

USDA Rural Development
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013 (VAWA) SUGGESTED FORMAT OF
CERTIFICATION OF VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR
STALKING

NOTICE TO TENANT OR APPLICANT: If you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking, you will be asked to provide the information below by the owner/manager or the Rural Development (RD) Multi-Family Housing (MFH) Program Director in your State (State MFH Program Director). The information in Part I below may be provided by you or by someone on your behalf, and given to the owner/manager or the State MFH Program Director for use in determining eligibility for protections under VAWA. The Certification and Signature in Part II, and the Confidentiality Statement in Part III are mandatory statements that must be included with your application.

Purpose of The Form of Certification: VAWA provides protections for applicants and tenants who are or have been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. VAWA protects applicants and tenants from being evicted, denied housing assistance, or terminated from housing assistance, based on acts of domestic violence dating violence, sexual assault or stalking, committed against them.

If you are an applicant or tenant and a victim of domestic violence, the information requested below is one type of documentation that you may be asked to complete by the “responsible entity,” as indicated on the Notice of Occupancy Rights distributed to you.

Use of This Form of Certification Is Optional: Instead of this form, upon the written request by the owner/manager or the RD State MFH Program Director, the tenant or applicant may be asked to submit the alternate documentation below:

- (1) A document signed by an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider, an attorney, or medical professional, or a mental health professional (collectively, “professional”) from whom the victim has sought assistance relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking, or the effects of abuse;
- (2) A document signed by the applicant or tenant who states under penalty of perjury that the professional believes in the occurrence of the incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that is the ground for protection and remedies under VAWA;
- (3) A record of a Federal, State, tribal, territorial or local law enforcement agency, court, or administrative agency; or
- (4) At the discretion of the owner/manager or RD MFH Program Director, a statement or other evidence provided by the applicant or tenant.

Time Period For Submission of Documentation: The time period to submit documentation is 14 business days from the date that the owner/manager or RD State MFH Program Director submits a written request to the tenant or applicant to provide documentation of the occurrence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The time period to submit the documentation may be extended, if the tenant or applicant requests an extension of the time period. If the requested information is not received by the 14th business day or any extension of the date provided, none of the VAWA protections have to be provided to the tenant or applicant. Distribution or issuance of this form does not serve as a written request for certification.

Part I – Required Information:

1. Date of applicant’s receipt of written request for documentation
2. Name of victim
3. Name of person completing this form (if different from victim)
4. Name of other family members and lawful tenants listed on the lease
5. Address of victim
6. Name of accused perpetrator (if known and can be disclosed)
7. Relationship of the accused perpetrator to the victim
8. Date(s) of incident(s)
9. Time(s) of incidents(s)
10. Location of incident(s)
11. Description of incident(s) in your own words (attach as many sheets as needed)

Part II – Mandatory Statement of Certification and Signature: This is to certify that the information provided on this form is true and correct and that the individual named above in Item 2 is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. I acknowledge that submission of false information could jeopardize program eligibility and could be the basis for denial of admission, termination of assistance, or eviction.

Signature

Date

Part III – Mandatory Statement of Confidentiality:

All information provided to the owner/manager or other responsible entity concerning the incident(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking shall be kept confidential and such details shall not be entered into any shared database. Employees of the owner/manager or other responsible entity are not to have access to these details unless to provide or deny VAWA protections to the applicant or tenant, and such employees may not disclose this information to any other entity or individual, except to the extent that disclosure is: (i) consented to by the victim in writing; (ii) required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance; or (iii) otherwise required by applicable law.

- I do not choose to disclose this information at this time
- I have not been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking

Signature

Date