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## What is EASI?

### 1. A Brief Description of The Program and Its Rationale

Elder Abuse Services, Inc. (EASI), is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing shelter, victim advocacy and coordinated case management services to victims of elder crime and abuse in the Fresno and Madera area. The concept of EASI originated in 2009 when a group of professors, some current and former students at California State University, Fresno, and community members who had been working on local issues of victimization were discussing the needs of local elder abuse victims and gaps in services in the area. This discussion evolved in a plan to create an emergency shelter for abused elders called the STAR (Seniors Transitioning to Assistance and Restoration) program. Currently, EASI is seeking local community support, partnerships, and funding to hire key staff and operate the first shelter dedicated to serving abused elders in the Fresno and Madera area.

The Fresno and Madera region lacks existing resources that specifically serve victims of elder abuse at imminent risk of harm and in need of safe, confidentially located, emergency housing that includes

supportive services. Facilities that currently operate are not designed to address the specific needs of victims of elder abuse. Elder victims report feeling out of place, isolated and uncomfortable in settings for young mothers and their children or the homeless. Staying with friends or relatives does not ensure the safety of victims and, often, does not promote the victim accessing services that end the violence and promote the elder's highest independent functioning. EASI will serve a critical need for abused elders in the Fresno and Madera.

Emergency shelters for abused elders are still underdeveloped, and there is no shelter which include the Restorative Justice concept in the United States. In California, Sacramento is the only county where an elder abuse emergency shelter is operating, but it does not employ a Restorative Justice concept. Thus, our project will be a benchmark model for California and could be replicated in other counties throughout California.

In developing an emergency shelter model, EASI referred to a model that was successfully implemented in Edmonton and Waterloo in Canada. A key feature of that model is the use of resources already in the community, for example, allocating unoccupied suites or apartments in an area's retirement community for shelter beds. Another distinct component of that model is the Restorative Justice concept, which allows for a range of care to be provided to victims of elder abuse depending on their need, while also repairing and restoring the relationship between the victim and the abuser(s). These relationships are likely to be important to the elder's functioning, if the violence can end.

## **2. A Statement of The Program's Goals and Objectives**

**EASI has six specific goals:**

- Provide emergency housing for elders when authorities need to remove them from a critical abusive situation or when elders choose to remove themselves because they believe they are vulnerable.**
- Provide transition care for elder abuse victims striving for self-reliance and dignity.**
- Provide resources to prevent and reduce the further risk of abuse in these elders' lives through advocacy, counseling, mediation, Restorative Justice and legal representation.**
- Engage in outreach to diverse communities to provide culturally appropriate emergency housing and services for elder abuse victims.**
- Reduce suffering and facilitate recovery for all elder abuse victims who EASI serves.**
- Restore the relationship between victims and abusers if it is in the victim's best interests.**

**In the first phase of operation the measurable objectives are as follows.**

- Provide emergency shelter services for up to six abused elder women who are in dire need of having a safe place to reside for up to three months.**
- Staff EASI's STAR facility with one executive director, a shelter manager, two shelter advocates and one secretary/bookkeeper for full-time employment for three years.**

- Operate a shelter and supporting administrative activities with one office containing two desks, three telephones, two computers with a printer, a copy machine, two filing cabinets, internet service, one liquid-screen television and office supplies for three years.
- Serve victims per year with shelter and case management services to help these victims cope with the conflict that resulted in their victimization and the emergency that brought them to EASI's facility.
- Provide a 40-hour basic training course for all new volunteers and staff to become fully familiar with elder functioning, elder abuse issues, and elder victim assistance resources.
- Provide on-going training for all volunteers and paid staff to ensure their competent practice.
- Conduct annual evaluations of all staff, Board members/activities, and services provided by EASI.
- Conduct annual audit of EASI's service provision and fiscal operations using an outside auditor.

### **3. A Brief Description of The Population to Be Served**

**EASI completed a comprehensive feasibility study of the Fresno and Madera region in 2010 to assess the target population. It included a survey of elders, assessments by experts in the field, and local demographic statistics. Some of the study's findings were that the Fresno area is one of the most culturally diverse in the nation, with more than 70 ethnicities and 105 languages spoken. It is anticipated that over the next twenty years there will be a significant increase and diversification of the elder population (Central California Institute for**

**Healthy Aging, 2008). Out of the 58 counties in California, Fresno County ranks eighth, among those having the highest percentage of elders living below the national poverty level in 2006 (Federal Interagency Forum on Aging Related Statistics, 2006).**

**Approximately 120 cases related to elder abuse are referred to Adult Protective Services agencies in Fresno and Madera Counties annually. Among those, female clients accounted for 63% and one-fifth of them live alone. Psychological and mental abuse account for 31% of cases investigated and physical abuse accounts for 21%. A local survey of elders indicated, with significance, that elder victims are more likely to feel vulnerable and believe they deserve to be treated with more respect.**

**At the initial phase of operation, given the limited resources and the priority of needs based on our feasibility study, this proposed shelter project will accept only abused woman age 65 and older, who live in the Fresno and Madera area. However, based on population projections, we envision the demand for EASI's services will expand. We anticipate the need for additional resources to provide shelter and support services for more women, male victims and other specialized populations (e.g., abused elder victims with dementia or other medical needs).**

**EASI's clients will be persons who self-refer or are referred by mandated local public agencies such as: victim assistance centers, Adult Protective Service agencies, law enforcement agencies, social service providers, elder service providers, health care providers, hospitals and domestic violence shelters in the Fresno and Madera area.**

#### **4. A Description of The Evaluation Activities and Desired Outcomes**

**Based on the program mission, goals, and objectives a comprehensive evaluation will be conducted after each year of operation. The evaluation will include process and outcome assessments. Service statistics will be entered into a computer on a daily basis. The shelter manager will be responsible for maintaining the records for all activities in the program, and he/she will release the monthly statistics and present them at each monthly Board of Directors' meeting. The evaluation will focus on three areas: clients, staff, and program operations.**