

New  
Mexico  
Intimate  
Partner  
Violence  
Death  
Review  
Team

Process  
Evaluation  
Report

2010

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New Mexico Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Team  
Department of Emergency Medicine  
University of New Mexico



**Contents**

Introduction..... 3

Statutory Objectives..... 4

Case Review Process: Identification through Data Collection..... 7

Case Reporting and Team Feedback Procedures..... 13

Appendix 1: Confidential Case Review Form..... 14

Appendix 2: Team Member Case Review Feedback Form..... 21

Appendix 3: Team Member Evaluation Comments ..... 22

## **Introduction**

In December 2010, the New Mexico Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Team (Team) adopted a policy to produce an annual program evaluation. The evaluation is two pronged, consisting of both an assessment of outcomes and a process evaluation.

### **Outcomes Evaluation**

In an effort to assess outcomes of the Team's work, Team members, in collaboration with the coordinator, monitor activities around the State that can be identified as consistent with the Team's recommendations from prior years. Activities may include, but are not limited to, developments in legislation, policy, and agency practice. Keeping track of these activities helps the Team assess the relevance of their recommendations over time. Team members report activities related to these recommendations at meetings as they occur throughout the year. These reports are documented by the coordinator and reported in the *Recommendation Updates* section of the Annual Report.

### **Process Evaluation**

The second component of the evaluation plan is a process evaluation. Beginning in 2011, the coordinator will provide the Team with a report that examines the review process, including the case data collection strategy, case review procedures, and adherence to the Team's statutory mandate. This report will be presented at the January meeting where the Team will discuss the findings and provide feedback on improving the review process to better serve the mission, goals, and objectives established in *NMSA 1978 §31-22-4.1*.

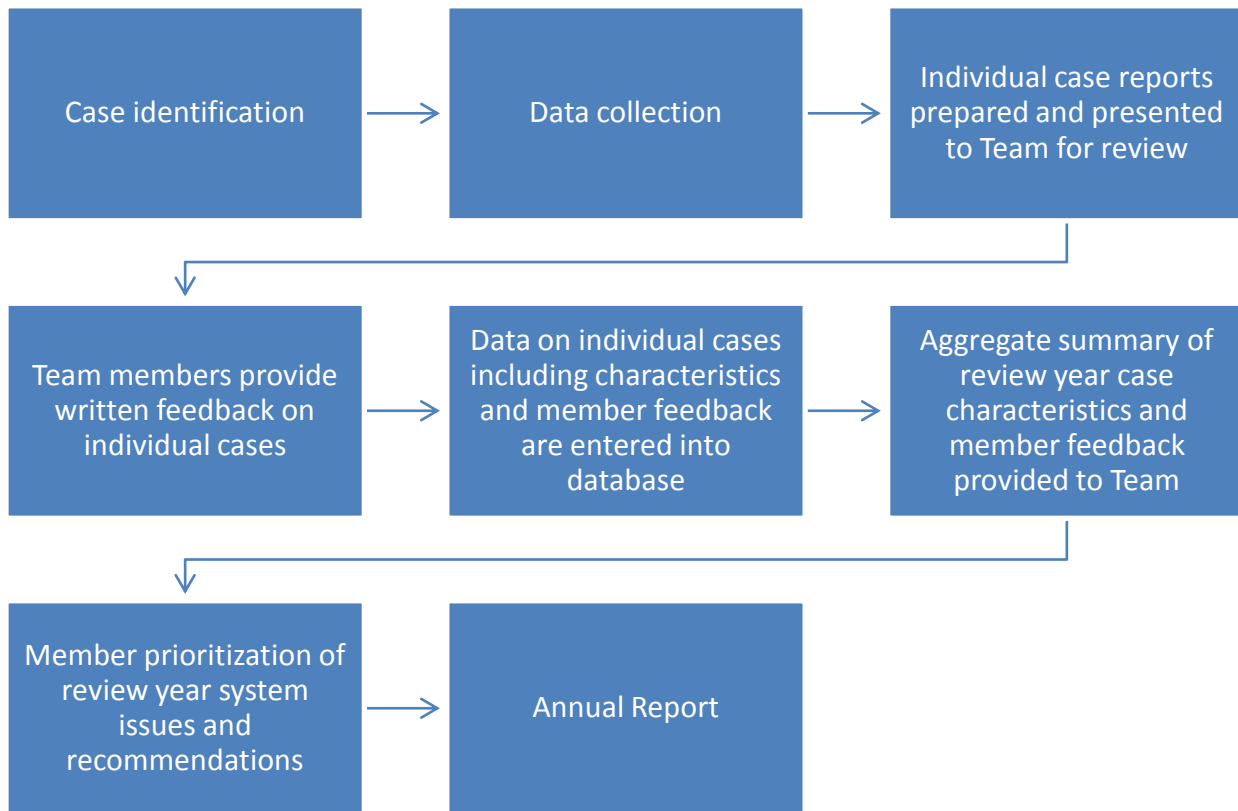
### **Overview of the Death Review Process**

The Team is tasked with reviewing the facts and circumstances of domestic violence related deaths and sexual assault related deaths in New Mexico. Each identified death incident is reviewed individually. The purpose of the review is to identify the causes of the fatalities and their relationship to government and nongovernment service delivery systems.

Recommendations for system improvements are made following each case review. Review findings and recommendations are compiled and reported in the aggregate at the end of each

review year. This knowledge is produced with the goal of developing more effective methods of domestic violence prevention. Figure 1 provides a diagram of the review process.

Figure 1. Case Review Process



The present report provides an assessment of three components of the review process: meeting statutory objectives, the case review process from identification through data collection, and the case review process from case presentation through Team member feedback. This work is intended to serve as a discussion guide for the Team to review and make recommendations for improving the case review process.

## Statutory Objectives

*NMSA 1978 §31-22-4.1* defines the Team's composition and sets out specific objectives to be accomplished.

## Membership

The statute identifies 11 occupational categories to be represented in the Team's appointed membership. In 2010, each occupational category and agency specified in the statute was represented in the Team's appointed membership. Table 1 shows the number of appointed members by member type.

Table 1. Number of Appointed Team Members by Type

Appointed Member Type	Number of Representatives in 2010
Medical personnel w/expertise in domestic violence	2
Criminologists	1
New Mexico District Attorney's Association	1
Attorney General's Office	1
Victim service providers	5
Civil legal service providers	2
Public Defender Department	1
Judiciary	3
Law enforcement	2
Department of Health, the Aging and Long-Term Services Department and the Children, Youth and Families Department who deal with domestic violence victims' issues	4
Tribal organizations who deal with domestic violence	4
Others appointed by CVRC	4

The Team has 30 appointed members. In addition to appointed members, the Team includes over 116 invited members who represent a diverse group of local, state, tribal, and federal agencies. Monthly meeting attendance averages approximately 45 members.

## Objectives

The statute defines 5 specific objectives to guide the Team's work. Table 2 lists each objective alongside corresponding 2010 activities and 2011 goals.

Table 2. Statutory Objectives, Team Activities, and Future Goals

Statutory Objectives	2010 Activities	2011 Goals
Review trends and patterns of domestic violence related homicides and sexual assault related homicides in New Mexico	Team compared patterns of risk factors and case characteristics across 2007 homicide and suicide cases	Complete activity for 2008 deaths, and  Provide multi-year comparison of these characteristics (deaths occurring between 2005 and 2008)
Evaluate the responses of government and nongovernment service delivery systems and offer recommendations for improvement of the responses	Team compared system interventions preceding these deaths for both victim and offender and compared criminal charges and prosecution outcomes for 2007 homicides	Complete activity for 2008 deaths, and  Provide multi-year comparison of intervention delivery as well as criminal charges and prosecution outcomes (deaths occurring between 2005 and 2008)
Identify and characterize high-risk groups for the purpose of recommending developments in public policy	Team identified risk factors for (victim, offender, and environmental) for each 2007 reviewed death,	Complete activity for 2008 deaths, and  Prepare list of lethality risk factors commonly identified in Team reviews and frequency of risk identification in reviewed deaths (2005-2008)
Collect statistical data in a consistent and uniform manner on the occurrence of domestic violence related homicides and sexual assault related homicides	Team utilized standardized form for collecting and reporting case data for each 2007 reviewed death	Complete activity for 2008 deaths, and  Construct and maintain database of collected data elements (including the Team's feedback) for all cases (2005-2008)
Improve collaboration between tribal, state and local agencies and organizations to develop initiatives to prevent domestic violence	Team works toward improved collaboration through organizational representation in Team membership, by monitoring community and agency prevention and intervention activities statewide, and by providing recommendations derived through multi-disciplinary case review discussion	Continue to assess ways in which organizations are working together to improve both prevention efforts and response to domestic violence

## Case Review Process: Identification through Data Collection

### Case Identification

The coordinator identifies cases for review using several methods: researching death records at the Office of the Medical Investigator, reviewing media reports regarding domestic and sexual violence, requesting information from local domestic violence and sexual assault agencies on homicides in their communities, and receiving case suggestions from Team members or other professionals. The coordinator attempts to gather information on all domestic and sexual violence deaths that occur in the state. However, many deaths are not reported in conjunction to domestic or sexual violence and therefore, may be difficult to identify as such through public records. Table 3 lists the types of cases that the Team considers for review and the number of reviewed calendar year 2007 cases (CY2007) that fit in each category.

Table 3. Types of Cases Reviewed

Type of Case	Number of CY2007 Deaths Reviewed in 2010
Homicide committed by intimate or dating partners	18
Homicide with a sexual assault component	1
Suicide by a victim of prior domestic violence	0
Suicide by an offender of domestic violence (even if the victim survives) when the suicide is related to domestic or sexual violence	14
Homicide of the offender if related to domestic violence (officer-involved shootings or bystander interventions)	4
Accidental death from asphyxiation, toxicity, or overdose where there is a history of domestic or sexual violence	0
Homicide of any child, family member or bystander killed during a domestic violence incident	1

### Data Collection

Once cases are identified for review, the coordinator collects information about the victim and offender and the death incident. In addition to demographic and relationship information, the coordinator also determines which agencies or systems the victim or offender had contact with prior to or following the death and contacts each of those agencies to obtain all pertinent and available reports and case information. The coordinator also researches available media reports



or other relevant information sources (i.e. websites) regarding the death or prior incidents with the victim or the offender. Once compiled this information is entered into the Team's *Confidential Case Review Form* as completely as possible (see Appendix 1). Table 4 details the types of information collected by the coordinator for use in case investigation and compilation with notes on the availability and accessibility of each type of information.

Table 4. Case Review Data Types, Sources, and Access

Types of Information	Source(s)	Access	Comments
Law enforcement reports, including crime scene investigations and detective's investigative reports	Individual law enforcement agencies	Good	Law enforcement reports are public records available upon request. Acquiring these documents may require a fee for copying/ mailing and can take from a few days to two or three weeks to obtain.
Media reports	Albuquerque Journal Subscription Archive*  Internet Search	Good	Stories of intimate partner violence related deaths are collected in real time. Media coverage of homicide is consistent statewide and generally leads to stories on the arrest and prosecution of the offender. Murder-suicide is generally covered but to a lesser extent than homicide and there is no coverage of suicide unless it occurs in a public manner.
Details of any prior protective orders (temporary and permanent)	Identified through NM Justice Net** and NM Courts  Retrieved from individual courts	Good	Protection order documents are public records available upon request. Acquiring these documents may require a fee for copying/ mailing and can take from a few days to two or three weeks to obtain.
Civil court data regarding divorce, termination of parental rights, child custody, or child visitation	Identified through NM Justice Net and NM Courts,  Retrieved from individual courts	Fair	Divorce proceedings are easily identified and those without children can be ordered from individual courts although we generally do not request these documents unless they are immediate / relevant to the death review.  We do not have access to the content of proceedings for parentage, child custody, and visitation cases. The outcomes are generally noted in the data available on NM Justice Net.

Table 4. Continued

Types of Information	Source(s)	Access	Comments
Criminal histories of the offender and the victim	Identified through NM Justice Net and NM Courts,  If relevant to review, reports may be requested from individual law enforcement agencies and / or courts	Fair-Good	Consistent access to criminal histories within the State of NM.  Limited access to criminal histories for persons who are from out of state or have spent significant time outside of NM and those that live on the State's border with another state or Mexico.
CYFD protective services data (regarding alleged child abuse or neglect involving either the victim or the offender) and juvenile justice data (prior delinquency history of the offender or the victim)	Team Member Report Out	Good	No direct access to records.
Adult protective services summary data and prior abuse history	Team Member Report Out	Good	No direct access to records.
Summaries of psychological evaluations or reports appearing in public record documents, such as police files	As documented in law enforcement and / or court documents	Fair - Poor	No direct access to mental health care records. Rarely documented unless symptoms and/or treatment are reported immediately preceding the death
OMI autopsy report	OMI Database***  In person review of autopsy records	Good	
Workplace information (stalking/harassment, alerts among co-workers)	As documented in law enforcement and / or court documents	Poor	Rarely documented unless the workplace and/or co-workers are tied in some way to the incident (location, witnesses, construction of timeline, etc...).

Table 4. Continued

Types of Information	Source(s)	Access	Comments
Medical reports and hospital emergency room information	As documented in law enforcement and / or court documents	Poor	Rarely documented unless immediately preceding the death.
Shelter or program services information from domestic violence or sexual assault advocates (if appropriate and legally permissible)	Team Member Report Out,  As documented in law enforcement and / or court documents	Fair	Difficult to identify shelter use unless reported in law enforcement documentation
School reports regarding children reporting abuse in the home		None	
Statements from neighbors, friends or witnesses (often found in police files as transcribed material or in court documents or trial transcripts)	As documented in law enforcement and / or court documents	Fair-Good	In homicide and undetermined death cases, witness reports and interviews with relevant parties are generally documented. Witness reports are less rigorously documented in cases involving suicide and murder-suicide
Pre-sentence investigation report (probation)		None	
Parole information (including victim notification)	Team Member Report Out  Court case information obtained through NM Justice Net and/or NM Courts	Fair	Electronically available court records do not contain a full report of the conditions of release, treatment orders, etc... but rather document only the terms of the original sentence. Details available in the electronic court record are limited to formal violations of court mandated conditions of release, and whether or not the parolee successfully completes the terms of parole.

Table 4. Continued

Types of Information	Source(s)	Access	Comments
Information regarding weapons confiscation, purchase, and background checks	As documented in law enforcement and / or court documents	Fair-Poor	Rarely documented unless directly related to or immediately preceding the death
Drug and alcohol treatment information	As documented in incident reports and court records.	Poor	Limited to the determination of whether or not an individual has been mandated by the court to attend drug and/or alcohol treatment. No information on treatment for those with no criminal or DVOP history. At times, the facility for treatment is documented.  Unless the individual is on probation and/or parole and violated for failure to attend or complete treatment, we do not have access to information on the outcome of treatment.

\*The Department of Emergency Medicine at UNM maintains a subscription to the Albuquerque Journal archives.

\*\* New Mexico Justice Net requires authorization from the Justice Information Sharing Council. Access to this database is critical to identifying incident, criminal history, and outcomes information. Similar information is publicly available on the New Mexico Courts website. However, this site has significant technical design / maintenance issues.

\*\*\*The Department of Emergency Medicine at UNM has a memorandum of understanding with Department of Health to access autopsy records from the Office of the Medical Investigator. This data source is critical to identifying cases for review.

## Case Reporting and Team Feedback Procedures

During closed sessions of the Team meetings, the coordinator distributes the *Confidential Case Review Form* and other relevant documents (i.e. news articles, court docket entries) to the Team. This form has been revised for the 2011 review year and can be located in Appendix 1.

Beginning in 2011, all information contained in the *Confidential Case Review Form* will be recorded in a database so that case similarities and differences can be identified and monitored over time. The form includes detailed information about the victim, offender, the relationship between the parties, the death incident, system response to the death, and a narrative that includes a timeline of events surrounding the death. Team members review the information provided and the narrative is read aloud. Team members ask questions to clarify issues or obtain additional information about the case. When appropriate, the coordinator invites representatives from agencies or systems that had contact with the offender or victim prior to or following the death to the meetings in order to provide the Team with additional information not available in the written records.

After reading and discussing the facts of the death, Team members conduct a thorough review of the death and factors associated with the death. In particular, Team members look for: risk factors for the victim or the offender prior to the death, system failures associated with the death, and recommendations for policy or systems improvement.

### **Feedback**

Each Team member is responsible for participating in the case review discussion and for writing down findings and recommendations on the *Team Member Case Review Feedback Form* (revised form is located in Appendix 2). The Team relies on the professional expertise of each of its members and therefore, it is important for Team members to analyze each case according to their profession and contribute ideas and suggestions for inclusion in the Team's recommendations. After each review, the coordinator summarizes the findings and recommendations identified in the review and maintains case statistics for aggregate reporting, such as age, race, and gender of victims and offenders and the relationship between victim and offender.

## Appendix 1: Confidential Case Review Form



# New Mexico Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Team

### CONFIDENTIAL CASE REVIEW FORM

#### DATE OF REVIEW:

#### SECTION 1. VICTIM INFORMATION

1. Victim's Name:  
Other Names/AKA's:
  
2. OMI #:
3. Date of Death:
  
4. County of Residence:
  
5. Race/Ethnicity:      White      Black      Hispanic      Native American      Other  
                                   —            —            —            —                                    — :
  
6. Sex:      M      F      Other
- —            :
7. Date of Birth:
- Age:
  
8. History of Substance Abuse:      Yes      No      Unknown
- 8a. Abuse of Alcohol?                    Yes      No      Unknown
- 8b. Abuse of illicit drugs?                Yes      No      Unknown
  
9. Substance use during homicide?      Yes      No      Unknown
- 9a. Use of Alcohol?                        Yes      No      Unknown
- 9b. Use of illicit drugs?                  Yes      No      Unknown
  
10. History of Mental Illness?            Yes      No      Unknown
- 10a. Diagnosis or treatment for Mental Health?      Yes      No      Unknown
- 10b. Victim of child abuse/neglect-physical?      Yes      No      Unknown
- 10c. Victim of child abuse-sexual?      Yes      No      Unknown
  
11. Criminal History?                      Yes      No

If yes, please provide the following information for each offense:

Case	Date	Offense Type	Charges Filed	Outcome

12. Was victim on probation at the time of the homicide?      Yes      No      Unknown
13. Was victim on parole at the time of the homicide?      Yes      No      Unknown

**SECTION 2. OFFENDER INFORMATION**

1. Offender's Name:  
Other Names/AKA's:
2. OMI #:      3. Date of Death:
4. County of Residence:
5. Race/Ethnicity:      White      Black      Hispanic      Native American      Other  
   —      —      —      —      — :
6. Sex:      M      F      Other      7. Date of Birth:      Age:  
                 —      —      :      Birth:
8. History of Substance Abuse:      Yes      No      Unknown  
8a. Abuse of Alcohol?      Yes      No      Unknown  
8b. Abuse of illicit drugs?      Yes      No      Unknown
9. Substance use during homicide?      Yes      No      Unknown  
9a. Use of Alcohol?      Yes      No      Unknown  
9b. Use of illicit drugs?      Yes      No      Unknown
10. History of Mental Illness?      Yes      No      Unknown  
10a. Diagnosis or treatment for Mental Health?      Yes      No      Unknown  
10b. Victim of child abuse/neglect-physical?      Yes      No      Unknown  
10c. Victim of child abuse-sexual?      Yes      No      Unknown
11. Criminal History?      Yes      No  
If yes, please provide the following information for each offense:



Case	Date	Offense Type	Charges Filed	Outcome

- |  |     |    |         |
|--|-----|----|---------|
| 12. Was offender on probation at the time of the homicide? | Yes | No | Unknown |
| 13. Was offender on parole at the time of the homicide?    | Yes | No | Unknown |

**SECTION 3. NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP**

1. Victim's Relationship to Offender (at the time of the homicide):

- Spouse/Common Law/Partner
- Ex-Spouse/Ex-Common Law/Ex-Partner
- Boyfriend or Girlfriend
- Ex-boyfriend or Ex-Girlfriend
- Other (specify):

2. Same Gender Relationship: Yes No

3. Habitation Status at time of homicide:

- Living together
- Separated and divorce pending
- Separated and divorce final
- Previously lived together, no divorce filed
- Never lived together

4. Victim and Offender have children together: Yes No Unknown

First Child: Age:	Living in Household:	Yes	No
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- |                                   |     |    |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Biological child of the victim:   | Yes | No |
| Biological child of the offender: | Yes | No |
| Present during the murder:        | Yes | No |
| Witnessed murder:                 | Yes | No |

Second Child: Age:	Living in Household:	Yes	No
--------------------	----------------------	-----	----

- |                                   |     |    |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Biological child of the victim:   | Yes | No |
| Biological child of the offender: | Yes | No |
| Present during the murder:        | Yes | No |
| Witnessed murder:                 | Yes | No |

**SECTION 4. INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE**

- |    |   |     |    |
|----|---|-----|----|
| 1. | Documented Prior Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) between Victim and Offender: | Yes | No |
| 2. | Prior IPV Police Reports between Victim and Offender:                         | Yes | No |
|    | How many IPV Police reports?  |     |    |
|    | Dates:  |     |    |

**SECTION 5. RESOURCE UTILIZATION BY VICTIM**

- |    |  |     |    |
|----|--|-----|----|
| 1. | Order of Protection against Offender (at time of homicide):                  | Yes | No |
|    | Date Issued:   |     |    |
| 2. | Order of Protection against Offender (pending at time of homicide):          | Yes | No |
|    | Date Requested:  |     |    |
| 3. | Order of Protection against Offender (applied for, but did not qualify):     | Yes | No |
|    | Date Applied<br>for:   |     |    |
| 4. | Order of Protection against Offender (applied for, but dismissed by Victim): | Yes | No |
|    | Date Applied<br>for:   |     |    |
| 5. | Order of Protection against Offender (in the past):                          | Yes | No |
|    | Date Issued:   |     |    |
| 6. | Order of Protection against Victim (at time of homicide):                    | Yes | No |
|    | Date Issued:   |     |    |
| 7. | Order of Protection against Victim (in the past):                            | Yes | No |
|    | Date Issued:   |     |    |

**SECTION 6. MEDICAL INJURIES/OMI FINDINGS**

1. Location of homicide:

2. Site of Homicide (Choose one only):

- Shared Residence
- Victim's Residence
- Offender's Residence
- Victim's Workplace
- Parking Lot
- Street
- Other
- (specify):

3. Site where body was found (If different, Choose one only):

- Shared Residence
- Victim's Residence
- Offender's Residence
- Victim's Workplace
- Parking Lot
- Street
- Other
- (specify):

4. Injury Date:

5. Day of Week:

6. Date Pronounced Dead:

Time Pronounced Dead:

7. Weapon/Method Used:

- Handgun
- Shotgun
- Rifle
- Other firearm (specify):
- Knife (specify):
- Body (specify):
- Blunt Object (specify):
- Drowning
- Hanging
- Other (specify):

8. Was a Sexual Assault Analysis Conducted?

Yes                  No

If yes:                  Positive                  Negative

9. What injuries did the victim suffer? (check all that apply):

- Gunshot/s
- Lacerations/slashes/gashes
- Stab/incised wounds
- Burns
- Broken bones/cartilage
- Smoke inhalation
- Cuts/abrasions
- Bruises/contusions/hematomas
- Strangulation
- Other (specify):

10. Murder-Suicide Yes No

Method:  
Location:  
Date & Time:

11. Murder-Attempted Suicide Yes No

Method:  
Location:  
Date & Time:

12. Others Injured: Yes No  
Specify:

13. Manner of Death Recorded by OMI:

**SECTION 7. PRESENCE OF CHILDREN**

1. Homicide occurred during the exchange of children: Yes      No

2. Homicide occurred during a court ordered visitation: Yes      No

3. Children found homicide victim: Yes      No

4. Custody of children following the homicide (check all that apply):

- CYFD
- Relative of Victim
- Relative of Offender
- Other (specify):

## **SECTION 8. CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE**

1. Police Agency(s) that Responded:

Investigating Detective:

2. Charges Filed:

3. Charges Prosecuted:

4. District Attorney:

5. Judge:

6. Sentence (if any):

## **SECTION 9. CASE SUMMARY**

**HISTORY**

**EVENT**

**CHARGES/PROSECUTION**

## Appendix 2: Team Member Case Review Feedback Form

### NM Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Team

#### Team Member Feedback

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**Comments:**

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**Risk Factors: Victim**

**Risk Factors: Offender**

**Risk Factors: Environmental**

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**System Failures:**

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**System Recommendations:**

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**Case Review Recommendations (i.e. Team procedures, requests for additional information):**

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## **Appendix 3: Team Member Evaluation Comments**

**Please detach this form and return to coordinator at your convenience  
Feedback can also be emailed to [dalbright@salud.unm.edu](mailto:dalbright@salud.unm.edu)**

### **Statutory Objectives**

Comments on and/or recommendations for agency representation in Team membership:

Comments on and/or recommendations for meeting statutory objectives in 2011:

### **Case Review**

Comments on and/or recommendations for improving case identification:

Comments on and/or recommendations for improving data collection (Please note: if recommending access to information not currently collected, please provide point of contact for the owner of the data):

Comments on and/or recommendations for improving the case report out process and forms:

Thank you for your feedback!