Case Checklist

I. **Initial Contact with Potential Client**

A. Be discrete, the potential client may be living with the abuser. Do not leave a message unless the client specifically says that it is ok.

B. Ask the potential client if s/he is able to talk to you about the problem at this time.

C. Ask about the potential client's physical safety. If they feel unsafe, recommend that s/he call the police, and then call us back once s/he does feel safe.

D. Obtain the correct spelling of both parties' names, and birth dates, if known, for the conflict check, and summarize the basic facts in a sentence or two.

E. Inform the potential client that a student volunteer will contact them in a couple of days with the conflict check results. Usually this takes two or three days.

F. Obtain a safe phone number and time to call for the potential client.

G. Ask the potential client how they heard about POP.

H. Fill in the case's information in the "Case Management File".

1. Open the file called "Case Management File" on the desktop

2. A pop-up will ask if you want to block unsafe expressions. Click "No"

3. A second security warning will pop up. Click "Open"

4. The spreadsheet listing all case information will appear. Scroll to the bottom.

5. On the first open line at the bottom, fill in all information you currently have on the case. This should include the case open date, your name in 'entered by', and as much information as you have on the potential client and respondent in the appropriate cells. This should include at a minimum the potential client's name and birth date, as well as that of the respondent. Leave blank any cells asking for information currently unavailable. Add any relevant comments in the far right field.

I. Begin the case file by typing a brief memo using the format inside the "Initial Contact" folder on the computer desktop. There is also an example memo in this folder. Your memo should briefly relate the initial contact. Print it and place it in a file with the potential client's last name on the outside tab. These files can be found in the third drawer of the plastic cabinet under the desk. Once you have the file properly labeled, with your memo inside, place it in the top drawer of the filing cabinet against the back wall. The drawer is labeled "Open Cases" and it is arranged alphabetically.

II. **Conflict Check**

A. Email Ginnie Phero (gphero@indiana.edu) from the POP email account asking for a conflict check

B. Include the full name and birth date of the potential client and adverse party (as well as it is known)

C. Check back over the next few days to receive conflict check information from Ms. Phero

D. Contact either the student director or case manager with the conflict check results and the basic information of the case. They will determine whether POP will take the case.

1. If POP will not take the case, contact the person and inform them, and give possible referrals, if available.

E. Either way, add a brief memo to the case file with the update. A format and example memo can be found under the "Conflict Check" folder on the computer desktop.

F. Also, either way, update the "Case Management File". Open it as was described before, find your case line, check the box for the conflict check, and fill in your name for having performed it. Add any comments at the far right you think may be needed.

1. If POP will not take the case, enter either A, B, or C in the disposition column. Use A if the student director or case manager rejected the case. Use B for a rejection that also included a referral to another institution. C is used if Ms. Phero found a conflict.

G. If POP did not take the case, you are done. If POP did take the case, continue on to "Volunteer Assignment.

III. **Volunteer Assignment**

A. Inform either the student director or case manager if you can take the case yourself at the time

B. The student director or case manager will then contact the student volunteer coordinator to assign experienced and inexperienced volunteers as needed.

IV. **Intake Interview**

A. Contact the client to schedule an initial interview

1. Use a public place, such as the POP office, library conference rooms, etc for the interview. DO NOT agree to meet at the client's home for any reason.

2. If you are going to use the POP office, sign up for it on the calendar located on the bulletin board next to the door as soon as possible to avoid conflicts with ILAP. Also, at the time of the interview, put a note on the door so that you will not be interrupted.

B. Before the interview, see the Client Intake form to review what information you need to gather during the interview. The forms are in the front section of the file rack on the table near the door. Fill in this form with your notes during the interview.

C. During the interview, make sure to take careful notes about what the client tells you. Go over anything you think is relevant, but include at least the following:

1. Tell the client you are a law student, not an attorney, and that you can't give legal advice. The client will be working with two or three law students and a volunteer attorney, who will represent them in court

2. Explain as well that all communications with you and with the attorney are confidential communications, and you will not discuss them with anyone without his/her permission.

3. Clients should be told that POP is limited to obtaining protective orders and that if they need additional help, you will attempt to refer them to another agency

4. You should explain to the client what a protective order is and all the remedies that are available under the protective order statutes so that s/he can choose what relief s/he wants to seek with the protective order

D. Ask the client to tell you their story.

1. It is useful to ask about the most recent incident and work backwards. Refer to the Interviewing Reminder (located on a bulletin board in the office) for suggestions about the types of questions to ask.

2. If the client mentions witnesses to the incidents, get their names (spelled correctly) and addresses.

3. If the client has been to the police, hospital, or Child Protective Services, get the dates.

4. Any pictures showing evidence of the abuse should be obtained by POP for use at the protective order hearing, as well as any relevant documents

5. It is very important to ask whether the respondent owns a gun or other deadly weapon, since the court may order the respondent to refrain from possessing any weapons in certain circumstances.

E. Conclude the interview with a brief recap to make sure you have the information correct.

F. Ensure that the client has the contact information for the POP office. DO NOT give personal contact information to clients.

G. Write a memo stating when and where the interview took place, as well as a summary of the interview. This memo should be a bit longer than the others. Add this memo, and your notes on the Client Intake form to the case file. There is an example in the "Intake Interview" folder on the desktop.

H. Update the case information on the "Case Management File". Check the box for the initial client intake and put the names of the people who performed it.   Add any relevant comments in the far right field.

V. **Contact Volunteer Attorneys**

A. Open the "Contact Attorneys" folder on the office computer desktop

B. Open the "Available Attorneys" file

C. A pop-up will ask if you want to block unsafe expressions. Click "No"

D. A second security warning will pop up. Click "Open"

E. An attorney's information will populate the screen. Call this attorney.

F. When calling an attorney, be professional. Tell them who you are and that you are calling on behalf of POP. Then, ask if they could help with a case at this time. Have the case file with you when you call, so that you can reference any information the attorney may need to know.

G. After you call, fill in the information at the bottom of the screen, including the date, which case you were calling about (use the case number, not name), your name, whether the attorney accepted the case, and any notes.

H. ONLY IF you actually spoke with the attorney (not left a message or spoke to a receptionist) fill in the "Today's Date" box at the top of the sheet. Filling this in moves the attorney to the bottom of the call list.

I. If you have difficulty finding an attorney, contact the Volunteer Attorney Coordinator.

J. When you get an attorney for your case, write a brief memo for the case file. An example is in the "Contact Attorneys" folder on the desktop. Also, update the "Case Management File" with the attorney's information.

VI. **Working with the Volunteer Attorney**

A. Once you have obtained a volunteer attorney, offer to help them in pursuing the case in whatever manner they choose. Some attorneys will want to handle most of the case on their own; others may want your assistance in preparing documents and keeping in contact with the client. Offer to help, and take your guidance from the attorney directly.

B. Continue to update the “Case Management File” and add memos to the case file whenever a significant event in the case occurs.

C. There is a folder on the computer desktop called “Sample Forms” that has examples of many of the forms that attorneys ask for most often. Refer to it as needed if your attorney wants you to draft documents.

VII. Wrap-Up

A. At the conclusion of the case, update the “Case Management File” once more with the proper disposition code for the case. There is a list of the codes and their meaning on the bulletin board above the phone.

B. Write a final memo, that states the end result of the case, place it in your case’s folder, and move the folder from the “Open Cases” drawer of the file cabinet to the “Closed Cases” drawer below it.

C. Send a thank you letter to your volunteer attorney, thanking them for their time and effort in assisting POP. There is an example in the “Wrap-Up” folder on the desktop.

1. Open the “Attys by Last Name” file in the “Wrap-Up” folder on the desktop

2. A pop-up will ask if you want to block unsafe expressions. Click “No”

3. A second security warning will pop up. Click “Open”

4. A third pop up will ask for the Lawyer’s Last Name. Enter it.

5. When the attorney’s data come up, find the line in there note section on the bottom you made when you initially contacted them, and check the thank you letter sent block

If at any time in any case, you are unsure about something, do not hesitate to ask an experienced volunteer or board member for help!