

THE TEAM

The Domestic Violence High Risk Team (HRT) was developed in 2010 as a result of the Northwestern District Attorney's Safety and Accountability Audit findings.

The audit findings, combined with a district wide increase in serious domestic violence offenses, led to the need for a targeted program to identify and monitor high risk cases.

The HRT is a collaboration of the district attorney's office, police departments, probation, parole, sheriffs' departments, emergency dispatch, bail commissioners, Department of Children & Families, batterer's intervention and victim advocates.

Evidence-based research shows that a set standard of high risk behaviors, perpetrated alone or together, substantially increases the level of risk for victims.

The HRT works to identify these behaviors in order to maximize victim safety and offender accountability.

HIGH RISK ASSESSMENT

If we first accept that there is no such thing as low risk in domestic violence, then we conclude that there is only risk and higher risk. Our charge is to identify the risk level and take steps to minimize that risk.

High risk assessment is the identification and management of dangerous behaviors, using indicators identified through evidence-based research.

By identifying high risk behaviors and sharing information, the HRT makes recommendations to maximize victim safety and offender accountability and to increase safety for first responders.

Recommendations may include:

- priority prosecution
- GPS
- batterers intervention referral
- parole denial
- enhanced probation conditions
- maximum supervision
- police safety checks
- increased safety planning for victims

HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS

Threat to Kill

Strangulation

Use or Threat to use Weapon

Suicidal Ideation / Mental Health Issues

Escalation of Violence

History of Intimate Partner Violence
(multiple victims/restraining order violations)

Child Abuse / Violence during Pregnancy

Animal Abuse

Sexual Assault

Alcohol or Substance Abuse

Stalking Behaviors

Visible Injuries

**If you have a concern for a victim's safety,
refer to the HRT for evaluation.**

There were 256 Domestic Homicides in Massachusetts from 2003 to 2012 (YTD April)

175 Intimate Partner Victims

- 151 Female
- 24 Male

81 Non-Intimate Partner Victims

- 22 Children
- 8 Females associated with victim
- 32 Males associated with victim
- 11 Other family members
- 8 Perpetrators

Jane Doe Inc. 2012

In the Northwestern District, Franklin & Hampshire Counties and the town of Athol, there have been **20 domestic violence related homicides since 1984**; three in 2010 and one in 2012.

**When we collaborate as a team
we create a safer community**

“He seemed like such a nice guy.”

People are often shocked after a domestic homicide. No individual is dangerous at all times to all people. Individuals who commit domestic violence are typically most dangerous to their intimate partners.

TO MAKE A REFERRAL

If you are aware of an offender who exhibits high-risk behaviors please make a referral to the HRT for consideration.

Contact the High Risk Team
Coordinator at the Northwestern
District Attorney’s Office:

(413) 774-3186 ext. 5903

(413) 773-3278 – fax

To download our risk assessment tool
visit our website at NorthwesternDA.org

WHEN IN DOUBT REFER
You may save a life!

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Domestic Violence High Risk Team

*A Multidisciplinary Team of the Office of
Northwestern District Attorney
David E. Sullivan*



A Guide for First Responders
Do You Know How to Assess
High Risk in an Intimate Partner
Relationship?

**Building Safer Communities by
Increasing Offender Accountability
and Maximizing Victim Safety**

NorthwesternDA.org