

Family Transition Place

“Our mission is to promote safety and mutual respect in our community by providing safe shelter for abused women and their children, support and counselling so that abused individuals may build lives free from violence and abuse, and information and education towards the prevention of violence against women.”

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| Address: | 20 Bredin Parkway Orangeville, ON L9W 4Z9 |
| Area served: | County of Dufferin and Town of Caledon |
| Accessibility: | Walk-in service provided. Wheelchair accessible. |
| Hours: | Business hours: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm M-F Crisis support: 24 hours/day, 365 days/year |
| Telephone: | 519-942-4122 and toll free 1-800-265-9178 519-941-4357 905-584-4357 |

Services

Family Transition Place (FTP) provides the following services:

1. Residential services

- Emergency shelter for up to 6 weeks for women (16 and older) and their children (under 16) who have experienced abuse.
- 24-hour emergency transportation to come to the shelter.
- Information, support and referrals.
- Services for children.

2. Counselling services

- Individual and group counselling.
- Skill-building workshops for women.
- Individual and group counselling for abused women who are current or past sexual assault survivors.
- Services for children who have been exposed to abuse.
- Services for men who have been sexually assaulted.

3. Crisis Services

- 24-hour crisis and information line:
(519) 941-4357,
(905) 584-4357
or 1-800-265-9178
TTY: (519) 942-1651

4. Outreach support services

- Second stage supportive housing for up to 6 months for women over 16, with or without children.
- Transitional support: Emotional support, safety planning, practical assistance and community referrals in making the transition to an independent, violent-free life. The focus is on identifying and achieving practical goals such as housing, job training, educational upgrading, etc.
- Legal support services providing information, support and accompaniment (not legal advice, representation or mediation).

5. Violence prevention

- School-based programs for students and teachers.
- Community initiatives.

Family Transition Place (FTP) will provide the following accountability measures:**1. Confidentiality**

All FTP Staff will adhere to the confidentiality requirements of the Personal Information Protection and Electronics Document Act (PIPEDA). Clients will be informed at the outset of service regarding their rights and responsibilities.

2. Complaints resolution

Concerns regarding the quality or nature of service can be directed to the Manager of Residential and Outreach Services, Manager of Counselling and Violence Prevention Services or Executive Director. All complaints will be investigated and responded to according to agency policies and procedures.

Responsibilities Re: DART Agencies**Crisis Response****1. Initial response**

Upon receiving a crisis call, FTP will:

- Clarify the concerns of the caller and provide crisis intervention as necessary.
- In case of a recent assault, ascertain the victim's safety, any physical injuries and need for medical or Police intervention.
- Encourage the victim to call 911 for emergency response service.
- Offer to arrange transportation to seek medical attention.

2. Follow-up

After crisis intervention, FTP will:

- Refer to other services internally or externally.
- Review the woman's safety plan.
- Provide information, referrals and support in response to her identified issues. (e.g., legal, income, housing, etc.).

Legal Support Services

1. Client focus

The Legal Support Counsellor (LSC) will provide support and follow-up interventions for:

- Practical assistance with court preparation.
- Information and referral regarding legal resources.
- Assessment of eligibility for a free two-hour consultation with a family lawyer.
- Advocacy with other service providers.
- Accompaniment to court and legal appointments.

2. Interagency consultation and advocacy

If the client is involved in a criminal proceeding as a victim or witness, the LSC will encourage and support her to connect with:

- **Victim Services/Police.** The LSC will assist the client in understanding the impact on her and her children and the importance of Police laying charges.
- **Crown Attorney/Victim Witness Assistance Program.** When charges have been laid, the LSC will assist the client in making contact with the Crown Attorney/Victim Witness Assistance Program in preparation for court and may attend as a support person in any appointments with the Crown.
- **A health service.** The LSC will urge a woman to attend at her doctor's office or the hospital emergency department if she has been assaulted.
- **Probation/Parole.** The LSC will support a woman to cooperate with Probation/Parole for the completion of pre-sentence and other reports, particularly if there are safety concerns or non-compliance to probation or other orders.

Protocol with the Police

FTP will work with the Police in a manner that best meets the needs of the client and the safety requirements of the shelter.

1. High risk assessment

When necessary, as part of the admission procedure, FTP will conduct a risk assessment with a tool called Guidelines for Assessing Lethality.

If a client coming into the shelter is considered to be high risk, FTP will notify the Dispatcher at the Orangeville Police Service. If the client has given consent, identifying information will be provided: her full name, date of birth, previous address and names/ages of the children accompanying her to the shelter. If the client has not given consent, FTP will advise the Dispatcher of a “high risk Jane Doe” together with her date of birth, previous location and the number of children accompanying her to the shelter.

In either case, FTP will provide full information about the partner and any information regarding access to weapons. The Police will enter this data into Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) so that it is available to other Police Services.

- It is understood that the Police will not share the woman’s location with the abuser or other person.

2. Discharge

FTP will notify the Dispatcher when a high-risk woman is discharged from the shelter. The Police will enter this data into the Record Management System.

3. Missing person report

The Police may call the shelter in response to a missing person report. FTP will call back to ensure that the caller is a Police Officer and, if the woman is resident, report that she is safe. If the missing woman is not at the shelter but has been in recent contact, FTP will provide this information.

However, if the woman was previously called in as a “Jane Doe,” FTP will suggest to the woman that she contact the Police. If the woman is unavailable or unwilling to call back, FTP will inform the Police that she is safe. The woman will be advised at the outset that this is a FTP policy procedure.

- It is understood that the Police will not disclose the location of the woman – only that she is safe.

4. Police calls to the shelter

If a Police Officer calls the shelter wishing to speak to a client, FTP will ensure that the caller is a Police Officer, state that she will try to contact her and call back within 10 minutes. FTP will suggest to the client that she call the Police on her own. If the client is unwilling, FTP will inform the Police of this information. If unable to contact the client, FTP will advise the

Police of when (if possible) they might expect a return call. If the woman is not a resident of the shelter, FTP will provide this information.

- If the client is a partner or family member of a Police Officer, FTP will provide information to the Chief of Police, Detachment Commander, Staff Sergeant or designate only.

5. Police attendance at the shelter

Ideally, Police will notify shelter staff before attending. On site, Police will be expected to provide proper identification. Staff will escort Police to an office location to establish the reason for the visit and provide appropriate information. Should Police wish to meet with a client in the shelter, a quiet space will be provided. The client will have the option of including a staff member.

FTP Protocol with Child Protection Services

Reporting Requirements

In accordance with Section 72.3 of the Child and Family Services Act, all FTP staff, volunteers and students will report any child in need of protection to the Children's Aid Society in the area in which the child resides. In the County of Dufferin, Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS) is incorporated as the Children's Aid Society. Caledon is served by the Children's Aid Society of the Region of Peel (Peel CAS).

Children's Aid Society (CAS)/ Violence Against Women (VAW) Protocol

In 2001, the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services initiated guidelines for developing locally based protocols between the Violence Against Women and Children's Aid Society agencies across Ontario. The purpose was to ensure the Ontario-wide quality and consistency of VAW services as well as standards of collaboration between the VAW and CAS sectors.

The Dufferin County protocol, called the Collaboration Agreement for the Children's Aid Societies and Violence Against Women Agencies of County of Dufferin, was signed in 2003 by Family Transition Place (FTP), Catholic Family Services Peel Dufferin (CFSPD) and Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS).¹

The protocol was dedicated to creating a shared understanding of woman abuse and child abuse/neglect, coordinating VAW and CAS services and, ultimately, increasing the safety of

¹ VAW and CAS agencies serving Caledon in the Region of Peel participated in developing a separate but similar agreement, called the Collaboration Agreement for the Children's Aid Societies and Violence Against Women Agencies of Regional Municipality of Peel, 2003.

women and children. It specified the following seven points of collaboration where their work intersected:²

1. The CAS³ has received a referral/report/information that a child may be in need of protection. The CAS Worker suspects or learns that woman abuse may be/is occurring in the home.
2. The CAS Worker is assessing the safety and future risk to the child. The CAS Worker suspects or learns that woman abuse may be/is occurring in the home.
3. The CAS Worker is involved in developing a Plan of Service for a child in a case involving woman abuse.
4. The VAW Worker is trying to determine whether a situation constitutes reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may be in need of protection.
5. A woman and child are involved with both CAS and a VAW agency.
6. The CAS or VAW Worker is assisting a woman who is trying to negotiate custody and access agreements in order to increase her safety or that of her child.
7. The CAS and VAW agencies will continue to work toward a shared vision of eliminating violence against women and children.

Of particular interest to FTP is the fifth point, which specifies that where the woman and child are residents of a VAW shelter, the CAS and VAW agency will produce a written agreement on their respective roles and responsibilities in relation to the woman and her child(ren). The VAW agency refers to its own policy in order to complete a notification form. For other VAW services, the agreement can be verbal.

**We are committed to collaboration within the
Domestic Assault Review Team.**

² See the Dufferin County agreement for a complete description of the intersecting activities.

³ The generic term of CAS will refer to DCAFS, which is responsible for child protection services in Dufferin.