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NEWSLETTER

Turning Assessment Into Action: The History of LAP in Oklahoma

The first implementation and evaluation of the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) took place in Oklahoma. The study spanned approximately four years, from 2009 to 2013. At that time, Oklahoma consistently ranked among the top 15 states in the nation for domestic violence homicides (Violence Policy Center, 2012). The state also presented a unique demographic profile, including a high percentage of Native American residents.

To conduct the study, researchers partnered with two key groups essential to LAP implementation, victim service agencies and law enforcement agencies.

Victim Service Agencies

- Domestic Violence Intervention Services (DVIS)
- Women's Shelter and Family Resource Center
- Marie Detty Youth and Family Services Center, Inc.
- Stillwater Domestic Violence Services (SDVS)
- YWCA of Oklahoma City
- Help-In-Crisis

Law Enforcement Agencies

- Oklahoma City Police Department
- Tulsa Police Department
- Lawton Police Department*
- El Reno Police Department*
- Stillwater Police Department
- Broken Arrow Police Department
- Cherokee County Sheriff's Office
- Tahlequah Police Department



Bring LAP Training to Your Community

Partner with Us to Strengthen Your Response to IPV

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](#)

Statistics

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.

*Lawton withdrew during the first year due to technological barriers that made data entry and communication overly burdensome. El Reno withdrew in the final year following a change in police leadership

Findings from the Oklahoma LAP Study demonstrated the program's effectiveness in several key areas. Victims who participated in the LAP were significantly more likely to engage with a domestic violence advocate and to take protective actions—such as developing a safety plan or seeking shelter—compared to those who did not. Moreover, victims who completed the LAP were less likely to experience subsequent physical intimate partner violence (IPV).

Overall, the Oklahoma LAP Study showed that when law enforcement officers administer the assessment correctly, make timely referrals, and ensure follow-up occurs, the program can replicate these positive outcomes and enhance victim safety.

The Legislation

The first statutory change involving the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) occurred while the Oklahoma study was still ongoing. In 2011, lawmakers added an educational requirement to the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training (CLEET) curriculum stating that,

“training should include, at a minimum, the importance of reporting domestic violence incidents, determining the predominant aggressor, evidence-based investigation of domestic violence and stalking, and lethality assessment.” (70 O.S. § 3311.5(G))

Attend the Partners for Change Conference

The annual Partners for Change Conference will be held September 2-3, 2026 in Norman, Oklahoma. This conference brings innovative, multidisciplinary training to Oklahoma to support a coordinated community response to violence against women. The conference features a variety of breakout sessions covering a wide range of topics relevant to allied professionals, with continuing education (CEU) opportunities available. This event plays a vital role in enhancing victim safety and advancing efforts to end domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and trafficking that involves these forms of abuse.

Multi-Disciplinary Training

Gain insights from experts across fields on innovative approaches to addressing violence against women.

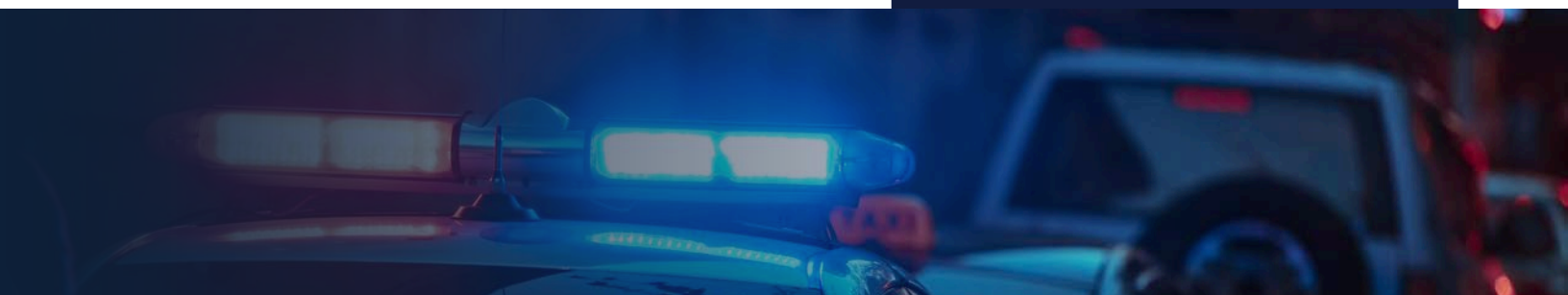
Wide-Ranging Topics & CEUs

Choose from diverse breakout sessions tailored to your role, with opportunities to earn continuing education credits.

Collaborative Impact

Join a statewide network of professionals working together to strengthen Oklahoma's coordinate response and enhance victim safety.

There will be over 40 CLEET-Approved Classes available at the Partners for Change Conference.



This was the first legislative step toward integrating the LAP into Oklahoma's response to domestic violence crimes.

Following the completion of the Oklahoma LAP Study, a bill was introduced, requiring all law enforcement agencies to utilize the 11-question LAP form when responding to intimate partner domestic violence incidents. The bill became effective on November 1, 2014.

It's important to note that the original statutory language for the referral process states: "Based upon the results of the lethality assessment, referrals to shelters, domestic violence intervention programs, and other social services shall be provided to the victim." (21 O.S. § 142A-3(D))

In 2021, 21 O.S. § 142A-3(D) was amended to add specificity to the referral process and establish a standardized form housed with the Office of the Oklahoma Attorney General.

The updated statutory language reads: "Upon the preliminary investigation of a domestic violence crime involving intimate partner violence, the first peace officer who interviews the victim of domestic abuse shall assess the potential for danger by asking a series of questions provided on a lethality assessment form available on the Oklahoma Attorney General website... Based upon the results of the lethality assessment, referrals to shelters, domestic violence intervention programs and other social services shall be provided to the victim. E. If the results of the lethality assessment indicate a referral is suggested, the assessing officer shall implement the protocol referral process to a domestic violence advocate from a certified or tribal program as follows:

1. Advise the victim of the results of the assessment;
2. Advise the victim that based on the results of the assessment the officer will call the domestic violence hotline to allow the victim to speak with an advocate;
3. If the victim does not want to speak with an advocate, the officer shall document the refusal on the form.

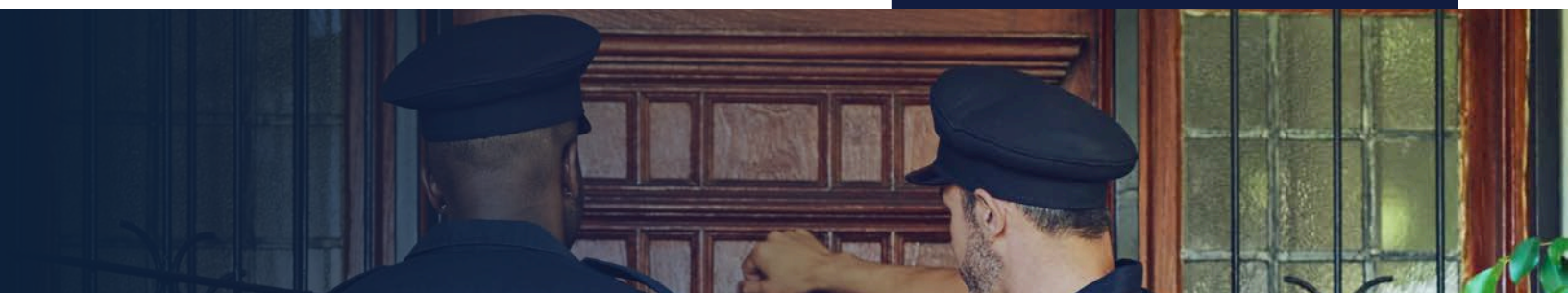
Resources

We offer two versions of the LAP Form: a Fillable version and a Printable version. The Printable form is a static version designed for manual completion, while the Fillable form allows users to complete it electronically. Both versions include a drop-down list of all OAG-Certified Victim Service Providers.

[LAP Form - Printable](#)

[LAP Form - Fillable](#)

[OAG LAP Team Webpage](#)



F. Regardless of the results of the lethality assessment, referral information for shelters, domestic violence programs and other social services shall be provided to them."

This updated protocol became effective on November 1, 2021. The expansion of the referral process provided clear procedures for officers to connect victims with advocacy services and required referral information to be offered in all cases, regardless of the LAP results.

Carrying the Torch

Our team was established to ensure the consistent statewide implementation of the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) in accordance with Oklahoma state statute. We are continually refining training for both law enforcement and victim advocates to strengthen consistency and effectiveness across agencies. In addition to training, we are ensuring that screening and referral procedures are completed correctly and that victims receive meaningful connections to advocacy services.

Looking ahead, our goal is to onboard LAP partner agencies to a digital database platform that streamlines the referral process, while also expanding into statewide data collection and tracking to improve outcome measurement and identify areas for improvement. Ultimately, we are working to ensure that agencies go beyond simply asking the LAP questions but fostering widespread understanding of the protocol's intended purpose: enhancing victims' safety and saving lives.

There is still much work to be done, but we are eager to be the state's LAP resource, as we continue working together towards a better Oklahoma for victims of intimate partner violence.

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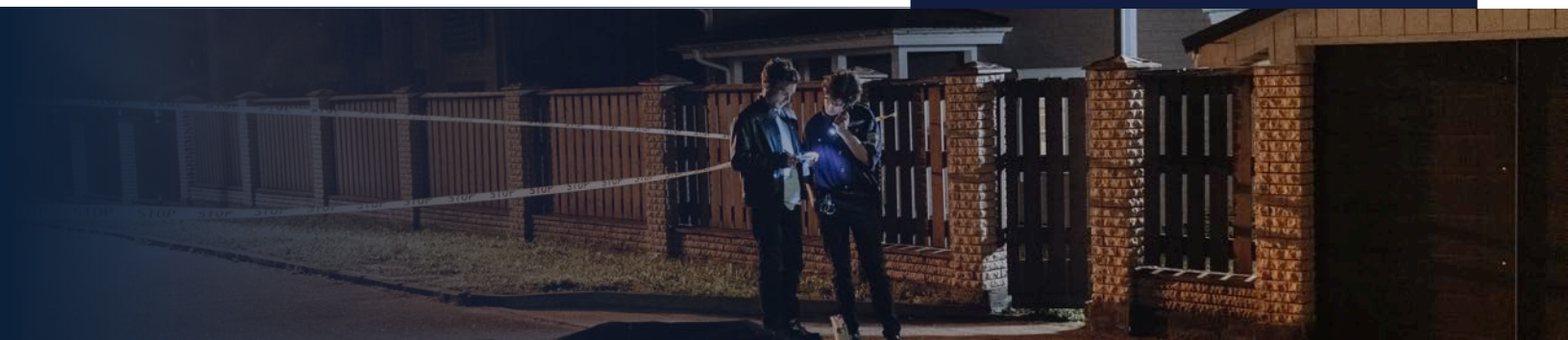
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2025 LAP Officer of the Year Award



This year marks the inaugural presentation of the LAP Officer of the Year award, created to honor an officer whose dedication, compassion, and commitment have made a profound difference in the lives of victims and survivors across our state. It celebrates those who go beyond their duties, embodying the highest standard of service and support within our communities.

The LAP Officer of the Year Award honors an officer's commitment to victim safety, their accurate and trauma-informed use of the LAP screening tool, collaboration with victim service providers, and overall contributions to strengthening the LAP initiative in Oklahoma.

This award reminds us why we do this work, and why excellence, empathy, and a trauma-informed approach matter so deeply in everything we do.

This year's recipient, Sergeant Zachary Havenar, has exemplified these values in every way.

Sgt. Havenar has served in law enforcement for eight years. He began his career with the Northeastern State University Police Department and now serves as a State Park Ranger. He is deeply committed to ensuring the best possible outcomes for survivors of domestic violence. Understanding that his first interaction with a survivor can shape their path forward, Sgt. Havenar consistently approaches each encounter with compassion and professionalism. He has made daily efforts to advance the success of the LAP in Oklahoma—educating and mentoring other officers, building strong partnerships, and ensuring survivors feel heard, supported, and believed after experiencing trauma.

Through his dedication and use of the LAP, Sgt. Havenar has made a lasting impact on his community and on the lives of those he serves.



“ —
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