 unit	€ 120
Iron	€40/unit x 4 unit	€ 160
Laundry basket	€10/unit x 10 unit	€ 100
Baby bath	€10/unit x 4 unit	€ 40
Laundry bucket	€3/unit x 10 unit	€ 30
Toilet brush	€3/unit x 20 unit	€ 60

Toothbrush holder	€5/unit x 10 unit	€ 50
Bath item organizer	€10/unit x 10 unit	€ 100
Laundry Detergent	€50/month x 12 months	€ 600
Total		€ 2,000
Outdoor furniture		
Garden shade, tables, chairs	€1,000	€ 1,000
Total		€ 1,000

**Total resident support: €
78,752.00**



PART TWO

SHELTER DESIGN GUIDELINES



SECTION I

Standards of COE
Convention, Victim's
Profile and Typology
of Protection Housing

1. Guiding Principles
2. Victim's Protection Housing Models
3. Victim's Profile and Protection Housing Accessibility

SECTION I

1. Setting the Guiding Principles

The Victim's Protection Housing and Supports Program serve the ultimate goal of assisting women⁵⁰ – with and without dependents⁵¹ - who have experienced violence or are at risk of experiencing it, and who are provided with equal access to safe, secure, confidential and inclusive services.

The literature states that an essential means of fulfilling the obligation to protect victims is to ensure immediate, round-the-clock access to safe accommodation for women and their children and other dependents.⁵² Over the years, the growing body of studies and research literature on domestic violence, violence against women, and gender-based violence has grown exponentially. Subsequently, research has influenced the development of relevant theoretical frameworks that broaden the understanding of who is affected by violence. Nowadays, the common understanding of who and how is affected by violence is expanding. These guidelines attempt to reflect this informed understanding of violence.

Women come from all walks of life, age, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, education, religion, socio-economic status, and citizenship status. Both women and children have various needs for support that are defined by their physical abilities/disabilities, health needs, emotional and mental health issues, or substance use issues.

On the other hand, service providers, state ones, and non-governmental ones differ in their resources, operation orientations, and organizational and individual professional capacity. Such differences play a unique and contextual role, and ultimately, they influence how support to victims of domestic violence is provided through protection housing and support services. Some providers serve all victims and their dependents at risk of all type of violence, while other prefer to offer limited or more specialized services. Nonetheless, there must be a degree of minimum standards of the arrangement, organization of physical space of protection housing for the victims and their dependents that all should aim to achieve. Setting up quality standards for protection housing arrangements and organization of their physical space

⁵⁰ Women are disproportionally affected by domestic violence and violence against women, and gender-based violence acts. The term 'victim' is a broader, more inclusive term that includes women alone as victims of violence. However, the victim's protection and support program guidelines do not exclude other gender-based identities/orientation, who shall have equal access to the protection housing system and support programs..

⁵¹ Dependents may be children but also senior citizen.

⁵² Council of Europe (2008). Final Activity Report - Council of Europe Task Force to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence (EG-TFV). Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/Source/Final_Activity_Report.pdf

contribute directly into **the realization of several basic rights** of women and their dependents, to name a few:

- the right to life;
- the right not to be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- the right to equal protection according to humanitarian norms in time of international or internal armed conflict;
- the right to liberty and security of person;
- the right to equal protection under the law;
- the right to equality in the family;
- the right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health.

There is also a right to receive equal treatment in health care – providing free services where necessary (Article 12);

- the right to just and
- favourable conditions of work.⁵³

The establishment of the quality standards for protection housing arrangements and organization of their physical space further contributes to the materialization of Article 18, paragraph 3 of the Istanbul Convention that requires that support services be based on **a gendered understanding of violence against women and domestic violence** that violence is both cause and consequence of the inequality between women and men and imbalance of power. The arrangement of the physical space shall contribute to the deconstruction of the gender power imbalance and the disempowering effects of the unequal relations.

The protection housing spatial arrangement and its functioning should be a space that reflects the principles of **empowerment** and **self-determination**. They should promote and encourage the victims to reclaim their dignity, physical and mental integrity, regain or develop their ability to make choices and decisions.

The gendered understanding of violence as a phenomenon and its addressing is interconnected with the understanding of **diversity** and **intersectionality** aspects of gender. Therefore, any spatial arrangement design shall ensure the accommodation of the victims' aspects of gender diversity and inter-sectionality. The functioning of spatial arrangement should consider these aspects. Its design arrangements should contribute to supporting and

⁵³ The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1992). General Recommendation No. 19, 11th Session 1992 para 6-7.
https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/INT_CEDAW_GEC_3731_E.pdf

fostering diversity and inter-sectionality as essential operating and functioning values of the protection housing objects.

The quality standards of spatial arrangements also play a major role on **the safety aspects** and again Article 18, paragraph 3 of the Istanbul Convention demands that support services consider the safety of the victim. Building location, indoor and outdoor spatial arrangements linked to the safety protocol and daily operation procedures of the protection housing should ensure the physical safety of the victims and step-by-step contribute increasingly to gaining and regaining the victim's sense of security that has been diminished due to the past violence.

Victims of domestic violence and violence against women should have access to appropriate services and that a range of support options are available that take into account the particular access needs of women facing multiple discrimination⁵⁴. Hence, the spatial design and arrangement of protection housing objects should be done in that way that considers and permits the application of **the integrated approach** in the treatment and functioning of the victim accommodated in the protection housing system and the implementation of support services that aim at victim empowerment and reintegration. The application of the integrated approach as a quality standard for protection housing is directly linked to the requirement and implementation of the Article 18, paragraph 3 of the Istanbul Convention that requires that support services be based on integrated approach which takes into account the relationship between victims, perpetrators, children and their wider social environment.

Confidentiality and **privacy** are two other key principles that should guide the quality standards of location of the protection housing objects and their spatial arrangements and design. Service providers should respect and observe service users' right to confidentiality and privacy and all victims as service users are informed of situations where that confidentiality or privacy may be limited. The location, spatial arrangement and design of the protection housing objects should reflect these principles as well.

The protection housing objects should be envisioned as a location that provides **fair access** and is **non-discriminatory** and **free of charge**. Not only the physical location of protection housing objects should be easily accessible but its functioning and the availability of the space and services should be accessible by all in spite of victim's background, orientation, identity and status and geographic location.

The protection housing space design and size should be envisioned in such way that to allow for the place taking of the **holistic services** without interference, which is considered both a

⁵⁴ Speed, A., Callum, T. & Richardson, K. (2020) Stay Home, Stay Safe, Save Lives? An Analysis of the Impact of COVID-19 on the Ability of Victims of Gender-based Violence to Access Justice. The Journal of Criminal Law. Volume: 84 issue: 6, page(s): 539-572. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0022018320948280>

paramount principle and good practice in working across forms of violence against women and domestic violence.

Children comprise the largest number of the residents in the protection housing system. Hence, the protection housing space design and arrangements should welcome children and provide **child-friendly spaces** and services to help children to return to a normal life routine by creating spaces where they can function easily as a family and have access to a space where they can play and learn.

A good space design and arrangement shall consider harmonization of many conflicting rules and principles to which the functioning and management of the protection housing system should pursue faithfully. Thus, for example, the site design should “balance the need for larger (and “louder”) group spaces and those for an individual or two to sit on a bench and read, talk on the phone, and hang out.”⁵⁵

2. Victim’s Protection Housing Models

The literature review on domestic violence and violence against women reveals that different facilities offer sheltering or housing services to victims of domestic violence and women’s-based violence. The broad range of variety seems to be defined by country size, population density, country context, policy frameworks, target groups they serve, service providers’ capacities and scale of service provisions and delivery, and resources, to name a few.⁵⁶ It should be noted that there are no standard definitions on the types of protection housing facilities and, subsequently, no strict categorization. However, based on information provided by the literature review⁵⁷, drawing on common features of the types of shelters described, the following categories of facilities can be identified:

2.1. Safe/Emergency Homes

A safe or emergency shelter is a facility offering short-term respite that serves as a first stage emergency housing, that provides secure accommodation and emotional support for women who voluntarily enter with or without children and whose life is considered at high risk.⁵⁸ These types of shelters operate with 24/7 staffing. The accommodation usually lasts from few days

⁵⁵ Building Dignity: Design strategies for Domestic Violence Shelter. [Site Design: Harmonize \(wscadv.org\)](http://wscadv.org)

⁵⁶ Beattie, S. and Hutchins, H. 2015. Shelters for abused women in Canada, 2014. Juristat. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 85-002-X. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2015001/article/14207-eng.htm#r1>

⁵⁷ This categorization attempt draws heavily on two significant sources of literature review on shelters, namely:

Beattie, S. and Hutchins, H. 2015. Shelters for abused women in Canada & Gierman T. & Liska, A. (2011). Shelter for Women and Girls at Risk of or Survivors of Violence.

⁵⁸ Beattie, S. and Hutchins, H. 2015. Shelters for abused women in Canada, 2014. Juristat. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 85-002-X. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2015001/article/14207-eng.htm#r1>

up to few months. Concurrently to housing service, these type shelters may offer additional services that include but are not limited to transportation of the victim and/or her children to medical centers to address medical needs if necessary, provision of personal goods, counseling, referrals, advocacy, and awareness outreach programs to the communities, service providers, etc., crisis telephone support, safety planning, programs for affected children and follow-up for former residents.⁵⁹

Safe shelters are being provided in a variety of ways, and some function as a single apartment, hotel room, private residence, while some other providers prefer a combination of facility types aiming at serving a diverse and large range of victims' needs. Some offer independent living to the victims, some offer both a combination of substantial enjoyment of privacy and communal living through activity participation and sharing of communal areas.

2.2. Transitional Housing

Transitional housing shelters provide temporary housing that varies from a few weeks up to a year to meet the victim's individual circumstances and needs. They provide services around the clock and operate with 24/7 staffing. These types of shelters vary in composition and facility type, but they offer substantial home-like dwelling conditions, with separate bedrooms and opportunities for personalization of space arrangement. They also offer common areas for food preparation, eating, laundry, shared living areas, and support services.

These types of facilities usually accommodate victims and/or their dependents that face the low risk or no risk from the abuser and are in the process of regaining their independence and are waiting to move to short-term housing. Where possible, units may have increased security measures such as locked doors and windows, alarm systems, or response systems; and facilities may provide anonymous and confidential services (such as ongoing emotional support for residents, including women's and children's groups).⁶⁰

2.3. Second Stage Housing

Second stage housing is safe, short-term lodging and offers independent living space. The length of stay goes up to 18 to 24 months, but it may be extended based on the individual circumstances of the victims. Most often, these kinds of facilities offer opportunities for the victims to have their apartment unit, and most of the victims are on the way to become independent. Staff is available to provide emotional support, safety planning, and referrals. Also, staff presence in the common building is available when shelters offer other services to

⁵⁹ Gierman T. & Liska, A. (2011). Shelter for Women and Girls at Risk of or Survivors of Violence. pg 9-10.
<https://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/modules/pdf/1363538451.pdf>

⁶⁰ Ibid.

the residents and the community-wide through outreach programs or by providing “one-stop-shop” type of services.

2.4. Long-Term Housing

Long-term housing facilities are safe and independent long-term housing, with no limit on the amount of time a woman can live in this type of facility. These are usually low-cost and self-contained facilities used by the victims who have or have gained a certain degree of economic independence and are on their way to become fully independent. Enhanced safety and security elements may still need to be addressed. These facilities are managed by shelter service entities and are part of the victim’s treatment program and services offered. Access to this type of facility should consider the victims’ risk status. Suppose the risk status is low or insignificant at the time of assessment, but it is considered in flux due to the past violence history or ongoing divorce proceedings at the time. In that case, this type of facility may be suitable as it offers at the same time independence and support to the victim at yet another significant phase of the victim’s empowerment. Support services as counseling and therapeutic support, legal assistance, financial and economic assistance, and economic opportunities (apprenticeship, training, part-time schooling, etc.).

3. Victim’s Profile and Protection Housing Accessibility

Violence is a profound personal experience, an experience laced with multiple layers. They deeply intersect with other victim’s identities such as ethnicity, class, religion, race, and sexual orientation, influenced by contextual and circumstantial factors such as legal status, age, health, physical and cognitive capacities, geographical location, linguistic, education level, community ties. These elements define their needs, the kind of services, and how they need to receive them. Resident populations include:

- Single women
- Women with children
- Pregnant women
- Adolescents and girls
- Adolescent pregnant girls
- Women from minority communities
- Women who belong to strict religious communities
- Women from rural communities
- Women with varying levels of physical abilities, physical disabilities or mobility issues, cognitive disabilities

- Seniors who experience chronic, age-related health conditions, such as diabetes, renal insufficiency, progressive nervous system disorders (dementia, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, etc.)
- LGBTQI individuals
- Asylum seekers, refugees, human trafficked victims
- Women who are substance abusers.

This list of potential residents does not pretend to exhaust every possible profile of all potential victims that may knock on the door of the shelter system. The profile of victims seeking refuge and support through the protection housing and support programs shapes the type and range of services offered and the space arrangement and accommodation. The protection housing facilities often ought to balance principles of inclusivity and respect for the sexual orientation of individuals from the LGBTQI community and demonstrate consideration for other victims' preferences (understand: freedom of choice) to not mingle with LGBTQI individuals.

Also, the LGBTQI individuals who reside in the center may be accompanied by their children. In both cases, shelters shall plan and provide private spaces for those who do not feel of sharing with LGBTQI individuals' communal areas or if these latter ones prefer privacy over socialization. Whatever approach the facility managers decide to pursue to resolve conflicting principles and interests, the key to remember is that the ultimate goal for providing shelter is protecting life, reclaiming dignity, and empowering each victim.

Victims Accompanied by Pets and Animals

Finally, during the design and management of space, the protection housing facilities shall consider that animals, specifically dogs, may accompany victims who suffer from sight impairment. Many victims choose to bring their animals with them into these facilities as they fear that their pets will suffer at the hands of the abuser. Research demonstrates that when survivors of domestic violence seek to escape their abusive homes, they're not only faced with the challenge of finding shelter for themselves and their children but also their pets. As many shelters do not have the means to house companion animals, many survivors face the difficult decision to leave their pets behind or remain in an abusive environment.

Sadly, many survivors stay in abusive homes for fear of subjecting their animals to continued abuse if left behind.⁶¹ Providing accommodation for pets' victims helps address trauma and emotional distress during a time of crisis⁶² (Jalongo, 2004; Melson, 2001) and it can help

⁶¹ Domestic Violence and Pets (2021). <https://redrover.org/resource/domestic-violence-and-pets/>

⁶² Jalongo, M. R. (2004). The world's children and their companion animals: Developmental and educational significance of the child/pet bond.

Melson, G. F. (2001). Why the wild things are: Animals in the lives of children. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

victims to feel more at-home. To design an animal-friendly building, building materials such as eliminating carpet as a flooring option and providing pet-friendly units or rooms, protected outdoor space should be taken into consideration, alongside considerations for pets' and animals' medical care, vaccination status, etc.



SECTION II

Building Design and Planning Process

1. Preparatory Work
2. Designing Process, Planning and Project Team

SECTION II

1. Preparatory Work

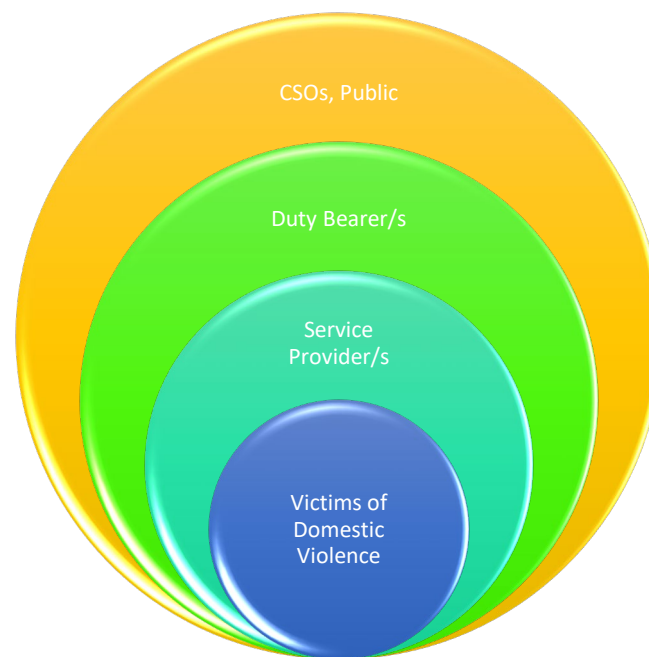
Construction of a new building or the renovation of an old one is a complex and expensive processes, with long-lasting impact. Building or renovating facilities that serve a group of residents who is diverse and has both common and specific needs, with a length of occupancy that varies from few days to several months, to several years, and who require ongoing specialized support services, necessitates an in-depth preparatory work process with the participation of multiple-stakeholders. Most importantly, all these elements should come under consideration prior to the construction work starts. This section singles out few essential steps that ought to be undertaken during the process.

1.1. Stakeholders' Consultation

- As part of the preparatory work, the consultation process with various stakeholders remains of paramount importance. Understanding and taking stakeholders' views, needs, and vision and meeting the principles and requirements of the Istanbul Convention for the protection and empowerment of the Victims of domestic violence is a complex process and may appear daunting at times. Construction is an expensive undertaking, and often building has taken place without consideration for their service-users or residents. Therefore, the involvement of the stakeholders in the development of the facilities' design and its execution helps shape a process and, ultimately, its final product that is in tune with users' plans, aspirations, and needs. Also, but also it avoids designs and plans that fail to match the facilities' standards and result in a costly revision of plans.
- The proposed stakeholder's list below aims to cover matters and aspects such as gender-based violence, victim's based-approach, inter-sectionality, service user-centered, duty bearers institutional mandate/s, service provider/s, rights-based advocacy, and monitoring non-governmental organization. The list sets the minimum standards for stakeholders involved in the planning process. However, the enlisted stakeholders can be adjusted accordingly to the context:
- Service organizations that provide protection housing and support programs for domestic violence, women's violence and gender-based violence victims and public education,
- Victims of Domestic Violence,
- Former residents of protection housing and support programs facilities,
- Social Welfare Departments and line ministry/is in charge,
- Agency for Gender Equality,

- Police,
- Department of Zoning and Urban Planning,
- Women's Rights Organization,
- Children's Rights Organization,
- Disability Rights Organization,
- Minority Rights Organization,
- LGBTIs Organization.

Figure 1.



1.2. Assessment of Needs

During the consultation process with the stakeholders, a needs assessment should be conducted. Its findings should be reflected in the blueprint design of a new facility building or the reconstruction plan of an existing facility, including the facility layout. The assessment process should ensure that the following vital matters are covered during the consultation with stakeholders:

- the size of the facility,
- safety and security (high or low security type of facility),
- the needs of victims and their dependents,
- the victims' target group/s envisioned to gain access to the facility,
- the type of services currently offered, expected/envisioned to be offered,
- the type of protection housing facility, and finally,
- the length of stay of victims in the facility.

In addition to these, the following issues ought to be explored during this phase that concern the following:

- operating policies,
- operating budgets,
- building and space use efficiency, and
- sleeping areas and common areas and the circulation between private and common areas.

1.3. Location, Location, Location

The literature on protection housing for domestic violence victims emphasizes that it is crucial to identify a suitable shelter location to ensure the facility can provide maximum protection for women and their children. It is best to keep the site of the shelter secret, although this may not be feasible in all settings (e.g., small or rural communities).⁶³ When identifying a new location for a new building or evaluating an existing building, consideration should be given to the surrounding community and how it can support the victims in their quest for dignity and empowerment. The literature notes that the following considerations can help determine whether a particular location is appropriate for a shelter.

So, for example, the facility location must be close to services that may be needed by women and girls and all victims of domestic violence in general, well-lighted streets and alleys, and safe. These services include:

- Health services,
- Accessible Public transportation,
- Police station,
- Education institutions, such as: kindergarten and schools,
- Marketplaces and commercial services.

The facility shall provide and have uninterrupted access to basic services such as:

- water
- electricity
- communication and heating
- access to a landline or mobile telephone in cases of emergency, and alarm button.

⁶³Gierman, T. Liska, A. & Reimer, J. Canadian Network of Women's Shelter & Transition Houses. Shelter for Women and Girls at Risk of or Survivors of Violence. Pg 41.
<https://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/modules/pdf/1363538451.pdf>

The planning and design team, altogether with the stakeholders, should plan for space and allocate resources for water tanks and power generators, especially in areas where public services are not entirely reliable.

The literature recommends that the facility be integrated within the community and near opportunities for women to engage in local activities (where safe) and feel a sense of social inclusion. Further, the facility should have access to other communities and recreational opportunities available through public or different affordable modes of transportation (e.g., between rural and urban areas) to facilitate the travel and mobility of women).⁶⁴

1.4. Building, Rebuilding, Remodeling – the Way Ahead

Building, rebuilding, and remodeling protection housing facilities for domestic violence victims is an obligation of the duty bearer and noble mission. Yet, like any other obligation or noble mission delivering upon it becomes often a daunting task. First and foremost, predicting domestic, women's-based, and gender-based violence is neither an exact science nor is a predictable phenomenon. Regrettably, service & accommodation for the victims' planning takes place in a post-violence context. Nonetheless, this challenge should not stand in the way of the noble mission of providing housing for the victims and protecting their life and dignity.

The need for more accommodation shelter space may arise quickly and unpredictably. Therefore is very important that the best building options are considered in close relation and observation of funding's availability, location, time-length of building implementation, functionality and operational services of the shelter, location, and the number of residents that will be served and external service users. To meet all the above, the ***“Building Dignity – Design Strategies for Domestic Violence Shelter”***⁶⁵ website suggest to consider the following possible options:

- Remodeling an existing building to better fit the number of the victims and their profile,
- Rebuild an existing building through major renovations and new construction, or
- New Building.

Apart from the number of victims who will reside in the facility, the preferred type of protection housing facility, location, etc., other elements should be considered and inform the final decision for the preferred option. The following features that may affect the options

⁶⁴ Ibid, pg. 41.

⁶⁵ Building Dignity. Design Strategy for Domestic Violence Shelter (2021).
<https://buildingdignity.wscadv.org/resources/case-studies/>

preferences are enlisted below. Still, they do not constitute in any case an exhausting list that can be alternated or expanded to suit the needs and the process:

- ✓ **Confidentiality** – the question that must be raised shall concern whether the proposed facility will be a confidential one or not.
- ✓ **Crime rates in the area** - whether women and girls are likely to encounter individuals or groups which might pose a risk to them.
- ✓ **Hazardous materials and land contamination** – Old buildings and formerly used land often contain dangerous materials or are contaminated. Before building or rebuilding, specialists should be hired and assess the degree of contamination or the type of hazardous materials used. Old buildings often contain lead and asbestos, while formerly industrially used land or dumping plots contain lead and other chemicals that may fatally affect future residents' health. Land decontamination and removing hazardous materials from old buildings is both labour and time-consuming activity that increases the cost of the construction and remodeling.
- ✓ **Environmental site assessment** – A comprehensive review of any environmental and physical hazard of the chosen site should be conducted about issues of potential flooding, fire, steep slopes, proximity to wetlands, waterways, fuel deposits, etc., should be completed during the pre-design stage and sounding mitigating measures necessary to manage these risks should be proposed.
- ✓ **Space availability** – The size of an existing building, its front and backyard, or surrounding land should be spacious enough to accommodate all the necessary changes and plans of the new facility. Particular attention should be paid to parking area availability and the amount required and whether the new facility plans meet the zoning requirements of the municipalities, and if not, what changes and options ought to be considered.
- ✓ **Property ownership issues** – Ownership issues of either donated land or existing buildings should be addressed and resolved before the commencement of the designing, planning, and construction implementation.
- ✓ **Building Efficiency** – During the assessment process, issues of energy efficiency, water usage, sanitation and hygiene problems, use and durability of appropriate interior materials should be addressed thoroughly to avoid process setbacks.
- ✓ **Shared locations, spaces and services** – Often it is beneficial to work through shared services and consider co-sharing of the protection housing facilities. This approach offers economic benefits, services delivered in a timely and integrated fashion, better management of staff duties, to name a few. For this purpose, planners, service providers, state institutions, and donors may consider merging types of

facilities according to the needs of victims, service provider mission and target groups, nature of services available, size of the location, etc.

2. Designing Process, Planning and Project Team

Advisably, the Project Team and all stakeholders should approach the development of the facility through an integrated approach. They should seek to draw a building design that achieves high performance that considers specific social goals, environmental principles, building standards and combines them all within well-calculated budget means and scheduling deadlines.

The integrated approach calls for an integrated design that means the conceptualization of a “whole building design” approach instead of an accumulation of separate components (site, structure, systems, and use) to make sure that all members and systems work in harmony complement each other. This integrated approach is rooted in the socially responsible architecture that involves people, designs for people, and gives them a sense of belonging, inclusion, safety, and empowerment.

An integrated design approach should be pursued for all three facility construction categories: remodeling, rebuilding, and new building, and thru all the five stages of the building process: **pre-design, schematic design, design evaluation and development, construction** and **post-construction**.

2.1. Design Process and Planning

Pre-Design

During this stage the design and planning team should ensure that thru needs assessment and stakeholders’ consultation the needs, concerns and their vision is understood by the team and translated into clear goals and objectives, and mapped out into a detailed work-plan.

Schematic Design

In the Schematic Design stage, the project teams examines options and innovative solutions that reflect the needs and the vision of the stakeholders for the new facility, optimizes the design option/s and delivered the functional and operational aspects of the shelter facility, accompanied by a detailed cost-estimated budget. Evaluation of options should be as holistic and life-cycle based as possible, considering the particulars of the opportunities especially the passive design strategies and constraints unique to the project.⁶⁶ Identification of risks and risk mitigating factors should be investigated during this stage, as well.

⁶⁶ [BC Housing Design Guidelines & Construction Standards](#) (May 2019).

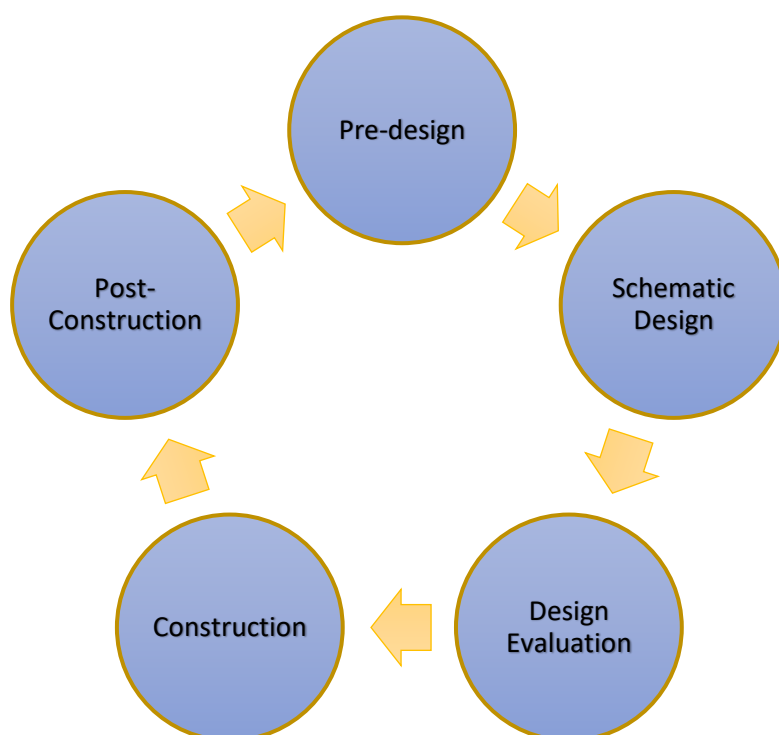
Design Evaluation and Development

During this stage, the project team shall present the schematic design to the stakeholders and select the optimum option, finalize the design, and review the construction budget. The final design should be presented to the stakeholders and authorities for approval.

Construction

The construction documentation should include instructions for the construction that reflect the stakeholders' vision and concerns. Members of the design team and stakeholders' group, through regular monitoring and consultation, shall ensure that the construction team's work remains within the remits of the proposed design. If any change is deemed necessary, the proposed modifications do not affect the functionality and operational aspects of the new facility.

*Figure 2. From needs to design to construction – Five stages of shelter construction*⁶⁷



Post-Construction

The stakeholders' group members, design, and construction team ensure that all potential deficiencies are addressed before the hand-over process. All the documentation is handed over with sufficient explanatory notes and proper instructions to the shelter management team and maintenance staff. If necessary, training should be provided to the maintenance staff on

⁶⁷ Adopted from the BC Housing Guidelines and Construction Standards, (2019).
<https://www.bchousing.org/publications/BCH-Design-Guidelines-Construction-Standards.pdf>

sensitive or critical matters, primarily related to new building materials and new technologies. All teams involved in the construction of the facility bear responsibility for these activities.

2.2. Design Team

A protection housing facility should be sustainable, efficient, accommodating to all needs, free of barriers and accessible, safe, trauma-free, and nurture independence. Therefore, the design team composition shall be interdisciplinary and gender-representative. Bringing the best architects in the team will not deliver necessary the best project design. First and foremost, the design team shall be willing to listen and be open-minded towards the needs of the victims, services, and supporting programs to be delivered through the protection housing facilities and facility staff working modalities.

Considering that gender has yet to become comprehensively part of the architecture and urban planning university study program. Many architects lack both a gendered understanding of and gender perspective in the architecture design. Before meeting with the stakeholders, an orientation or familiarization session of the design team with the domestic violence and gender-based violence phenomenon shall be considered and conducted to cover at least the most fundamental issues. Questions, concerns, and stereotypes shall be addressed to the greatest extent possible. A gender-based violence expert shall be part of the design team and serve as an information source to ensure that the facility design methodically meets the needs of the victims of domestic violence and the principles of the Istanbul Convention are incorporated in the proposed facility design.

An illustration on the left side of the page shows a hand with pink skin and orange sleeves holding a thick white ribbon. The ribbon loops upwards and then curves across the top of the page. The background is a solid orange color.

SECTION III

Harmonization of Guiding Principles and Design Requirements

1. Safety and Security
2. Health, Wellness, and Welcoming Spaces
3. Trauma-Informed Design
4. Design with Children in Mind
5. Flexibility and Conflict Minimization
6. Resilience and Responsive Measures
7. Building Model

Section III

HARMONIZATION OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES & DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

The living environment effects our individual development and evolution. It is equally valid that spaces can contribute to strengthening our sense of self-esteem, self-determination, and satisfaction as it is true that: “you can kill a man with an apartment as with an axe - it takes only a little longer.”⁶⁸ Ill-conceived architecture design and space layout, altogether with building material choices and exterior and interior finishing, can induce stress and psychosomatic symptoms and create physical discomfort and exhaustion.

While these effects may not appear immediately, awareness about the consequences of ill-conceived architecture design on its residents should foster actions that reverse such effects. Shelter facilities should be built with an architecture that can accelerate healing processes, strengthen vitality and confidence, emotional and cognitive skills, socially interactive and communicative skills. With this in mind, “the shelter space and environment should help women to move past their experience of crisis and overcome the traumatic effects of violence.”⁶⁹ Harmonization between the foundation of standards that form the guiding principles of establishing and operating the protection housing and support programs and the design principles should shape the design requirements and considerations.

1. Safety and Security

Creating safety, security, and well-being is indispensable for the victims who seek temporary refuge in shelter facilities. Safety and security should be elements of significant importance in the building design and its operational arrangements. The victims and their dependents should be able to acquire a sense of safety and security when they move into the protection housing facilities. Equally important is to provide the same for the staff who run the shelter facility daily and provide services to the housed victims and those who come to receive benefits through support programs run by the shelter.

Designing the building with safety and security as the primary goal of the shelter’ existence ensures the direct realization of several fundamental rights of women and their dependents, to name a few:

⁶⁸ Wechsberg, J. (1958, December). Letter from Berlin. *The New Yorker*. Pg. 168.

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1958/12/13/letter-from-berlin>

⁶⁹ Gierman, T. Liska, A. & Reimer, J. Canadian Network of Women’s Shelter & Transition Houses. Shelter for Women and Girls at Risk of or Survivors of Violence. Pg .43.

<https://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/modules/pdf/1363538451.pdf>

- the right to life;
- the right not to be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- the right to equal protection according to humanitarian norms in times of international or internal armed conflict;
- the right to liberty and security of person;
- the right to equal protection under the law;
- the right to equality in the family;
- the right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health.

Adequate security and safety of the site planning, building, and space design can be achieved by employing the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, a multi-disciplinary approach of crime prevention that uses urban and architectural design and the management of built and natural environments.⁷⁰ CPTED strategies influence decisions that precede criminal acts and nuisance activity through proper design, practical use, and maintenance of the built, social, and administrative environment. Realizing that there is a direct relationship between the physical environment, the behaviour of people, productive use of space, and crime/loss prevention, CPTED is built upon the following principles:

1. Territoriality
2. Natural Surveillance
3. Access Control
4. Activity Support
5. Maintenance.⁷¹

These strategic principles in the building design aim to reduce or remove environmental opportunities that induce risk-taking or criminal behaviors and promote positive and fearless interaction with space by legitimate users through a preventative model and not a reactive one. An adopted table of the CPTED performance checklist and its related principles can be found in the Annex section of this document. It can be used to facilitate the building design of the shelter facilities at all stages. Meantime, some fundamental recommendations for enhancing security are as follows:

- **Clear sightlines and visibility** between and within staff- and shelter-user occupied spaces except in areas intended to be private;

⁷⁰ The International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association (2021). Webpage of CPTED Association. <https://www.cpted.net/>

⁷¹ BC HOUSING Design Guidelines and Construction Standards (2019). <https://www.bchousing.org/publications/BCH-Design-Guidelines-Construction-Standards.pdf>

- **Spaces that minimize or de-escalate conflict** where interactions between staff and shelter-users may most commonly occur;
- **Alternate routes for escape** for occasions when conflict arises, such as a second exit from spaces
- **Systems that enable quick assistance** when conflict resolution needs additional support;
- **Secured main entrance with an audible connection** before allowing the guests or new residents entry into the transition area and can be electronically controlled from the reception/intake office;⁷²
- **Avoid keys and staff-monitoring system all the time.**⁷³ Victim-residents⁷⁴ can have fobs, cards for a card reader or simply a numerical key pad operated access (depending on operator preference) that will allow entrance to the building, access to their rooms, and common areas;
- **Provide interior video surveillance system** that addresses the operator's security requirements. Security system options include Digital Access Control (DAC), Intrusion Detection, and Video Surveillance (i.e., CCTV) Systems. The extent of the camera locations inside the building shall depend on the operator needs and requirements, taking into consideration women and children's privacy;
- **Ensure no blind spots on the exterior of the building** and cameras are installed accordingly;
- **Design shall allow ease of supervision** and ensure good sight lines for staff supervision that involve outdoor areas, entrance(s), circulation, gathering, or programs;
- **Maximize glazing** for staff offices, program support offices and common room doors such as TV rooms, multi-purpose room, children play-area, laundry rooms for improved visibility.⁷⁵

2. Health, Wellness and Welcoming Spaces

Protection housing facilities are not just spaces where victims seek temporary refuge. They are places where the victims seek to escape the trauma, abuse, and violence, find safety and receive support, empathy, and comfort. The promotion of well-being is an essential focus of

⁷² Adapted from: Hildich Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/8cea-shelter-design-and-technical-guidelines.pdf>

⁷³ Keys may get lost and where a lost key could mean changing all the locks, a lost fob or key card may simply be deleted from the system.

⁷⁴ Victim-residents refers to victims who reside in the safe, transition and second stage housing.

⁷⁵ Adapted from BC HOUSING Design Guidelines and Construction Standards (2019). <https://www.bchousing.org/publications/BCH-Design-Guidelines-Construction-Standards.pdf>

the shelters, the protection housing, and support programs. Building design can be critical promoters of the health and well-being of the victims and their children.

- **Support for optimal sleep.** The building design is critical for a good night's sleep and creates restful places that provide a sense of personal security and privacy. A good building design should give the victims control over the surrounding environment, temperatures, lights, and acoustics.
- **Keeping the families together** by providing expandable places to accommodate both large and small families.
- **Restorative space.** Building design should provide restorative spaces where victims can benefit and get relief from negative symptoms of anxiety, pain, stress disorders, and depression and have opportunities to rest and meditate.
- **Separation of spaces.** Sleeping accommodations should be separated from collective areas and staff offices.
- **Counselling rooms** should be shielded from noises and should be designed to minimize sound transfer to adjacent spaces.
- **Interior finishes.** Colour choices for walls, furniture, and floors should be welcoming, calming appropriate for people who suffer from various impairments.
- **Exposure to the healing power of nature.** Biophilic design that provides direct contact with nature can improve wellbeing. Access to water, natural light, and plants, either within a space or in an adjacent outdoor area and secondary views to nature, can also improve health and wellbeing.⁷⁶ Children can also benefit from contact with nature, as it is increasingly evident that exposure to nature helps us be better, more caring, and compassionate human beings.⁷⁷
- **Access to natural daylight** has therapeutic effects, and both natural and artificial light therapy effectively reduce types of depression.
- **Access to medication** should be given to victims at all times on which they should be given locked storages in their room to keep them safely away from children but not only. (victims of domestic violence who are substance abusers and those who have suicidal thoughts should be given complete independence in managing their medication).

It is essential that the victims feel that they are not institutionalized throughout their stay in the shelter.

⁷⁶ Stephen R. Kellert and Elizabeth F. Calabrese, (2015) "The practice of Biophilic Design", <https://www.biophilic-design.com>

⁷⁷ Beatley, T. (2016) Handbook of Biophilic City Planning & Design. IslandPress.

3. Trauma-Informed Design

The needs and situations of the victims of domestic violence require responsive, holistic services. The design of the physical environment plays a vital role in the successful delivery of these holistic services. The victims who reside in the protection housing are not just mere victims but also traumatized individuals, with lasting adverse effects on their functioning: mental, physical, emotional, and well-being. The services offered should constitute trauma-informed care ⁷⁸ approach, and so should the shelters' physical environment design.

WHAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE?

A PROGRAM, ORGANIZATION, OR SYSTEM THAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED REALIZES THE WIDESPREAD IMPACT OF TRAUMA AND UNDERSTANDS POTENTIAL PATHS FOR RECOVERY; RECOGNIZES THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS IN CLIENTS, FAMILIES, STAFF, AND OTHERS INVOLVED WITH SYSTEM; AND RESPONDS BY FULLY INTEGRATING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT TRAUMA INTO POLICIES, PROCEDURES, PRACTICES, AND SEEKS TO ACTIVELY RESIST RETRAUMATIZATION.

The trauma-informed design is the concept through which architects and interior designers work to integrate the principles of trauma-informed care into their practice and explore the built environment's idea that incorporates the principles of trauma-informed care.

- **Spatial layout** has a profound impact on an individual perception of space, mood, and behavior. Simple linear and easy to manage space is calming and altogether with spatial availability increase the sense of safety and mitigates perception of crowding and barriers are trauma inducers elements.
- **Emphasis on personal space.** Treating space as personal and allowing residents to rearrange a chair or other small pieces of furniture enhances their sense of control and independence.
- **Visual interest.** Symmetry, regularity in the arrangement of objects, and appropriate painting of objects in harmony with colors and contrast. Kaleidoscope paintings and photography of trees, water, the landscape in calming and meditative colours. Visual complexity to be kept simple, not crowded not to increase stress and anxiety.
- **Lighting.** All rooms should have windows to allow natural light to appear. Lighting should not buzz, hum or flicker as it may induce traumatic reactions, self-harming

⁷⁸ The definition included in the box is adopted from: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014), <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4884.pdf>

behaviors, and actions. Harsh fluorescent lights should be avoided. Lighting should come in layers, indirect and controllable through dimming, light switches, personalized areas, and large areas thru different light switches. At night, the shelter residents should be allowed to control their lights in their bedrooms thru bed lamps or main room lamps, while hallways, shared washrooms, stairways should have nightlights and emergency lights.

- **Art.** Create visual interest, a visual distraction that alleviates stress improves mood and provides comfort. Landscape paintings exhibiting calm, cheerful, and soothing colors increase positivity and comfort. Images that convey symbolic significance or reflect painful human moments should be best avoided as they arouse negative feelings.
- **Color.** Cool colours (such as **blue**, **green**, **purple**, etc.) have calming effects in the sleeping room, washroom and common areas. Avoid warm colours (such as **red**, **orange**, **yellow**, etc.) that may spark negative emotions. Avoid stark white walls in areas that have no windows. Decorate them with arts and visual distractions that break the austerity of white walls in confined spaces.
- **Furniture.** Invest in lightweight furniture that can be moved around to allow the residents to express themselves, build and tell their self-determination, reclaim independence and make free choices. Avoid sharp edge furniture and give preference to those with round edges, corners, and shapes, which keeps children's accidents at a minimum and minimizes the perception of blocks and barriers. The furniture should be durable and easy to be cleaned.
- **Seating.** It should be arranged to increase socialization to help the victims connect, build a social network, and interact with new individuals as part of their transition into society.

What is Trauma-Informed Design?

- Realizing how the physical environment effects an individual's sense of identity, worth, dignity, and empowerment.
- Recognizing that the physical environment has an impact on attitude, mood, and behavior, and that there is a strong link between our physiological state, our emotional state, and the physical environment.
- Responding by designing and maintaining supportive and healing environments for trauma-experienced residents or clients to resist re-traumatization.

(2014 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach)

4. Design with Children in Mind

The victims who decide to enter protection housing are often accompanied by their children, witnesses, and victims of the violence and abuse. Child-friendly spaces help children to return to normalcy by feeling welcomed, comforted, and supported. Some children may, unfortunately, reside in shelters for an extended period. For these children, these are also their formative years. The shelter environment will have a significant impact on their formation. The support provided in these spaces is crucial in the development and growth of children spending the early years of their life in a shelter.

- **Diversity.** Children's needs significantly vary as they may be from 0 to 16 years old, and they all will need spaces dedicated to them for independent growth and self-control. Their age, demographics, physical needs, and cognizant abilities, alongside intersectionalities, should be considered during the shelter space design. In these spaces, a distinction should be made between support for preschool-age children (under five years), and school-age children (5-15 years).
- **Child Program areas and outdoor spaces** should be design and built with materials and finishes that can withstand the impact of children's play and contribute to the sense of space for children by incorporating colour, shapes, and patterns to aid learning and interaction. Safety measures concerning the building materials and other arrangements should be included in the design to avoid accidents and harm to children. Design zones and associated furniture with the flexibility to allow staff opportunity to rearrange and modify the space and provide a recommended area of 2.8 m² per child.⁷⁹ Ensure an inclusive play space, provide flexibility in use, and encourage learning through activities.
- **Childproofing safety measures** should guide the design process at all times and for all areas. All furniture should be rounded or padded corners and with no harmful design features. Some furniture such as bookshelf should be fixed against the wall or floor to avoid dangerous accidents, and lower cabinets must be secured at all times. Their finishing should be of free hazardous materials. All power sockets should have covers. Window blinds should be cordless, and cords as a design feature should be avoided. Anti-scald devices should be installed in the washroom to regulate the water temperature. Cutlery should be kept out of reach at all times. Cleaning supplies should be kept on top shelves.

⁷⁹ Hildich Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines.
<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/8cea-shelter-design-and-technical-guidelines.pdf>

- **Design for uninterrupted attention and supervision.**

Parents and staff in the shelter should be able to attend and supervise children at all times without being necessary in the same place. Open space plans and glazing doors or on walls provide mothers and staff with an uninterrupted view of the whereabouts and actions of their children while they are preparing food, doing laundry, meeting, etc. Sightlines with maximum visibility should be provided between communal spaces such as a



TV room, child playroom, outdoor playground and garden, kitchen, laundry area, pet area, and counseling rooms. There should be no direct sightlines or access to this space from the street or site entrance. Incorporate careful consideration to ensure there are no blind spots within the space.

- **Washrooms.** Washrooms should be designed to support parents with children of all ages and needs.

- ✚ **Washrooms availability.** Washrooms should be available in the family units, adjacent to the playroom, dining area, TV room, and library room. Bathrooms should include resilient, non-slip sheet flooring with flash cove and floor drains. Washing stations can be installed in/or adjacent to the dining areas or playroom/playground when several children are residing in the shelter. A washroom design for physically impaired children should be made available and be kept separate from the one designed for physically impaired adult/s.

- ✚ **Child height fixtures.** In washrooms that small children will use, consider child height fixtures or space for a step stool so that children can access all areas. For stalls, it is preferable to opt for individual doors without keys or locks. In these cases, use latches that are easy to open from the outside, indicating whether the cab is free or occupied. Additionally, the shape of the faucet is a primary consideration, as the faucet handle or lever must be easy to use for children whose motor coordination is not yet fully developed. Designers may even avoid water temperature adjustment systems so as not to add additional difficulty in this phase of learning self-care.

- ✚ **Bath Areas.** There are three types of users in children's restrooms: infants, toddlers, and older children. Each one has different needs since they are in particular periods of development. For babies, it is essential to provide areas with hot baths and taps so that caregivers can comfortably bathe them. A

padded room should also be equipped for dressing children and changing diapers. For children from 1 to 3 years old, installing raised partitions about 40 centimeters high can facilitate caregiver aid during the bath. For those over five years old (who tend to bathe themselves), the floor should be wholly non-slip and, when possible, support bars should be installed within reach of the child's hands.

5. Flexibility and Conflict Minimization

The protection housing facilities should be designed with maximum flexibility of use and configuration, therefore keeping the cost of such potential changes low. Flexibility in use should entail:

- **Space for growth** that means that where the budget and site allows, an empty pocket of space can be configured in areas where programs are expected to grow immediately or shortly.
- **Multifunction room design** should anticipate changes of use while single-purpose spaces should be evaluated for longevity. Adaptability to future program changes or serving population are served best by establishing linkages of adjacent areas that permit rooms to be combined or shared with minimal cost thru interconnection doors, removable walls, etc.
- **Structural systems and building services:**
 - ✚ **Plumbing and electrical services** should be placed below concrete slabs instead of within concrete slabs and should be designed to permit the joining up of spaces into large bedroom or units.
 - ✚ **Consider regular column grid** instead of walls as column grid provide better flexibility in location of interior partitions.⁸⁰

The efficiency of the flexibility of the built design should be linked not only to materials, technology innovations, and implementation methods. Cultural matters and people's relationship with their habitat would enrich and increase the flexibility of the design and favorably deepen the consequences of space modification for its inhabitants⁸¹ and minimize potential conflicts. In addition to rules and guidelines necessary to manage the daily operation routine of the shelters, the design, access, and availability of utilities, areas, and services do contribute to conflict minimization and a pleasant environment:

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ De Paris Ritter, S. and Lopes L.N. C. Housing flexibility problem: Review of recent limitations and solutions. Published in the Frontiers of Architectural Design, [Volume 7, Issue 1](#), March 2018, Pages 80-91. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2095263517300742>

- **Separate high activity and noisy areas** from quiet spaces such as sleeping areas, counseling rooms, etc. Spaces with noise-generating equipment, such as mechanical and electrical rooms, should be designed for separation.
- **Provide generous number of washrooms.** Each sleeping unit should have its bathroom. When such availability is impossible, then an ample number of bathrooms shall be provided. Special consideration should be given to design solutions that address issues of accessibility and diversity of the residents (senior, children, individuals with ailment or physical impairment).
- **Provide lockers and storage areas** for residents where they can store their valuables or documents. Also, when sleeping areas are small or shared, a storage area where suitcases can be stored helps with overcrowding issues.
- **Shared kitchen and food storage** should offer ample space for residents to prepare their meals and store their food. Also, separate food storage places should be provided for people with food allergies. Labeling stickers should be kept handy to label food and avoid potential conflict over missing food and dietary restrictions. The design should address issues of accessibility of kitchen equipment and utensil storage for individuals in wheelchairs.
- **Opportunities for accommodating individuals with disruptive behaviours**, e.g., through a proportion of single rooms and sitting areas outside of sleeping rooms.⁸²
- **Stress-free laundry.** Laundry rooms should be equipped with washing machines and dryers that take into consideration the maximum number of residents in the shelter. The laundry area should be child-friendly and accessible to those on wheelchairs.

6. Resilience and Responsive Measures

Like other residential facilities, even shelter facilities may face emergencies related to natural disasters and technology malfunction. Designing with resilience principle in mind ‘reduces impacts on shelter operation by unforeseen events and circumstances.’⁸³ Differently from other residential and commercial building occupants who can be relocated or have more remarkable ability to cope with adverse effects, few such options exist for people served by the shelter system, hence the desire to provide greater resilience for shelters than for typical commercial or residential buildings.⁸⁴

These resilience measures include but are not limited to:

⁸² BC Housing Design Guidelines and Construction Standards (2019).

<https://www.bchousing.org/publications/BCH-Design-Guidelines-Construction-Standards.pdf>

⁸³ Hildich Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines.

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/8cea-shelter-design-and-technical-guidelines.pdf>

⁸⁴ Ibid.

- Equipment be purchased from authorized local services who can provide swift replacements or remedy to the situation,
- Mechanical equipment should be located in areas that cannot be reached from potential flooding,
- Backup systems and replacement equipment should go through routine checking, testing and inventory check to ensure their resiliency and reliability of equipment at all times,
- IT rooms and electrical rooms should be set apart of the water-piping system,
- Electrical room/s should be never located below grade,
- On-site water tanks should be hooked up to the domestic cold water system at the main header and be cleaned on a regular basis,
- On-site portable emergency power generators be provided in a manner that allows the facility to continue its functions during an extended power outage. The generator should enable up to 66% of the shelter activities during a power outage.
- Ensure that there is sufficient uninterrupted power to keep security, access control, IT, and telephony can continue operation until backup generation capacity has been activated.⁸⁵

7. Accessibility

Stair accessibility	Within new construction it may be apparent that tactile warning strips and contrasting slip-resistant nosing are required at stairs, however, this is also a need within renovations of existing buildings.
Training rooms	Allow adequate space to accommodate accessibility of people using mobility devices.
Accessible kitchen	Wherever a private unit contains an accessible bed the kitchenette or kitchen shall also be accessible.
Accessible Washrooms	The number of washrooms that are accessible should be proportional to the number of beds that are accessible for example if 10% of beds are accessible than 10% of washrooms should also be accessible; wherever accessible beds are located the washrooms closest to them should be accessible; where an accessible bed provides maneuvering space for a mobility device with a turning circle of 2500 mm this bed shall be served by a universal washroom and shower.
Accessible Private Units	All accessible fixtures and furnishings within an accessible reach range and storage units being equivalent in volume to non-accessible storage units.
Accessible Dining Room	Dining room seating that has 10% accessibility, which will include consideration of space provisions for table seating and/or accessible counter with no or fewer chairs than can be accommodate mobility

⁸⁵ Adapted from: Hildich Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/8cea-shelter-design-and-technical-guidelines.pdf>

	devices, aisle widths and circulation routes between tables, and circulation routes around the room.
Accessible Kitchen	The number of kitchen equipment and furniture that are accessible should be proportional to the number of beds that are accessible for example if 10% of beds are accessible than 10% of kitchen equipment and furniture should be accessible.
Accessible Living Space and Hallways	Generous paths of travel to accommodate shelter-users on a range of accessibility devices,
Intake Room(s)	Accessible intake room permitting accessibility devices
Accessible Wheelchair Cleaning Space	This is a staff-only accessed room for staff to clean shelter-users' mobility devices. The room should support cleaning and disinfecting activities including: ▪ donning and removing PPE (gloves) ▪ hand washing ▪ handling of cleaning and disinfecting chemicals.
Accessible landscape	All landscaping that is intended for paths of travel should be designed to be accessible.

8. Building Model

There is a great need for safe, affordable housing for victims of domestic violence that can provide responsive support and services that can address the immediate post-violence victim's essentials to building their self-confidence, independence, and empowerment. It has been well documented that without access to housing and support services, women, escaping from an abusive relationship and life-threatening violence, are often forced to either return to their abusive relationship or live in substandard conditions.

Recognizing the housing needs of domestic violence and gender-based violence victims, many domestic violence service providers intend to offer short-term to long-term protection housing and support programs to the victims and their children. As noted elsewhere in this document, the current models in the use of the protection housing and support programs fell under four categories current models in use of the protection housing and support programs fell under four categories: **safe/emergency homes**, **transition housing**, **second stage housing** and **permanent housing**.

Preferences for each of these models differ. Their setup is closely linked to the services providers' mission and the state's will to expand services and increase professional capacities resources to address the victims' needs and support community outreach programs to combat gender-based and domestic violence.

Also, essential to building form decision play other significant components such as need analysis, functional program, type intervention building intervention (new vs. remodeling), space size and availability, and the type of living (communal vs. private vs. self-contained units).

It should be highlighted that nowadays, preference is being given towards facility models that provide and combine space privacy opportunities with communal space interaction and socialization activities. Communal spaces offer opportunities for socialization and networking, healing, and solidarity. In contrast, private living spaces and self-contained units provide the victims with choices and decision-making opportunities and build their independence and encourage self-determination. The table below enlist most fundamental features, organizational elements and services provided by each of these protection housing models. These features altogether with the needs assessment results and communication with stakeholders, and available resources can help to shape the functioning and the operation of housing facilities in various ways.

So for example, **safe homes** can be run just as a safe, highly secured and confidential facility that, in addition to access to private accommodation, should provide other services such as counseling, child-care, medical and legal support services, etc., shared spaces such as kitchen and dining area/cafeteria, meditation room, indoor and secured outdoor playground and resting area, computer room and studying room for children, laundry room/s, etc. However, the same building facility may serve as both **safe** and **transitional housing**. In such a case, the building facility should have separate entrances for the secure housing area and transition housing area to provide maximum security for the victims and their dependents who occupy the safe housing units.

Also, service providers, given the relatively short period that the victims reside in the safe housing facilities, may choose to run secure housing services and accommodation independently and decide to merge transitioning housing with second-stage housing. In this way, they maximize the use of services provided by a relatively large facility that offers multi-purpose services and activities. Regardless of facilities housing both **transition** and **second-stage housing**, their private and self-contained units should be designed and refurbished in observance of the set-out standards for both models.

Finally, **long-term housing** can be regular apartments housed in residential buildings accessed by the victims and their dependents, based on the family size, housing needs, and income. The apartments can be managed by the service providers or by the municipalities. All the accommodations, regardless of the housing model, should be accessible at all times by victims with physical impairment and health ailment.

Table

<div>Features & Services</div> <div>Type of housing</div>	Safe/Emergency Home	Transitioning Housing	Second-Stage Housing	Permanent Housing
Safety	High at all times	High at all times	Medium (to follow regular risk assessment recommendations)	Medium to low
Confidentiality	High at all times	High to medium (to follow regular risk assessment recommendations)	High to medium (to follow regular risk assessment recommendations)	Medium to privacy entitlement
Control	Victims have control over their own space, staff has overall control of the facility	Victims have control over their units and private space, staff has overall control of the facility	Victims have control over their units and private space and have access at all times in other common areas.	Victims have full control over their units.
Availability	Always available at short notice and 24/7 response	Available within a short period of time.	Availability and accessibility should follow risk assessment recommendations.	Accessibility should follow risk assessment recommendations and victims' housing needs.
Access to Accommodation	Units with washroom, sitting area and sleeping space. Self-contained units (kitchen,	Units with washroom, sitting area and sleeping space. Self-contained units (kitchen,	Self-contained units like studio, one, two or three	Self-contained units like studio, one, two or three

	washroom, bedroom, living room) for large families or for those with male child/children over 14.	washroom, bedroom, living room) for large families or for those with male child/children over 14.	bedroom with a kitchen, washroom, living room.	bedroom with a kitchen, washroom, living room.
Access to Transportation	Secure parking, observed by cameras, well-lighted, at all times. Located within a reasonable distance to public transportation and other public services.	Secure parking, observed by cameras, well-lighted, at all times. Located within a reasonable distance to public transportation and other public services.	Secure parking, observed by cameras, well-lighted, at all times. Located within a reasonable distance to public transportation and other public services.	Secure parking, observed by cameras, well-lighted, at all times. Located within a reasonable distance to public transportation and other public services.
Amenity Areas	Laundry room/s, multi-purpose room, one 3-piece wheel chair accessible common washroom, phone landlines, common dining areas.	Laundry room/s, multi-purpose room, one 3-piece wheel chair accessible common washroom, phone landlines, common dining areas.	Laundry room/s, multi-purpose room, one 3-piece wheel chair accessible common washroom, phone landlines, common dining areas.	See the text under permanent housing.
Type of Building Form	Scatter model, or part of multipurpose services and program facility with separate and secure accommodation	Multi-purpose space combination with safe or second stage housing and support program.	Multi-purpose space combination with second-stage housing and support program.	Apartment part of other residential buildings, in low risk neighbourhoods.



SECTION IV

Elements of Design and Space Arrangements

1. Site Design
2. Program Areas

SECTION IV

1. Site Design

The design of the protection housing sites will pose unique challenges based on the serving purpose of the facility, context, requirements, and resources. This section introduces some essential standards and recommendations for site design covering the following matters: shelter in the neighborhood context, building entrances, site access, outdoor spaces and landscape, and parking.

1.1 Protection Housing and the Neighborhood Context

Consideration should be given to choosing a location for the protection housing facility and how it blends with the surrounding neighborhood. First and foremost, the chosen neighborhood for setting up the protection housing should be free of crime or low, non-violent crime rate. Second, the site design should address the need for community acceptance to provide a respectful and dignified experience for shelters, users, staff, and visitors.⁸⁶ Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should guide the design work to ensure safety, self-confidence, and empowerment to the shelter-users and deter potential violators' ill-intentions and violent acts. The following **fundamental elements** are recommended for the critical components of the protection housing site and the neighborhood:

- **Territorial marking:**
 - Use of fences, the street wall, and paving lines to mark and separate the public and private space,
 - Use place-making patterns and exterior artwork that make shelter-users belong and do not alienate them.⁸⁷
- **Sight lines:**
 - Screen neighbors' properties sightlines into the privacy of shelter-user and shelter-users into neighbors' properties,
 - Interior common spaces such as *shelter-user* gathering spaces and community spaces could be situated along building faces to enliven the street edge and create a threshold between the public exterior and the private interior,⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Adapted from: Hildich Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/8cea-shelter-design-and-technical-guidelines.pdf>

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

- Spaces that are typically considered public, such as waiting areas and lounges, should not be visible from the outside when they are used for *alternative space programs* and require privacy for *shelter users*,
- Elements that block the view of neighbors into shelters by depriving *shelter-users* of views to the outside, such as frosted glass, should not be used.⁸⁹
- **Exterior Architectural Design:**
 - The exterior architectural design should be compatible and blend with the neighborhood's architectural design. Building designs that make the shelter look plain and poorly designed or give the impression of a simple utilitarian institution should be avoided.

1.2 Building Entrances

The fundamental elements of design proposed for the building entrance apply equally whether the building entrance and site entrance are distinct components and where the building entrance also serves as the site entrance. The building entrance is a critical threshold for a *shelter-user* entering the shelter and should be inclusive, accessible, welcoming and inviting. It should avoid hidden exterior alcoves and blind spots, and support staff oversight of the front of the building when possible so that they are not disconnected from what is happening outside the building.⁹⁰

- **Shelter-users.**
 - Pedestrian access must remain the most substantial recommended mode of transportation alongside the vehicular drop-off and pickup for the shelter users.
 - Proper site design should be employed to accommodate both modes of transportation.
 - Pedestrian access must remain the most substantial recommended mode of transportation alongside the vehicular drop-off and pickup for the shelter users. Proper site design should be employed to accommodate both modes of transportation.
- **Service entrance.**
 - A separate service entrance should be provided for loading and deliveries.
- **Entrance and Circulation Paths.** Pedestrian access must remain the most substantial recommended mode of transportation alongside the vehicular drop-off and pickup for the shelter users. Proper site design should be employed to accommodate both modes of transportation.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

- **Pedestrian access** should be visible from the street and with different designated vehicle entry points. They all should be accessible and should lead to the main public entrance. Use proper signage to inform the shelter users on the appropriate entrance according to their needs when the shelter serves as a multi-purpose facility and entrances' separation is required.
- **Passenger Drop-off and Pick-up.** A passenger drop-off and pickup zone should be located beside the Main Entrance, and the area should be exclusively designated and used at all times without inhibition for emergency vehicles, wheel-trans vehicles and cars and taxis that are being used as means of transportation for the victims or to provide services to them. Access for other vehicles should all be provided to the designated areas according to the service they provide.
- **Way-finding and signage.** Proper, consistent design of way finding and signage should be in place at all times. All way finding and signage should be unobstructed, visible after dark with complementary lighting if necessary, and quickly spotted and viewed from the intended distance. The design of exterior signage should be consistent with that of the interior.

1.3 Outdoor Facility Spaces

Outdoor facility spaces, whether children playground, gardens or spaces for pets should be designed as spaces that provide shelter-residents with human interaction and restorative opportunities, give them the opportunity to enjoy the benefit of the direct access to nature and the positive impact nature and therapeutic benefits has on the overall emotional well-being of the shelter-residents. Some of the fundamental elements that should guide the design of the outdoor spaces are enlisted below:

- Accessible for all ages and abilities.
- The in and out access should be only through the building and access and with no access from the street.
- Sightline access from the neighborhood, parking area and garbage deposit next to these area should be avoided.
- Smoking spots and sun/precipitation covered areas should be provided.
- Landscaping (trees, objects, etc.) should not obstruct direct sightlines from all angles, nor should serves as blind spots for potential violators.
- Planting and landscaping materials should be easy to maintain, long-lasting, and cause no harm i.e. not-toxic planting, durable, non-slippery building materials, etc.

1.4 Parking

Parking design should be in accordance with the administrative local government standards and rules. The size of parking should consider the protection housing category, its resident's needs, and program users, and it should be accessible and in very short walking distance to the shelter entry point.

2. Program Areas

This section identifies program areas of the protection housing facility and the fundamental elements that should guide the design of each program area. The program area constitutes the following shelter/protection housing spaces: **entry and reception area, communal and shared use areas, private and self-contained units, administrative area, and facility support services.**

2.1. Welcome Center

The welcome center area should reflect the flow of people expected to use the facility based on the services and programs that the protection housing intends to provide. The best configuration for the reception should be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the best outcomes for shelter residents and staff. The area should be sufficiently spacious for receiving shelter users, including those with mobility impairments or baby strollers, where crowding is avoided. Also, the site should be kept free of clutter, safe, clean, dignifying, and calm. It should provide generous, accessible routes with unobstructed sightlines and routes.

The entrance should have only one leave and re-enter accessible point for all shelter-users and guests. The areas should be monitored through surveillance cameras 24/7 by staff. The staff shall have the ability to control the entry doors and door of the shelter area that accommodates safe, private units. Accessible drinking water fillers and at least four chairs, fixed in place, of durable material and wipe-able should be placed in the reception area.

In the reception area, a **hygiene suite** should be located where the following facility services are available:

- Wheelchair cleaning space
- Accessible washroom & shower
- The shelter-user luggage sorting area
- Heat room.

This is the space where the shelter residents voluntarily, with staff assistance, should attend to hygiene needs before entering the rest of the shelter and be accommodated to the private or self-contained units. Through the utilization of the hygiene suite, the facility is kept free of

hygiene and sanitation problems such as lice contamination, bedbugs, etc. The hygiene suite should not create a sense of “institutionalization” such as reformatory facilities. The washroom & shower should be a 3-piece suite and accessible.

As part of the routine for pet owners staying in the shelter, accommodation should be provided for pet cleaning near the point of shelter entry. The pet cleaning space should also be located in the Welcome Center area. However, the pet cleaning area is an optional facility service, and it rests primarily with whether the shelter is pet-free or pet friendly.

Optionally, in this Welcome Area, the **Intake Room** facility may be located, as well. The Intake room(s) provide a private space for one staff member and one or two upcoming shelter residents to meet and discuss personal information as part of the intake process. Adjacent to the **Intake Room** visually-connected place for children to play during intake is best practice under the supervision of a staff member. At least one room is needed in all shelters; however, the number of rooms should be determined by the shelter service provider.


2.2. Communal Used Areas

Communally used areas are spaces through which shelter residents meet their needs and are being supported to reclaim their dignity, gain their self-confidence and independence. These areas should not be confused with those that can be opened to out-of-shelter beneficiaries whose life or well-being is not in danger. Communal-used areas may include the following spaces:

Shared-Use Areas may include the following spaces clustered around four categories: **Daily Living Spaces**, **Family Shelter Daily Living Spaces**, **Case Management Spaces**, **Outdoor Amenity Spaces**, and **Specialized Program Spaces**. As the nature of the programming and support services offered may vary across the categories of shelters and target victims being served, the resulting space requirements should be determined in consultation with the service provider.

2.2.1 Daily Living Spaces

These spaces consist of various spaces or areas through which services are provided. Activities take place to benefit the shelter-users perform together, or with shelter staff, or individually.

-  **Gathering Space** is a space where shelter-users can relax and socialize. That space can be used by individuals or for larger scheduled gatherings such as group activities, group takings, etc. This space provides opportunities for shelter users to network with each other, feel supported, relax, and engage casually with the staff. The space should be comfortably furnished with easily cleanable furniture, light-weight furniture,

easy to be relocated and moved around, with multiple individualized areas, accessible, not cluttered, and a niche for small children. Gathering spaces should be comfortable, full of light, and, when possible, have views of nature. Maneuvering space for mobility-impaired individuals and wheelchair accessibility should be considered when determining furniture layout.

✚ **Dining area/room.** The design of the dining area/room should enhance shelter-user dignity and comfort. An institutional space should be avoided, and this space should be used as an opportunity to create a safe, calm, and welcoming environment for connection and interaction. The dining room should be adjacent to:

- ❖ **the shared shelter-user kitchens** with the dining room, as the central point of communal eating;
- ❖ **the outdoor amenity space** which can accommodate outdoor dining during favourable weather; and
- ❖ in proximity to **common space washrooms**.

The dining area should be sized to accommodate a minimum of 75% of the residents in one sitting, and more extensive programs may need to have multiple sittings. How the dining area gets organized also depends on the type of protective housing. A shared dining space shall be designed in such a way that elements such as traffic flow, easy access to food and utensils, and waste disposal are considered. The layout should allow sufficient passage width for free, unconstrained circulation so that shelter-users can come and go without being pressed into each other in tight passageways.


Tables and chairs should be movable to best suit the needs of the shelter users and provide them with the ability to configure the dining room. Loose tables and chairs rather than fixed tables and seating are less institutional and give shelter users a greater sense of control. Considerations should be given to target group-specific criteria to size the dining room suitably per shelters, such as the number of children, their ages, and the necessary support of highchairs in family shelters. Also, consideration should be given to the age and mobility of the shelter-users using the dining room, understanding that older shelter-users or those with accessibility needs may have particular limitations in accessing food through a server.

✚ **Shared shelter-user kitchens** provide shelter-users, when located in shelters without meal programs, with flexibility and control of their diet. Shared kitchens provides opportunity to socialize, share and learn new skills. Shared kitchens should be located in or adjoined to the Dining Room. The quantity of shared kitchens in each shelter should be determined through discussion with the service provider and based on the number of shelter-users and programs that the protection housing facility runs. Also,

shared kitchen should normally be a facility service for the safe homes and transitioning housing. Each kitchen, at minimum should contain the following fixtures and fittings:

- ❖ a double bowl sink with mixing valve
- ❖ a microwave oven
- ❖ refrigerator/s for shared use, or individual refrigerators in each shelter-user's room
- ❖ a separate freezer for shared use
- ❖ a cooktop or range with a range hood
- ❖ an oven
- ❖ continuous clear counter space
- ❖ counter space providing landing space beside each appliance or fixture
- ❖ storage area with shelving for non-perishable items
- ❖ space for waste bins
- ❖ eyewash station
- ❖ child safety devices for below counter storage and appliances (family shelters only).⁹¹

For the protection housing and support program, which will be funded to operate a commercial kitchen and meal service for the shelter users, it is recommended that a commercial kitchen designer be engaged early in the design process to advise on retail kitchen space and other systems requirements. The commercial kitchen should be suited to the scale of the number of meals per head and the number of meals per day. Safety issues should be addressed by professionals and in compliance with the set-up standards by licensing authorities. 20% of all appliances and kitchen furniture should be accessible for wheelchair users.

 **Laundry room/s** are intended for independent use by shelter users as a routine activity. In exceptional cases, staff assistance may be needed. All standard laundry rooms shall be designed to be wheelchair accessible and ideally located adjacent to the shared amenity space. Laundry rooms should not be found in secluded areas of the building and should be in the main traffic area, and they should be visible from the corridor through glazed screens through which parents can oversight their children while they play in the play area, as well. Below some of the most fundamental elements of the laundry rooms are enlisted:

⁹¹ Adapted from: Hildich Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines and BC Housing Design Guidelines and Construction Standards.

- ❖ Lighting in laundry rooms should be triggered by motion detector or occupancy sensor and they should be well ventilated and close to the exterior of the building.
- ❖ A floor drain should be located in the room so that overflowing water will drain to it.
- ❖ The laundry facilities' availability schedule should be organized around the schedule of the shelter users to avoid potential conflicts about the laundry facilities' use.
- ❖ A stainless-steel laundry sink, shelves to place safely detergents out of reach of children, a countertop with significant space for cloth folding should be installed in the laundry room.
- ❖ Laundry room should have a commercial washer and dryers to wash bed linens and heavy-duty laundry and there should be one commercial washer and drier for 15 beds and two for each 15 and above up to 35/40 beds.
- ❖ Family washer and drier should be used for personal use of shelter users and should be one washer and drier for 15 users.

🌈 **Private & restorative spaces.** These spaces should serve as flexible/multifunctional spaces that can be used for individual purpose/s as a quiet space, small private gatherings and can perform many functions, such as:

- ❖ **Family Visitation Space:** a separate space will facilitate personal interactions with family and loved ones, which is an essential aspect of emotional well-being, working through trauma, and normalizing some part of their lives.
- ❖ **Quiet Space:** a quiet, restorative space for meditation or a multi-faith worship space to retreat for prayer and meditation.
- ❖ **Study/Reading Space:** a space for reading or learning away from shelter-user common areas, especially if a teenage individual needs to study and who can adequately study in children studying area.
- ❖ **Alternative Meeting Space:** a space for small meetings or gatherings by shelter users when other spaces are unavailable.

These spaces should be located not at the proximity of active circulation and areas of high population, and they should be relatively secluded. They are best situated along an exterior wall to provide views of the outdoors, natural light, and acoustic privacy from adjacent programs. Space partitions can serve as movable walls to adjust the space used to the needs of the users and the purpose of the activities. Comfortable and light-weight furniture shall be put in place, and the area shall be accessible for all.

🌈 **Health & Medical Support.** Located in the ground floor of the facility, the Health & Medical room must be equipped with an examination bed, lockable medicine cabinet, washbasin, paper towel dispenser, and a filing cabinet. Next to the Health & Medicine

room, a two-piece washroom should be located and both their doors should not be located in a main corridor. This space should be at least 14 m².

- ✚ **Washrooms in the Daily Living Area.** An accessible 2-piece washroom should be located to the dining room, another 2-piece washroom should be located next to the Health& Medical Support room. Accessories such as toilet paper holders, soap, toilet tissues, towel bars and cloth hanging should be conveniently located and easily reachable by all the residents. All washrooms should have privacy locks but to be unlocked from staff and emergency professionals in case of emergency. Washroom doors should open outward, in case the person loses conscience and faints, and falling can block the door. Also, a panic button should be installed into shared washrooms. All washrooms should include resilient, non-slip sheet flooring and floor drains.


2.2.2. Family Daily Living Spaces

In these spaces, children are provided with a safe environment where they engage comfortably with the surroundings and can play, learn and grow, and their parents supervise them. These spaces are not a substitute for child care or child education/schooling. A distinction should be made between support for pre-school children (0-5) and school-age children (5-15 years).

- ✚ **Children play area.** The play area size should be scaled to the size of the facility and potential number of children it plans to accommodate. The places should be close to the different areas their mother could and with direct sightline. ensure the space is free of tripping hazards and large enough for free active play. If operable windows are present, their controls should be out of reach of children, glass should be tempered and laminated throughout common areas of a shelter.⁹² Incorporate methods of organization and storage designed so there are no barriers to supervision of children and children can freely play and move around and with children's safety in mind.
- ✚ **School age space.** The space must be designated for children aged 5 to 15 as they have different needs from children under 5 to perform their homework assignments. Acoustic design to support other activities coinciding within the space should be given careful consideration. The school-age space may also be a desk in the family's private area or self-contained unit or tables for a study in a quiet part of the facility. The design of this area and its availability depends on the size and protection housing model. Transitioning housing and second-stage housing may be best suited to offering such space. Nonetheless, the setup and the design should be consulted with the service

⁹² Ibid.

provider. Regardless of the choices being pursued on the availability or method of this space, computers have to be made available with high-speed internet service.

 **Child washroom.** A child washroom and change area dedicated to children, away from public access, should be present within or adjacent to this space. The following should be considered when designing child washrooms:

- ❖ Fixtures and furniture for children should be prepared to suit the scale of a child and be appropriate for children's talent and motor functions:
- ❖ child-size toilets should include 1 or 2 toilet seats; o children should be able to wash their own hands under supervision; and
- ❖ provide a mirror behind the sink at children's eye level.

2.2.3 Case Management Spaces

These are spaces where services provider staff or staff from other service-providing agencies or organizations support shelter-users to break their victimization disempowering cycle and support them in their quest for dignity and independence. Services offered to the shelter-users most often but not limited to involve: informal counseling, case management, referral services, group therapy, etc. Other services may be offered on a case-by-case basis or specialized services provided by the service provider or based on the specific needs of a specifically targeted group.

These spaces should be capable of accommodating privacy needs and provide flexibility for different kinds of meetings. A range of counseling and case management services may be delivered by staff or service providers, including:

- ❖ housing services;
- ❖ social welfare;
- ❖ employment services;
- ❖ social services;
- ❖ legal referrals and advice;
- ❖ life skills development services information;
- ❖ tax clinic;
- ❖ banking services;
- ❖ services may also be accessible through partnerships with other agencies and organizations specific to the needs of the sector;
- ❖ special cultural or personal needs for shelter-users who may be experiencing discrimination within a more generalized shelter.

Counseling and **case management rooms** should be no less than 14.0 m², and comply with the following:

- ❖ be sized appropriately and scaled up to the number of the shelter users being serve at the time, (one individual vs. one family)
- ❖ available of an adjacent space appropriate where small children can be accommodated and depending of their age they may be put under staff supervision or may be left on their own engaged in small activities, while a parent is engaged with staff or service providers;
- ❖ be acoustically private to permit shelter-user confidentiality;
- ❖ provide a sidelite or half-lite view into the support space (this should be discussed with the operator)
- ❖ be accessible.

Group meeting room is a designated space where service providers provide counseling, referrals and case management to shelter users through group approach. This space should:

- ❖ provide an accessible private consultation room of 17.0 m² with a second exit;
- ❖ include several chairs around a low table for the shelter-users and professionals from service provider organizations or agencies;
- ❖ be flexible in nature, allowing other program use, as requirements for this space are not exclusive of other use.

Outdoor Amenity Spaces provide shelter users and staff, and visitors with a designated outdoor space for recreation, gathering and other programs. Details on this are provided under *Site Section*.

Specialized Program Space is where different programs to support shelter users, and community members' needs are carried out. The size of the room reflects the number of the programs, and the number of beneficiaries participates in these programs. Usually, these spaces are open to both shelter users and community members. Mixed groups are permitted for the participation of the shelter-users when it is determined that there is no risk or conceivable threat to them. Most commonly, specialized programs take place in transitioning or second-stage housing. The size and design of this space should be determined in close consultation with the service provider.

2.3 Sleeping Accommodation

Sleeping accommodation is the most central protection housing and support program for domestic violence, gender-based, and women violence victims. A secure, clean, healthy sleeping accommodation gives victims and their children an immediate sense of security, comfort, and well-being. The design of sleeping accommodation is of paramount importance in providing victims with the opportunity to control their own space and privacy, gives them the denied autonomy over their body and their aspirations and decision-making. The literature

advises against shared sleeping accommodations and bunk beds and recommends that sleeping accommodations be provided through multiple rooms with single beds rather than bunk beds, citing the following advantages: ⁽⁹³⁾⁽⁹⁴⁾

- accommodation is more dignified because it recognizes the value of the individuals and avoids the perception of a warehousing,
- private sleeping space allows women the option of interacting with others when they choose,
- potential for conflict is reduced by the provision of adequate space, control over it and full privacy enjoyment,
- opportunity and privacy to deal with trauma effects and initiate the healing process,
- reset the interaction and communication between the victim and their children,
- mobility-impaired individuals have easier access to beds, and in between beds.

2.3.1 General Design Rules

Sleeping accommodation may suit many needs, and their design is shaped by the model of the protection housing facility under which they are located. Regardless of the differences and distinguishing elements they may exhibit, some fundamental aspects of design apply equally, including the following:

- Sleeping areas should be visually separated from the unit entrance.
- Beds should not be located under windows.
- Allow access to both sides of the foot of all beds.
- Avoid possible conflict between the placement of beds to the clothes closet.
- Each sleeping area should be provided with a window(s) to allow natural ventilation and day lighting.
- For larger families that require bigger or multiple sleeping areas, design for interconnecting units, with a lockable door between two units that can be opened to expand into one larger unit, if necessary.
- Allow for temperature control which provides both comfort and saves energy.
- For pet friendly bedrooms, ensure there is adequate room for a pet crate and easy to clean materials (such as flooring)⁹⁵.

⁹³ Gierman, T. Liska, A. & Reimer, J. Canadian Network of Women's Shelter & Transition Houses. Shelter for Women and Girls at Risk of or Survivors of Violence.

<https://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/modules/pdf/1363538451.pdf>

⁹⁴ Correia, A. & Melbin, A. (2005) Transitional Housing Services for Victims of Domestic Violence.

<https://safehousingpartnerships.org/sites/default/files/2017-01/TransHousingServices.pdf>

⁹⁵ Regulations on housing pets in the shelter and pets accommodation should comply with the regulatory framework and the by-laws of the service provider of the protection housing facility, and the design should be conducted in consultation with the service provider.

- Washroom in the sleeping accommodation area of the shelter should be best part of each sleeping accommodation unit. In this case, the washroom should be designed as a 3-piece washroom, (for further fundamental design elements of the washroom, see section 2.2.1).
- If washrooms cannot be included in each sleeping unit, then washbasins should be installed in each unit.
- The minimum standards for shared washrooms are:
 - ❖ One washbasin per four beds,
 - ❖ One shower stall per four beds,
 - ❖ One toilet stall per four beds.

Accessibility and Inclusivity:

- At least one sleeping accommodation area shall be accessible with an accessible bed with a maneuvering space for a mobility device of 2500 mm.
- At least one-bed sleeping accommodation area are recommended for gender-nonbinary shelter user/s.

2.3.2 Multi-Bed Configurations

The maximum number of beds per room is four, without overcrowding the accommodation space. Children should share a bedroom space with their parents, and cots or cribs should be provided for 0 to 3-year children. The four-bed format can also be reconfigured as a three-bed layout that includes a shower and toilet, with a separate sink in the location of the fourth bed. The three and four-bed configurations offer the design opportunity for two rooms to be combined into a small apartment in the future.

Minimum recommended floor areas are:

- ❖ Single bed – Minimum 3.0 m x 3.9 m with or without washroom
- ❖ Single bed – Minimum 3.9 m x 4.0 m with disabled access, with or without washroom
- ❖ Two-bed – Minimum 2.8 m x 4.3 m, without washroom
- ❖ Three-bed – Minimum 3.5 m x 5.3 m, with washroom
- ❖ Four-bed – Minimum 3.5 m x 5.3 m, with no washroom.

Rooms should be tested with furniture plan layout. The required areas and dimensions shall be measured between finished wall surfaces.⁹⁶

Other recommended features to include:

⁹⁶ BC Housing Design Guidelines and Construction Standards (2019).
<https://www.bchousing.org/publications/BCH-Design-Guidelines-Construction-Standards.pdf>

- ❖ A locker and small side table, as well as a durable wall mounted light fixture, should be provided for each bed in multi-room configurations;
- ❖ Provide awning or casement type opening windows;
- ❖ For storage in the rooms, provide additional closet area or shelves if required.

2.4 Staff Office Space Needs

Protection housing facilities provide non-stop service: 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year. The work of their staff and their professionalism is the key for the successful operation of the shelters and a vital contributor in the reintegration process of the victims into social life. Equally essential to their successful operation of the shelters and the sustaining of the service quality.

The protection housing facility and support program provider/s and operator/s should have their own designated working space. The size and the organization largely depend on the size of the facility and programs ran and managed by them. Certain staff positions require office space for their entire workday, while other staff positions may require office space for only a portion of their workday. A specific staff will work full-time at the shelter while other teams may only work there part-time. Office environments in shelters are to create modern and collaborative environments, provide all staff with access to office space as needed, and use space efficiently by allowing workstations to be shared as schedules allow.⁹⁷

Design consideration should include:

- Unless driven by specific adjacency requirements, all office spaces should be located in a central office suite to share meeting rooms, staff, and equipment (multifunction devices). The Main Office Suite should have one end close to shared use spaces and another end away from shelter-user areas⁹⁸.
- The Main Office Suite should have three main spaces: *Staff Office Spaces*, *Staff Meeting Space* and *Staff Support Spaces*.
- At a minimum, provide a front office/reception area, manager office, and shelter-user support/ counselling room. Provide millwork, security, telephone, cable, and data outlets.
- At a minimum provide staff locker, shower & change room for their shift.
- Dedicated washrooms facilities should be provided for shelter staff. This is a good health standard to protect shelter's staff.

⁹⁷ Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines. Prepared by Hildich Architect Inc. (2021). City of Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/8cea-shelter-design-and-technical-guidelines.pdf>

⁹⁸ Ibid.

- Staff washrooms should be situated adjacent to staff work areas and key staff support spaces.
- Provide one accessible 2-piece private washroom for every 10 staff.
- Staff spaces should offer maximum accessibility.
- Provide acoustic privacy for staff conversations.

ANNEX



ANNEX 1. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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