Developing an Effective Onboarding Process: Promising Practices for Onboarding New Sexual Assault Response Team Members

So you have a new Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) member?

Congratulations! Developing an efficient onboarding process for new members of your sexual assault response team can help ensure that new team members have all the information necessary to be an effective part of the team. A streamlined and organized process for onboarding is a valuable tool for new SART members. This list is designed to spark creativity and should be adapted to fit the needs of your SART.

Getting Started with the Onboarding Process

SART Coordinator Job Description

Leadership structure of a sexual assault response team can be unique depending on the jurisdiction and community being served. Most sexual assault response teams have a SART Coordinator or someone whose role it is to support the effective functioning of the team towards its mission and vision. In some cases, teams have a paid coordinator position. This person will likely have a formal job description and grant guidelines to follow. It can be extremely beneficial for new team members to know who the SART Coordinator is for their team, particularly to help with role clarification and expectations as part of the onboarding process.

SART Role Overviews and Expectations – Including Sub-Committees

This can help iron out any misunderstandings that may occur around roles and responsibilities. What is the expectation for those on the team? If you

have sub-committees, what team members are part of that group and what are the goals of that group? Implementing a team building exercise into your agenda every couple of months could also be a good refresher for the team as a whole around roles and responsibilities.

Confidentiality Requirements and Agreements

It can be tricky to navigate confidentiality when you are a multi-disciplinary team. This is also why it is so important to establish policies, procedures, or agreements for your SART. It is important that new members have an understanding of the organization's policies and procedures on confidentiality. It would also be useful to have local and state confidentiality statues available as well. Check out [What Can We Talk About? Honoring Victim/Survivor Confidentiality in SARTs](#) to help your team navigate confidentiality.

Integrate Team Mission, Vision, and MOUs

Integrate your core team mission and vision statements as well as any Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) into the onboarding experience of new team members. This can help create a strong foundation for the remaining onboarding process and paint a larger picture including who the team project partners may be.

Facilitation Basics

SVJI has some great resources on this topic:

- Principles of Facilitation: Keeping Your SART on Track (youtu.be/EBRGN8ZNf_Q)
- Facilitation of Online Meetings (youtu.be/AB4GUX1WbU8)
- Framework for Success: Facilitating Effective Sexual Assault Response Teams (youtu.be/gCbDrfXa5Pg)

Access to Previous Agendas and Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes create a historical record, show the team's progress over time, and serve as reminders of assignments or projects. They can be a great tool to assist new team members in getting up to speed on the history and work of the team.

Create Welcome Packets

Welcome packets may include any of the items on this list as well as

team member names, contact information, team member working hours if applicable, culture/values of the team, history of the SART, previous or current projects/policies developed or updated etc.

Get the Whole Team Involved

Successful onboarding is a collaborative effort, meaning it involves a variety of team members, not just the SART Coordinator. Consider assigning "onboarding buddies" or someone to whom the new team member can reach out for additional support during this time.

Ask New Members About Access Needs and Make Accommodations

Do not just assume new members will ask for accommodations—prepare in advance to have funds for interpretation/translation, make your meeting space accessible, provide accessible materials, etc.

Ask for New Members' Feedback

Set an expectation from day one that new members will be encouraged to share their feedback on how to improve new team members' experience. Onboarding doesn't end once your new team member has met the team and completed training, etc. Make sure you check in regularly to ensure the new team member has everything they need.