Office of the Oklahoma Attorney General
LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL PROGRAM

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NEWSLETTER

The FAQs of LAP

While 11 questions on a form may seem simple, we recognize that the 11 questions that make up the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) are often anything but straightforward. After nearly every training, participants approach us with thoughtful questions about the LAP and how it applies in real-world situations. We genuinely welcome those conversations—it means people were engaged, thinking critically, and considering how to apply the protocol in practice.

Here are some of the most frequently asked questions about the LAP.

What is LAP?

The LAP is an intimate partner violence (IPV) risk assessment used by law enforcement to assess whether a victim is at high risk of being seriously injured or killed by their intimate partner. This tool connects victims to a local victim service providers.

Is LAP required in Oklahoma?

Yes. Oklahoma law requires law enforcement agencies to use the standardized Lethality Assessment form when responding to crimes involving intimate partner violence.

Bring LAP Training to Your Community

Partner with Us to Strengthen Your Response to IPV

Our LAP Training is CLEET-Approved for two (2) hours of continuing education or mental health. If your agency or community is interested in strengthening your response to intimate partner violence, we would be happy to provide a LAP training. Our team offers in-person and virtual sessions tailored to law enforcement, prosecutors, and service providers. To request a training or learn more, please fill out the form below—we're here to support your team in implementing a proactive, coordinated approach to victim safety.

Training Request Form

Who developed the LAP?

The LAP was developed jointly by domestic violence advocates from the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV), researchers from Johns Hopkins University (Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell & Dr. Daniel Webster) and representatives from the Maryland State Police. It is based on Dr. Campbell's research.

Does it apply to all domestic violence calls?

No. The LAP is designed specifically for intimate partner violence, not all family violence situations.

What if the victim does not want to answer the questions?

Participation in the assessment is voluntary. Explain the purpose of the assessment and respect the victim's decision if they choose not to participate. If a victim declines to answer any of the questions, officers must mark the designated box on the form to document that the assessment was declined.

How is someone determined to be high-risk?

A "Yes" to any of the first five questions, or a "Yes" to three or more of the remaining six questions, or disclosure of something concerning to the law enforcement officer in the open response section indicates high risk under Oklahoma's current LAP.

Attend the Partners for Change Conference

The annual Partners for Change Conference will be held September 2–3 at the Embassy Suites in Norman. This multidisciplinary event brings together professionals across Oklahoma to strengthen coordinated community responses to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and trafficking. The registration deadline is August 15th. Register using the link or QR code.

Register for the Partners for Change Conference

Submit a Workshop Proposal

The Planning Committee is seeking workshop proposals that strengthen criminal justice responses and enhance victim services. Topics may include stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, trafficking, and culturally specific responses. The proposal deadline is May 31st. Apply using the link or QR code.

Submit a Workshop Proposal



What if I think the victim is high risk even if they don't meet the scoring criteria?

Use the Officer Assessment section. Your training, experience, and observations matter, and the protocol allows officers to document concerns that may warrant a referral.

Does a high-risk score mean the victim has to speak with an advocate?

No. Instead, officers must speak with an advocate to receive a safety plan and share that with the victim. Once this is complete, officers should encourage contact with an advocate, but ultimately the victim decides whether to participate.

What if the victim declines to speak with an advocate?

Document the declination according to agency policy and provide available resource information whenever possible.

What if there isn't a local victim service provider available?

Follow your agency's protocol for contacting the designated provider or contact the Oklahoma Safeline at 1-800-522-SAFE (7233).

Call for Vendors

We are also seeking vendors whose work supports victim services, public safety, and community response efforts. Space is limited and assigned first-come, first-served. Each booth includes a table, two chairs, and electricity. Additional needs can be arranged with the venue.

Submit a Vendor Proposal



Does the LAP become part of my report?

Follow your agency's records and evidence procedures. In Oklahoma, the completed LAP is generally maintained as part of the case documentation. As a best practice, document that the LAP was completed, indicate whether the victim screened in or did not screen in, and note that the appropriate referral process was followed.

What if children are present?

Complete the assessment with the victim. If children are present or impacted by the incident, consider any immediate safety or well-being needs and make a referral to the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS) when appropriate, in accordance with your agency's policies.

Should I administer the LAP if the perpetrator is still nearby?

No. Always consider line of sight and ear shot distance to the perpetrator. Officer and victim safety come first. Separate the parties and ensure scene safety before conducting the assessment.

Can I skip the questions if I already know the answers?

No. Ask each question as written. Consistency helps preserve the integrity of the assessment.

Numbers to Know

Oklahoma has consistently ranked in the Top 10 in women being murdered by men in single victim/single offender incidents since 1996. The most recent state rankings ranked Oklahoma as 2nd in the nation when analyzing 2020 homicide data.

Violence Policy Center. (2023). When men murder women: A review of 25 years of female homicide victimization in the United States. Retrieved from: https://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2023.pdf



Does the LAP predict who will be murdered?

No. It identifies risk factors associated with intimate partner homicide. It is a screening tool, not a prediction tool.

Does a low-risk result mean the victim is safe?

No. Any domestic violence incident can escalate. The LAP helps identify elevated risk but does not help eliminate concern for victims who score lower. Low risk does not equal no risk.

Will completing the LAP slow down my call?

The LAP only adds a few minutes and can connect high risk victims with services that may reduce the risk of future violence. It is better to add a few minutes on this call than spend hours on a homicide investigation later.

In Closing

There will always be new questions as we continue training our system partners on the LAP, and we want to hear them. We welcome every question because they help us strengthen our training and better support agencies across Oklahoma.

At the same time, we understand that some people may prefer to ask questions anonymously. To make that easier, we've included a link below where you can submit your LAP questions at any time. We'll continue sharing this link in future newsletters, so whenever a question comes up, you'll have an easy way to ask it.

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When you submit a question, you can let us know if you'd like us to contact you directly, or we can answer it in a future newsletter so others can benefit as well.

Keep asking great questions, because remember, we're proactive, not reactive.

Submit a Question Here

The Lethality Lens

Breaking down each LAP question to better understand indicators of high danger.

The Question

Has the person ever tried to choke the victim?

The Lens

Non-fatal strangulation is a lethal-level assault and a strong predictor of future homicide. Victims who have been strangled by a partner are 750% more likely to later be killed by them. Strangulation often leaves little visible injury but signals high control and intent.

The Research

"Research has now made clear that when a man puts his hands around a woman's neck, he has just raised his hand and said, "I'M A KILLER." He is more likely to kill police officers, to kill children, and to later kill his partner. So, when you hear "He choked me," now you know... you are at the edge of a homicide."

Gwinn, C., Strack, G., & Kingsbury, C. (2022, November). From stranglers to cop killers: A dangerous link. Police Chief. Roehl, J., O'Sullivan, C., Webster, D., & Campbell, J. C. (2005). Intimate partner violence risk assessment validation study: Final report. U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. "That finding is simple to interpret: use of a weoapon facilitates murder, but is not necessary to assault."

OFFICE OF THE *OKLAHOMA ATTORNEY GENERAL*
LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL (LAP) TEAM

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"The Lethality Assessment Protocol represents one of our most critical tools in protecting vulnerable Oklahomans. This partnership between law enforcement and victim advocates isn't just procedure - ***it is a lifeline that saves lives."***

GENTNER DRUMMOND
Oklahoma Attorney General