

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE: MODEL STANDARDS FOR SERVING VICTIMS & SURVIVORS OF CRIME

ABOUT THE OVC MODEL STANDARDS:

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Model Standards “provide guidelines and suggestions to help victim service practitioners and program administrators improve the quality and consistency of their response to crime victims.” The definitions listed below can help your organization think about how to incorporate robust trauma-informed, survivor-informed, and victim-centered practices within your organization. Visit the [OVC Model Standards website](#) for more information.

DEFINITIONS:

Approaches delivered with an understanding of the vulnerabilities and experiences of trauma survivors, including the prevalence and physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma. A trauma-informed approach recognizes signs of trauma in staff, clients, and others and responds by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and settings. Trauma-informed approaches place priority on restoring the survivor’s feelings of safety, choice, and control. Programs, services, agencies, and communities can be trauma-informed.

Placing the crime victim’s priorities, needs, and interests at the center of the work with the victim; providing nonjudgmental assistance, with an emphasis on client self-determination, where appropriate, and assisting victims in making informed choices; ensuring that restoring victims’ feelings of safety and security are a priority and safeguarding against policies and practices that may inadvertently re-traumatize victims; and ensuring that victims’ rights, voices, and perspectives are incorporated when developing and implementing system- and community-based efforts that impact crime victims.

A program, policy, intervention, or product that is designed, implemented, and evaluated with intentional leadership and input from victims/survivors to ensure that the program or product accurately represents the needs, interests, and perceptions of the target victim population.