

## THE PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK SURVEY: GUIDELINES FOR CRISIS COUNSELORS

The following guidelines provide information on the Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program (CCP) Participant Feedback Survey and how it is administered. This information is being provided to CCP crisis counselors as background information to be reviewed prior to survey administration. Training on the Participant Feedback Survey may be done during the Transition to Regular Services Program, Midprogram, Anniversary, or Phasedown trainings.

**What is the Participant Feedback Survey?** This brief survey provides information to program leadership about participants' opinions about crisis counseling and their experiences in and reactions to the disaster. The survey is NOT used to evaluate the work of individual counselors. The data are examined only in large groupings defined by state, region, or participant characteristics.

**To whom is the survey given?** During the selected survey week, the questionnaire is to be given to ALL adults receiving in-person individual or group crisis counseling. These are generally the same people for whom you would complete an Individual/Family Crisis Counseling Services Encounter Log or a Group Encounter Log for group crisis counseling. The survey is NOT to be given to people who would be recorded as having had a "brief supportive or educational encounter" on the Weekly Tally Sheet or "public education" on the Group Encounter Log, and it is not given if the counseling occurred over the telephone. The survey is also not for people younger than 18.

**When should you give the person the packet?** Introduce the survey when your conversation is starting to wind down but before the person is rushing off to the next thing he or she needs to do.

**What should you say when giving someone the packet?** Use your own words, but you can basically say the same thing that the cover letter says: (1) that [name of project] is trying to help people cope with the stress of the disaster; (2) that to do your jobs well, it is helpful to learn more about how people are doing now and about whether crisis counselors are finding the best ways to be helpful; and (3) that this packet has a very brief survey that will take them only a few minutes to fill out but will be very helpful to the project. Appeal to their altruism! The survey really is short, and people who have been through a serious event understand why it is useful to ask them about it (and the services your program is providing to support them in coping with the event). You can also point out that everything they need is inside the packet: the survey, a pen, and a stamped envelope to use to mail it back in. You should mention that the survey doesn't ask for their names and is completely anonymous.

**What should you do if the person needs or asks for help completing the survey?** Some people may not be able to read at the level required (fifth to sixth grade) or for some other reason (language, visual impairment) may need help to complete the survey. Unfortunately, you cannot help them. If someone asks you for help, you might tell him or her that you would really like to help but you've been told not to because the people doing the survey need to be sure that counselors haven't influenced the results. Please use this as an occasion to help the participant think about other sources of potential help. Is there a family member who could read the questions to him or her? A friend? When you think people might need help even if they didn't ask, you might tell them that many people prefer to have a family member or friend read them the questions so that they can think only about the answers.

**What should you do if the person implies that he or she shouldn't be the one to complete a survey?** Sometimes, people think they aren't the "right" people to participate. Tell them that their participation will be extremely helpful no matter what their answers might be. If someone says he or she would like to participate but is really busy, emphasize how little time the survey will take. However, don't push too hard. People have the right to refuse, and we all need to respect that.

**Should you do the encounter logs as usual?** Yes, please complete the Individual/Family Crisis Counseling Services Encounter Log or Group Encounter Log as you would normally.

**We are counting on you!** Please approach the survey positively and be assured that it is not a burden to participants. Many people will appreciate the opportunity to give back. This is a healthy thing! As always, we count on your expertise and your exceptional ability to engage people. We can't wait to share the results with you, which we are sure will help us to show how good a job we are all doing, while also giving us some guidance about how to further improve.

**THANK YOU FOR THIS AND EVERYTHING YOU DO!**