

Systems Thinking for Strategic Planning

How do you ask questions about current laws/policies if you don't know much about them? How can you bring this understanding to the partnerships and collaborations you are a part of? Use this worksheet as a tool to help you identify and ask the right questions and engage with your partnerships about how current laws and policies around consumer and economic issues impact the work that you are doing.

Component of policy or proposed policy to be analyzed: **NY early lease termination for DV survivors**

<p>Pros (positive effects for population impacted)</p> <p>Domestic violence survivors have a mechanism to terminate their lease early if necessary for safety purposes. They cut off ongoing liability on the lease and avoid accrual of rental debt.</p>	<p>Cons (negative effects for population impacted)</p> <p>The process is long and difficult! Survivors must be current on their rent and they must have an Order of Protection. They must first request to be released and if the landlord does not agree, they have to go to the court that issued the Order of Protection to get an order of termination.</p>
	<p>Strategy to address "cons"</p> <p>Propose amendments to the law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Remove requirement that survivor is current on rent -Broaden documentation beyond OP → include medical record, police report, certification from a qualified service provider, etc. -Change process to written notice instead of court procedure
<p>Additional information needed from survivors of DV/SA:</p> <p>What prevented you from utilizing this statute? How can we make this process more accessible to survivors? How can we ensure that survivors know about this protection?</p>	
<p>Additional information needed:</p> <p>Who will oppose this and why? Who will support this and how do we get them on board? How can we show that there is precedent for changing law in this way?</p>	<p>Source:</p> <p>Partners with legislative experience</p> <p>Research/discussions about what other states do, what we do in other statutes</p>

Action & Evaluation Planner

Use this chart as a tool to turn goals into action or to reflect on past work as you continue planning ahead. It can be used for long or short-term planning. The prompts are meant to help your brainstorming. Note: You do not have to fill in left to right – for example, you may have a clear sense of a strategy for one objective and a measure of success for another. From there, you can then ensure activities match your intended goals.

DV Consumer Law Working Group						
Problem: seeing many survivors with judgments/lawsuits for rental debt that accrued because they fled their apartments						
Goal: reduce negative financial impact for survivors who must leave their apartments before lease term has ended						
Method:						
(1) Individual/Preventative: train advocates who are working with survivors on exit plans and/or shortly after leaving on steps needed to terminate lease with landlord						
(2) Individual/Defensive: train attorneys on representing survivors when these cases are brought in civil courts						
(3) System/Preventative: amend early lease termination law for domestic violence survivors						
Objectives (Answer: What are the specific, measurable, action oriented, timed steps that will contribute to reaching the goal? Note: they will be behavioral; should begin with active verbs.)	Measures of "Success" (Answer: How will you know if this is successful or working? What will it look like? What will participants be doing/feeling? What could the impact on survivors look like? Note: not all measures of success will be on survivors, it may be on other actors (i.e. advocates, community members, etc) Don't grasp for	Tasks/ Activities (Answer: What will it take to be successful? What are the steps?)	Strategies (Answer: What are important considerations or approaches to each task/activity? Ex. Elements of a training or framing of arguments in a meeting)	Timeline (Answer: Do the activities need to go in a certain order? How long will each task/activity take? When can you reasonably accomplish each task/activity?)	Resources Needed (Answer: What could be a deal breaker? What's needed in terms of staff, time, money, external support, other?)	Lead Person (Answer: Who's responsible for overseeing or carrying out this objective?) Interdependencies (Answer: Who else will be needed? When and

	deep impact unless it makes logical sense.)					what will they contribute ?)
Research best provisions to use as a base for our proposal		Research NY laws & similar laws in other states	Draw parallels to show there is precedent: -How do other states structure parallel provisions -How does NY structure parallel provisions for other populations? -How does NY structure other laws that confer specific rights on DV survivors?		Utilized Fordham clinic students for help in doing 50 state survey	
Understand the barriers DV survivors face in utilizing this law to make sure our proposal addresses those barriers		Discuss/survey clients and DV service providers	Start open-ended: -Did you know about law? -If you knew about it, what kept you from using it? -If you didn't know, would you have qualified?		Utilize our working group membership, their connections, our own clients	
Draft our dream bill	Proposed bill language with broad support	Drafting, editing, soliciting and incorporating feedback	Get feedback from advocates working in DV, housing, and consumer		utilize broad advocate community for feedback	
Get a legislative sponsor	Strong sponsor who is on board with our proposal	Speak with folks who do legislative/policy work Reach out to key legislators	Strong dem who will support or bill as we draft it, or IDC/repub who may want to change it?	Want this introduced with enough time left in legislative session to move	Call on partners who do policy work more regularly	
Build support	Bill passes	Draft memo of support Distribute to orgs	Connect this issue to the work that other orgs do		Great intern project!	
Spread the word	Increased utilization of termination process	Distribute to advocates, shelters, courts, etc. to ensure folks are aware of change and how to use it	Outreach to courts, FJCs, DV shelters One pager explaining changes, copy of forms	Ongoing	Connections to these potential partners	

Anticipated Outcome(s): more survivors are able to terminate their leases and rental liability – fewer survivors ending up in court and/or with judgments for the remaining months on a lease

What's the change in practice/problem you hope to see from this work? What's the potential impact on your organization or operations? What is the potential impact on survivors? How can you see or measure success (in the short and long term)?

Key Lessons Learned & Takeaways:

- **Many survivors/advocates don't know this law exists in current form, but many survivors wouldn't have been eligible even if they had known about it.**
- **Initial research, stats, and client examples are really helpful for building support**
- **Bill was introduced towards very end of legislative session, not enough time to move.**

How would you describe one key benefit/outcome of this project? What have you gained? What, if anything, would you do over or differently (and how so)? Did you have any "ah-ha" moments? What were they?