



Part of the Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax

Creating Trauma-Informed Spaces

Facility Review Checklist

How to use this checklist:

The chart below outlines a variety of things to consider about the environments where we deliver our services. Before beginning to examine any facility or space using this checklist, it might be helpful to consider the goals of the review, and to have the support of those who can help to address any issues that come to light as part of the process.

Ideally, the checklist should be completed by 3-4 individuals, who then come together to compare notes and discuss their impressions. We have found it most helpful for folks to complete the checklist individually, and to save their comments and commentary for the debriefing conversation, rather than having too much dialogue through the course of the facility review. It is important for reviewers to be non-intrusive, and to avoid distracting clients and or staff with discussion in open areas during this process.

Not every category covered on this checklist will apply to every space. Simply omit any sections that are not relevant. Notes and comments are not required in every section, but space is provided for each in the event that reviewers do want to note something specific.

While all elements of a space have the potential to be welcoming and calming, reviewers should pay particular attention to areas where clients and staff will spend the majority of their time. Places like waiting areas, staff offices, and conference rooms are great places to focus on to get a general feel for the facility.

Accessing the Facility

	Yes/No	Notes/Comments
Accurate Phone Number(s) Listed - online - in printed materials		
Accurate Directions Available - online - in printed materials * Walking directions (using sidewalks/crosswalks) from closest public transportation stops (Bus, METRO) should be available		
Parking - available/accessible - well marked - well maintained - well lit - appears safe * If parking is not available, that should be clearly indicated online and in all printed materials. If clients/consumers will need to use public or paid parking that is not immediately adjacent to the facility, those details and directions should be highlighted.		
Approaching the Facility - sidewalks and crosswalks are present, clear, and well maintained - well lit - appears safe		
Entrance - clear - well lit - includes clear directions on how to access if door is locked		
Upon Entrance - warm welcome by a knowledgeable receptionist OR immediately visible building directory		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - directions about how to access different parts of the building are clear and easily followed (if applicable) - consideration has been given to the different needs of those accessing services, and different populations are separated as appropriate in a strategic and sensitive manner * If consumers do not or may not speak English, how can they interpret the building directory (is it in Spanish, does it include recognizable agency logos, etc.)? Are pictures or other directional strategies used for consumers who may not be able to read in any language? 		
<p>Accessibility Is the space Handicapped Accessible?</p>		

The Facility

	Yes/No	Notes/Comments
<p>Comfortable and Inviting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - minimal institutional appearance or feel - adequate space for the number of clients being served - comfortable waiting areas with adequate seating - easy and clear access to necessities (water, restrooms, public phone) - offers the opportunity for privacy as appropriate - building and room temperatures are comfortable (not too hot, not too cold) 		
<p>Safe</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hours of operation coincide with the hours of public transportation, and take the time of day (light vs. dark outside) into consideration as appropriate - exits are clearly marked, and both staff and clients/consumers know what doors are locked/unlocked and when - there is security presence as appropriate 		
<p>Family Friendly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - waiting areas include books, toys, etc. that are clean and in good repair - waiting areas do not require absolute quiet, and if they do, there are alternative areas for those with children to access if needed - restrooms include changing tables 		
<p>Access to Nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - windows overlook green spaces - courtyards or other outdoor areas are accessible and inviting - when windows are not available, things like plants or other purposeful design elements are used in the space to invoke nature 		

Décor

	Yes/No	Notes/Comments
<p>Floors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - carpet, tile, etc. is clean and in good repair - floor is free of obstacles 		
<p>Paint</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appears fresh and non-institutional 		
<p>Furnishings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clean, comfortable, and in good repair - are not used to create unnecessary barriers between staff and clients/consumers 		
<p>Lighting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is in working order 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - takes advantage of opportunities to use natural light when possible - relies on softer, non-institutional options 		
<p>Printed Materials on Display</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are clear, legible and in good repair - are inclusive of various cultures, family make-ups, languages, genders, etc. - use language that is empowering, strengths based, educational, inspiring, etc. - avoid language that is labeling, potentially stigmatizing or overly directive - include information about client rights and grievance procedures <p>* Bonus Points for having materials on display that educate clients/consumers about traumatic stress ☺</p>		
<p>General Feel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is not overly institutional <u>for the setting</u> - reflects attention to detail in terms of creating an attractive and comfortable environment that includes decorative elements (pictures, plants, fountains, etc.) that personalize the space and are appealing to clients/consumers - design elements that emphasize hierarchy (workers behind large desks when talking to consumers, closed door meetings within view of clients, glass partitions separating staff and consumers) are eliminated when possible - staff have the opportunity to observe spaces throughout the facility in a <u>non-intrusive</u> manner (in person and via camera) 		

Spaces

	Yes/No	Notes/Comments
<p>Restrooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - easily accessible - well marked - offer doors that lock - are clean and well stocked with supplies (soap, paper towels, toilet paper, lotion, etc.) - offer changing tables when they will be used by the public - offer family/unisex option 		
<p>Staff Offices & Conference Rooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are arranged in such a way that both staff and clients/consumers have a clear view and path to the exit(s) - include calming elements that promote self-care (access to water, nature sounds, fountains or calming background music, aromatherapy, rocking chairs, mandalas, stress balls or other manipulatives) 		
<p>Outdoor Spaces (if applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are well lit - are free of hazards - offer adequate seating as appropriate - include appropriate recreational equipment that is in good repair (if applicable) - appear to be safe and secure from outside intrusion (utilize fences or natural barriers, not directly visible or accessible from public sidewalks, etc.) 		

Residential Facilities

<p>Bedrooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - offer privacy as appropriate - allow for calming elements that promote self-care (access to water, nature sounds, fountains or calming background music, aromatherapy, rocking chairs, mandalas, stress balls or other manipulatives) when appropriate. <p>* In light of any safety concerns, efforts are made to creatively employ strategies to offer elements of privacy and self-care as much as possible</p>		
<p>Common Areas- Living and Dining Areas, Group Counseling Spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are arranged in such a way that both staff and clients/consumers have a clear view and path to the exit(s) - include calming elements that promote self-care (access to water, nature sounds, fountains or calming background music, aromatherapy, rocking chairs, mandalas, stress balls or other manipulatives) as appropriate 		

Other Considerations

	Yes/No	Notes/Comments
<p>Confidentiality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - client/consumer information is not visible at reception, or in staff offices or any public areas (consider things like sign-in sheets, visible schedules/calendars, etc.) - staff do not discuss clients/consumers in spaces where they can be heard at any time 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reception areas are set-up to maximize confidentiality - attention is made to direct clients/consumers to the right areas within the building in ways that are non-stigmatizing and that take their privacy into consideration (avoid labels) 		
<p>Creativity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - secure facilities (hospitals, correctional facilities, etc.) have considered the limitations of their environment, and have employed creative strategies to make the best of what they have to work with - in cases where facilities cannot be modified to be in line with best practices for creating trauma-informed spaces, policies, procedures and practices have been considered and implemented to mitigate any potential negative impacts (ex: staff explain why privacy may be limited, staff check-in with clients/consumers and are as transparent as possible about how safety is maintained in the facility) 		
<p>Client/Consumer Input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - those accessing services have an opportunity to offer feedback on the space (did they feel safe, welcome, comfortable, etc.) as part of regular client/consumer survey processes 		

For questions about how to use this checklist, or to request assistance from TICN members with your facility walkthrough, please contact:

Chrissy Cunningham, MSW

Prevention Coordination Specialist

Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services

703.324.5509

Deaf or hearing impaired, dial 711

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/prevention

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