

# ALTERNATIVES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 40-HOUR DV TRAINING FOR VICTIM ADVOCATES



ADV's 40-Hour Training Program for Domestic Violence Victim Advocates gives advocates, professionals, and community members essential knowledge from which to launch and inform ethical and transformative advocacy work with survivor populations. The 40-Hour training is open to all and is geared towards individuals and groups looking to volunteer or work with survivors of domestic violence at victim service agencies.

**Why 40 hours?** New Jersey affords confidentiality privileges to victim counselors who have undergone 40 hours of training and are engaged with victim counselor centers or service providers and who have a primary function of rendering advice, counseling, or assistance to victims of acts of violence. (N.J. STAT. ANN. § 2A:84A-22.13 to 22.16 (2016)).

**What do our students learn?** The training provides a comprehensive overview of domestic violence topics, including in-depth exploration of abuse dynamics in intimate relationships, the effects of abuse on diverse survivor populations, and anti-oppressive perspectives on abuse intervention and healing.

Our **unique hybrid model** of both live and asynchronous instruction allows students to learn at their pace and accommodate busy schedules. With several cycles of live sessions offered throughout the year, students have multiple chances to get started and earn their certificates!

## 2025 TRAINING SCHEDULE

### Winter Cycle

January 7–January 30  
Tuesdays & Thursdays  
5:30pm–8:30pm

### Spring Cycle

April 1–April 24  
Tuesdays & Thursdays  
5:30pm–8:30pm

### Summer Cycle

June 23–July 16  
Mondays & Wednesdays  
5:30pm–8:30pm

### Fall Cycle

September 15–October 8  
Mondays & Wednesdays  
5:30pm–8:30pm

**Register Online**

**OR**

Scan the QR  
code with your  
smart device to  
register



### Contact Us:

Laura Melendez, MSW, LCSW  
Training Technician  
Ph: (201) 336-7579  
Email: [lmelendez@bergencountynj.gov](mailto:lmelendez@bergencountynj.gov)

### Alternatives to Domestic Violence

One Bergen County Plaza, 2nd Floor,  
Hackensack, NJ 07601  
24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 201-336-7575  
Website: [www.co.bergen.nj.us/adv](http://www.co.bergen.nj.us/adv)

# 40-HOUR TRAINING FORMAT & TOPICS

The 40-Hour Training consists of **8 sessions (24 hours)** of live virtual instruction via ZOOM offered each training cycle and **8 modules (16 hours)** of self-paced asynchronous\* lessons. Participants are encouraged to complete modules with accompanying live sessions but are allowed to submit for credit up to 12 months after their last attended live session.

**WEEK 1**

## SESSION 1

Dynamics of Domestic Violence Pt 1:

- Introduction to Domestic Violence
- Systemic Analysis of Power & Control

**WEEK 2**

## SESSION 3

The Continuum of Abuse

- Tactics of Power and Control
- Sexual Violence, Coercion, and Exploitation
- Using Community Against Survivors

**WEEK 3**

## SESSION 5

Anti-Oppressive Work with Survivors Part 2:

- Transformative Advocacy with Diverse Populations
- Strategic Advocacy for Survivor Parents

**WEEK 4**

## SESSION 7

Abuse Intervention Programs

- Coercive Control vs Reactive Aggression
- WEB Framework and Coordinated Community Responses to Domestic Violence

## SESSION 2

Dynamics of Domestic Violence Pt 2:

- Understanding Survivor Trauma Responses to Violence
- Values & Ethics for Survivor-Centered Advocacy

## SESSION 4

Anti-Oppressive Work with Survivors Part 1:

- Societal Attitudes on Domestic Violence
- Cultural Humility with Survivors
- Power, Privilege, and Oppression in Domestic Violence Advocacy

## SESSION 6

Crisis Intervention & Stabilization

- Crisis Response & Deescalation Techniques
- Safety Planning
- Communication & Documentation for Advocates

## SESSION 8

Domestic Violence Interventions for Survivors

- Domestic Violence and the Law
- Housing and Economic Justice
- Healing Work and Community Care

**ASYNCHRONOUS**

**MODULE ONE** Domestic Violence Definitions, Theory, and Frameworks

**MODULE THREE** Assessing Tactics of Power and Control, Sexual Violence, and Human Trafficking

**MODULE FIVE** Prevention and Intervention Work with Diverse Survivor Populations

**MODULE SEVEN** Domestic Violence History, Law, and Formal Intervention Systems,

**MODULE TWO** Trauma-Informed & Ethical Advocacy with Survivors of Domestic Violence

**MODULE FOUR** Reflexivity, Intersectionality, and Advocate's Toolbox for Change

**MODULE SIX** Survivor Advocacy, Assessment and Screening, and Advanced Safety Planning

**MODULE EIGHT** Coercive Control, Characteristics of Battering Individuals, and Community Solutions to Violence

\*Asynchronous format allows participants to complete online modules on their schedule at their own pace!

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is the 40-hour domestic violence victim advocate training?**

The 40-Hour Domestic Violence Advocate Training is required in the State of New Jersey for anyone who is working in a paid or volunteer position that will provide direct services to victims of domestic violence. To be considered a victim counselor in NJ, you must undergo 40 hours of training and be engaged in any office, institution, or center defined as a victim counselor (according to NJ § 2A:84A-22.14), be under the control of a direct services supervisor of the center, and have the primary function of rendering advice, counseling, or assisting victims of acts of violence (N.J. STAT. ANN. § 2A:84A-22.13 to 22.16 (2016)).

After completing 40 hours of training, graduates shall receive a Certificate of Completion that will enable them to pursue volunteer and employment opportunities working directly with survivors of domestic violence in New Jersey. Alternatives to Domestic Violence (ADV), the lead nonresidential domestic violence agency in Bergen County, offers four trainings a year administered by agency staff, experienced advocates and professionals in the field, and occasional guest speakers. The training is expansive and comprehensive, covering various topics deemed fundamental to rendering effective, survivor-centered advocacy.

The training operates in a cohort model with virtual sessions that are live and synchronous, allowing all participants to actively engage with educators and peers through interactive and dynamic lectures, discussions, group activities, and audiovisual media. Participants must be able to access the virtual training via computer/laptop/iPad. Cameras/webcam are required to be on during entire sessions. Attendance will be monitored.

### **Who is the training for?**

The training and all of its sessions are open to the public. It is intended for a wide range of learners, of all ages and professional backgrounds, who are interested in safely and ethically supporting domestic violence survivors in our communities.

### **How much does the training cost?**

The training is 100% free of cost at this time!

### **How do I receive credit towards the 40-hour Victim Advocate Privilege certification in NJ?**

In order to receive credit for the live training sessions, participants must keep their camera on throughout the duration of the training and remain joined to the meeting until the end of the training. To receive credit for self-paced independent assignments, participants must read assigned training materials, complete all assessments, and submit to trainers.

### **Are the entire 40-hours conducted live or can I do the hours at my own pace?**

Our training is composed of 24 hours of live training sessions and 16 hours of self-paced distance learning modules. There are a total of 8 live training sessions, 3 hours in duration, conducted on a set 4-week cycle. All 8 self-paced distance learning modules become available to participants after they register for the course. Participants can complete the 16 hours of distance learning modules at their pace prior to, during, or after completing the live sessions. We strongly recommend that participants work on the distance learning modules concurrently to live sessions and that they complete the modules no later than 12 months after the conclusion of the live sessions.

### **Is the live training in-person or online?**

The entirety of the live training sessions is conducted online via ZOOM video conference calls while all of the distance learning modules are accessible on our platform. Once registered, participants will be provided with information on the distance learning modules that supplement the core live sessions and count towards the total 40 hours. Participants will have access to these modules prior to beginning the training but it is not required for them to complete them before starting.

### **Do I have to attend all live online sessions of the training to receive my certificate?**

Yes. You are required to attend all sessions of the training and be joined to the ZOOM meeting room the entire duration of the training times. All ZOOM sessions are presented live, and we ask participants to have their cameras on during the training session. We utilize ZOOM attendance records to corroborate our participants' training hours, so it is imperative that participants join the session on time and remain joined to the ZOOM room until the end of the training session. We cannot award certificates to participants who join late, leave early, or for whom we cannot account training time for. If any unforeseeable issues occur, such as technology or Wi-Fi issues, it is very important that participants communicate this to training staff immediately to ensure speedy troubleshooting.

### **Are there any make-up sessions available if I miss any sessions or part of the training?**

Our staff is not able to offer make-up sessions at this time for individuals who miss parts of the training. Please ensure that you are able to attend all live sessions of the training before registering. If participants miss parts of the training due to unforeseeable conflicts or illness, we may be able to provide them with alternative opportunities to earn credit on a case-by-case basis. Participants also have the option of receiving credit for the missed session by attending during the next training cycle. Participants have up to 12 months after their last live training session to submit assignments and receive credit towards the certificate before we ask them to retake live sessions they've already completed.

### **What can I do with the 40-hour domestic violence victim advocate training certificate?**

Completing the 40-Hour training will enable graduates to pursue volunteer or employment opportunities that involve providing direct services with survivors of domestic violence in NJ. The training is also intended to support advocates, counselors, first responders, and other professionals that may not volunteer or work within victim service provider agencies or organizations but that nonetheless interact with and/or influence the lives of survivors of domestic violence. Completion of the 40-Hour training demonstrates a strong commitment to ethical and competent work with survivor populations and serves as the baseline education for many professionals wishing to expand their expertise and skill sets in empowering survivors in various fields and service settings.

### **Are there any requirements for admission to the training?**

The training is open to any participant at least 16 years old. There is no educational requirement to participate in the training.

### **Can you take the training if you are a survivor of domestic violence or abuse?**

Yes, however, we strongly recommend that any current or past clients of ADV wait at least 12 months after completing services with ADV before participating in the training due to the triggering nature of its content. The training is heavily informed by survivor experiences and may trigger discomfort or distress for participants. This caution is also extended to persons who are survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or family violence. If you are currently doing healing work or therapy, we encourage you to consult with your supportive persons to ensure that you have all you need to care for yourself throughout the process. We also invite you to communicate any concerns that may arise during the program to our training staff at any time.

### **If I live outside of New Jersey, will this 40-Hour Training Certificate allow me to work with survivors of domestic violence in my state of residence?**

Many states have similar training requirements that require prospective advocates to complete specific training hours to afford some type of testimonial privilege to victim advocates. Out-of-state participants are welcome to participate in this training but are strongly encouraged to consult the statutes of their state of residence to confirm whether they will be meeting all criteria to be granted victim counselor privilege or to seek employment with victim service providers. Additionally, this program may or may not meet all the content and/or specific hour requirements in your state so it may be helpful to consult with the governing body for your state, your state's domestic violence coalition, and/or your local domestic violence agency to confirm any training requirements.

## MEET ADV'S LEAD TRAINERS

### **LAURA MELENDEZ, MSW, LCSW** **TRAINING TECHNICIAN**

Laura is a Survivor Advocate & Training Technician for Alternatives to Domestic Violence (ADV) in Bergen County. Laura has over 10 years of experience working and advocating on behalf of youth, families, and survivors of interpersonal and systemic violence as an educator, activist, and counselor. At ADV, Laura provides direct services to survivors of domestic violence, develops community programming, oversees its 40-Hour Training Program for Victim Advocates, coordinates the Youth Empowerment Programs for teens, and currently serves on Bergen County's Coordinated Community Response to Domestic & Sexual Violence (CCR-DS) multi-disciplinary team. Laura's passion to facilitate transformative change for individuals and communities inspires her to pursue and amplify liberatory healing practices and strategic forms of resistance against abuse in all arenas. At her private practice she provides inclusive and LGBTQ+ affirming individual and family therapy to children, adolescents, and adults with specialties in addressing anxiety, racial trauma, acculturative stress, and intimate partner violence. Laura holds a Bachelor's degree in Biological Sciences from Cornell University and a Master's degree in Social Work from Rutgers University. An avid learner, Laura is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Social Work from Simmons University with a focus on investigating the link between critical pedagogy and communal healing, wellness, and resistance practices.



### **SOPHIA TRAPHAGEN, MSW** **TRAINING TECHNICIAN**

Sophia is an advocate, educator, and artist with a profound passion for primary violence prevention and community education. At ADV, Sophia implements educational workshops, conducts focus group research and program evaluation, and utilizes her skills in digital design to develop educational content. Prior to her current role, Sophia worked as a Residential Assistant at the Center for Hope and Safety's safehouse, where she provided critical support services to survivors of domestic violence, including housing advocacy, hotline screenings, and direct support services. Her experience also includes Community Outreach Coordinator for the Bergen County Office of Food Security, where she spearheaded projects promoting food security in Bergen County and forged relationships with local food pantries and organizations. Sophia holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Marist College, with a minor in Social Work and a focus in Gender Studies. She also earned a Master's in Social Work from Fordham University. Sophia is dedicated to breaking the cycle of abuse by empowering individuals with knowledge, tools, and resources. Through her work, she aims to raise awareness, foster empathy, and support survivors in their journey towards healing and recovery.



### **PATRICK LOVAGLIO MSW, LSW** **ABUSE INTERVENTION PROGRAM (AIP) COORDINATOR**

Patrick has over a decade of experience working in domestic violence abuse intervention in both in New York and New Jersey. As the Abuse Intervention Program Coordinator at ADV, Patrick's work includes facilitating group sessions, coordinating with mandating entities and treatment providers, and providing community education on domestic abuse intervention. Within the context of abuse intervention, Patrick has a broad range of experience. He was initially trained and supervised by forensic psychologist Dr. Matthew Campbell, has worked under the Emerge Model, and the Duluth, DAIP Model. Patrick has trained in Duluth's DAIP, Addressing Women who Use Violence, and working within a Coordinated Community Response. Patrick holds a Bachelor's degree in English from SUNY Fredonia and a Master's degree in Social Work from Stony Brook University's School of Social Welfare.



## STAY CONNECTED WITH ADV'S NEWSLETTER

Interested in more training opportunities? Sign for our email list & newsletter to get interesting news and updates delivered to your inbox, including exciting program updates, new training dates, employment and volunteer opportunities, and community events!

**Click here to go to our [Newsletter Sign-Up Form](#)**

Scan the QR  
code to sign-up

