

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT (ASH) REFERRAL NETWORK

An ASH Referral Network is a mechanism in the city, municipality and barangay established to strengthen the coordination among public and private service providers in addressing the needs of victim-survivors of gender-based sexual harassment. It shall provide legal, medical, psychosocial, safety, security, and other relevant services.

Further, the members of ASH Referral Network shall receive and efficiently act on referrals from the ASH Desk and ASH Hotline for the provision of services needed by victim-survivors and witnesses of gender-based sexual harassment. Protocols in this connection shall be formulated through an executive order, ordinance or memorandum of agreement among the service providers.

1. Members of the ASH Referral Network

The referral network may be composed of the following service providers:

1. VAW/ASH Desk of every barangay in the city/municipality;
2. City/Municipal Health Office;
3. City/Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office;
4. Law enforcement agencies such as, PNP-Women and Children Protection Desk and the NBI-Women and Children Unit;
5. Legal aid providers such as Office of the Prosecutor, Public Attorney's Office and other legal associations;
6. Educational Institutions; and
7. Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) / Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) / Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) involved in gender equality and human rights and those providing medical, psycho-social, economic, legal and social services.

The respective representative/s of the different offices, agencies, institutions and organizations shall be responsible for the processing of referrals made to them and for the efficient delivery of their respective services.

2. Establishment of the ASH Referral Network

The Local Chief Executive shall convene the ASH Sub-Committee of the local Gender and Development Focal Point System (GADFPS) within 30 days upon the

establishment thereof, to take the lead in the establishment of the ASH Referral Network.

Thereafter, the ASH Sub-Committee, through its chairperson, shall undertake the following steps in the establishment of an ASH Referral Network:

1. **Convene an initial stakeholder's meeting.** The ASH Sub-Committee Chairperson shall be guided by the list of government and private service providers relevant to the issue of gender-based sexual harassment. The agenda for the meeting/workshop must be clearly stated in the letter of invitation so that the appropriate representative will be the one in attendance.
2. **Conduct a participatory mapping exercise.** The mapping exercise aims to identify community resources, services available, requirement for referrals, possible barriers in accessing the support services and other existing mechanism/structure addressing gender-based sexual harassment cases.
3. **Establish a referral network.** As a result of the mapping exercises, a referral network shall be established and a Directory of Resources must be created and updated regularly.

The members of the referral network shall define their working arrangement and clarify their specific roles and responsibilities. A focal person for each office, agency, institution and organization shall be identified.

The protocols and procedures to be observed, the forms to be used such as referral and feedback forms, shall be in writing and each member provided a copy for reference.

4. **Put system in place to develop and support the referral network.** A Memorandum of Agreement with clear terms of reference of all members and partners is encouraged to be undertaken.

The support and endorsement of the local chief executive or local sanggunian, through an executive order or ordinance, is paramount in providing mandate for the referral system and the service providers, and regular monitoring and evaluation of the referral system.