

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROBATION DEPARTMENT
DIRECTIVE

No.:	1448
Issued:	04/05/21
Post Until:	05/05/21

SUBJECT: SPOUSAL ASSAULT RISK ASSESSMENT (SARA)

(This Directive supersedes Directive 1309 issued on January 7, 2013)

The Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) is a tool designed to screen for risk factors of spousal or family related assault. It is deemed a useful instrument, containing a 20-item quality-control checklist, for determining the extent to which an individual poses a threat to his/her spouse, children, other family members or other persons involved.

Pursuant to California Penal Code 1203.097 Section (b)(3) (A-I), after the court orders the defendant to a batterer's program, the probation department shall conduct an initial assessment of the defendant, including, but not limited to the following:

- (A) Social, economic, and family background
- (B) Education
- (C) Vocational achievements
- (D) Criminal history
- (E) Medical history
- (F) Substance abuse history
- (G) Consultation with the probation officer
- (H) Verbal consultation with the victim, only if the victim desires to participate
- (I) Assessment of the future probability of the defendant committing murder

Effective immediately, a Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) shall be completed within 60 days of case assignment. The SARA will be used in conjunction with the Level of Services/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI). The Family Violence Deputy Probation Officer shall conduct a SARA on all probationer's who meet the following criteria:

- Ordered by the court to complete a batterer's program (Condition Code H01-H05);
- Convicted of Penal Code 273.5;
- Convicted of stalking or assault **only if** the court orders the batterers' program;
- Granted probation for a crime in which the victim is a person defined in Section 6211 of the Family Code.

Family Code Section 6211 states, "domestic violence" is abuse perpetrated against any of the following persons:

- (a) A spouse or former spouse;
- (b) A cohabitant or former cohabitant, as defined in Section 6209;
- (c) A person with whom the respondent is having or has had a dating or engagement relationship;
- (d) A person with whom the respondent has had a child, where the presumption applies that the male parent is the father of the child of the female parent under

**PROBATION DIRECTIVE
SPOUSAL ASSAULT RISK ASSESSMENT (SARA)
PAGE 2 OF 2**

the Uniform Parentage Act (Part 3 (commencing with Section 7600) of Division 12);

- (e) A child of a party or a child who is the subject of an action under the Uniform Parentage Act, where the presumption applies that the male parent is the father of the child to be protected; Any other person related by consanguinity or affinity within the second degree.

Additional SARA assessments shall be conducted whenever:

- There is a new domestic violence conviction;
- There is a new conviction that orders DV counseling or batterer's program;
- Criminogenic needs change.

After completing the SARA GUIDE form, the DPO shall:

- Complete the SARA screen in APS (see attached **Completing the Adult Probation Systems (APS)-SARA Screen**);
- Place the assessment form in the probationer's X-file;
- Document in DCID the probationer's treatment plan needs.

Furthermore, and without exception, domestic violence cases shall not be transferred (to caseloads within the office or to outlying offices) without the completion of the LS/CMI and SARA.

The Family Violence (FV) Consultant shall be responsible for ordering and distributing the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment forms.

Family Violence SDPOs shall contact the FV Consultant to obtain SARA forms and are responsible for distributing the forms to FV Supervision DPOs.

Questions or clarification regarding this Directive shall be directed to the Family Violence Consultant Sonya Crawford (909) 865-7173.



Brandon Nichols, Chief Deputy
Adult Services

Completing the Adult Probation Systems- SARA Screen

The following caseload types will allow completion of the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) in the APS-SARA screen:

- DOM
- PRF
- PRS
- FAM
- PRD

Choose from one of the four action codes (I, A, U, D) and press **Enter** on keyboard:

'I'-Inquiry: Allows the user to view information on the SARA screen. The most recent record will be displayed. If no records exist, the user will receive the following information message: **NO SARA ASSESSMENT RECORD EXISTS FOR THIS DEFENDANT.**

'A'-Add: Allows user to add a new record. User must enter a **'Y'- Yes** or **'N'- No** in the **SARA Required** field.

If the case does not require a SARA:

- User must enter **'N'** in the **SARA REQUIRED** field
- Tab to **REASON CODE**, click **F2** to choose one description:
 1. **N/A**
 2. **NO COURT ORDER**
 3. **STALKING/NO TREATMENT ORDERED**
 4. **OTHER**
- Click enter twice to finalize the action.

If the case requires a SARA, user must do the following:

- Enter **'Y'** in the **SARA REQUIRED** field
- Tab to **A.1 - RISK OF VIOLENCE TOWARDS PARTNER** and click **F2** to choose **RISK LEVEL: LOW, MODERATE OR HIGH**
- Tab to **A.2 - RISK OF VIOLENCE TOWARD OTHER** and click **F2** to choose **RISK LEVEL: LOW, MODERATE OR HIGH**
- Tab to **B. 1 DESCRIPTIVE CUTOFF** to enter:
 - **NUMBER OF FACTORS PRESENT (NO. OF FCTRS)**
 - **SCORE**
 - **RISK LEVEL: LOW, MODERATE, HIGH**
- Tab to **C. JUSTIFICATION:** If the results from Section A differs from Section B (refer to coding form), enter explanation in Section **C. JUSTIFICATION** (optional)
- Click enter to finalize action.

'U'-Update: Allows the user to update all information (except the **SARA REQUIRED** field) on the screen within 24 hours of the record being created.

- A **'Y'** must exist in the **SARA REQUIRED** field in order to complete update
- Update as necessary and click enter to finalize

Completing the Adult Probation Systems- SARA Screen

'D'-Delete: Allows the user to delete a record within 24 hours of generating Assessment.

- User to select record to be deleted, press **Enter** on the keyboard and delete as prompted
- An SDPO or higher authority, is authorized to delete the assessment after 24 hours have passed.