



## Database Review Chart

After you've received back the [Questionnaire for Potential Database Vendors](#), this chart will help to inform your organization's decision to choose the database that meets your needs while keeping survivors' privacy and safety at the forefront of any decision.

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Email / Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**COSTS**

ITEM	INITIAL COST	ONGOING COSTS	YEAR 1 ESTIMATE	YEAR 2+ ESTIMATE
Database product/license	\$	\$	\$	\$
Additional users	\$	\$	\$	\$
Customization	\$	\$	\$	\$
Data Migration	\$		\$	
Maintenance		\$	\$	\$
Staff training	\$	\$	\$	\$
Equipment upgrades	\$	\$	\$	\$
Internet bandwidth upgrades	\$	\$	\$	\$
Other:	\$	\$	\$	\$
			<b>TOTAL</b>	
			\$	\$

**DATA & DATA RETENTION.** Databases should be designed to help your organization collect the *least* amount of information necessary to meet survivors’ needs, and to keep it for the least amount of time needed (this is the opposite of how many are often designed).

<p>Data Fields</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> Your organization can easily make changes to data fields without contacting the company. Fields can be hidden, deleted, or edited and can be made either optional or required. Support documentation or videos are available.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> Changes can be made, but the company must make them or they need to help your staff. The company is easy to contact and quickly responds with free technical support, or can quickly make changes for you.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> The company must make the changes, or would need to help your staff, but there is a significant wait time and/or a cost.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> No changes can be made and all fields are preset.</li> </ul>
<p>Record Retention &amp; Deletion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> Data can be purged according to a routine schedule set by your organization. A specific record can also be manually deleted by a user with the appropriate access level at any time.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> Records can be deleted, but your organization must delete manually.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> The company must manually delete data.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> Data can never be deleted.</li> </ul>

Backups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> Data that is purged does not remain as part of a backup.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> There is a backup that the organization is completely in control of and could delete at any time.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> The company retains data in backups for an indeterminate amount of time.</li> </ul>
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**OWNERSHIP OF DATA.** Information about survivors should belong to survivors, and your organization is obligated to protect any information that survivors share with you.

Control, Oversight, and Ownership of Survivor Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> Your organization owns the data in the database and can edit or delete it in whole or part at any time.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> The company owns the data and could share it at any time.</li> </ul>
Exporting Data (moving the data elsewhere)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> There is a built-in, easy process for your organization to export the data at any time.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> You can request that the company export the data.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> It's not clear if, how, or when you could export data.</li> </ul>
Change of Ownership or Going Out of Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> There are clear, written explanations of what will happen to the data and to your ability to use the product in the event the company sells their business or goes out of business.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> It is not clear what would happen.</li> </ul>

**ACCESS TO DATA.** Access to personally identifying survivor data in the database must be limited to authorized people inside the shelter or transition house organization.

<p>Confidentiality Obligations and Protections Against Unauthorized Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> It is not possible for anyone in the vendor company to see personally identifying survivor information. The company doesn't hold a copy of the encryption key, sometimes referred to as zero-knowledge or no-knowledge encryption.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> The company has access to data but has policies against unauthorized access, uses audit systems that track access, agrees to penalties if data is internally breached, and will share the names of specific employees who might access data.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> The company has routine access to data (applies even if they "promise" not to access it). The company shares or sells data. Company employees can access data, and no policies or penalties are in place.</li> </ul>
<p>User Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> You have full control over access levels, can add or delete users, and can change their access levels at any point without company assistance.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> You have to request that the company add or delete users and change their access levels. The company will immediately process the changes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> You have to request changes from the company, and the changes are not processed immediately.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> All users have the same access level, which includes access to personally identifying survivor data.</li> </ul>

Device Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> You have complete control over which devices (computers, tablets, phones, etc.) can access the database, and can easily add or revoke access.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> The company is available 24/7 to make changes to device access.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> There might be a wait for the company to make changes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> There is no way to remotely remove access.</li> </ul>
Remote Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> You can securely access the data and/or use the database remotely in case of a long-term emergency or disaster.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> There is no secure way to remotely access the database or data.</li> </ul>
Subpoenas, Warrants, and Third-party Requests for Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> All data is encrypted and the company doesn't have access to the key, so they cannot release or share any unencrypted data. The company will not automatically comply with an outside party's request. They will notify you, so that you can fight the request.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> The company holds the key to decrypt the data and can or will comply with a legal request without giving your organization an opportunity to fight the request.</li> </ul>

**DATA SECURITY.** The company must take strong precautions against accidental or malicious breaches of database security.

Data Encryption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> Data is encrypted in transit <i>and</i> at rest.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> Data is not encrypted.</li> </ul>
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<p>Access to Encryption Keys</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> Your organization, not the company, holds the only encryption key(s).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> The company keeps a copy of the keys securely with limited employee access and has an audit system in place to track access.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> The company's employees and/or subcontractors can read survivors' personally identifying information.</li> </ul>
<p>Security Audits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> The company performs regular internal security audits.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> It is unclear if the company performs security audits, or it is uncommon for the company to perform security audits.</li> </ul>
<p>Data Breaches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> The company will notify you immediately of both internal and external data breaches, the data affected by the breach, and assist with remedies for affected users.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> They will notify you immediately that a data breach occurred and offer general information about what data was accessed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> They will notify you, but the timeline is unclear.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> They will not notify you of a data breach.</li> </ul>
<p>Data Storage Location</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> Your organization owns or controls the physical location of the data for in-house databases. For cloud-based databases, the company states where the data is physically kept <i>in Canada</i>, outlines the security of that location, and the data is not intermingled with other organizations' data.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> Your organization owns or controls the physical location of the</li> </ul>

	<p>data for in-house databases. For cloud-based databases, the company states where the data is physically kept <i>outside of Canada</i>, outlines the security of that location, and the data is not intermingled with other organizations' data.</p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> A cloud-based database is stored in an unknown location, without additional security or clear ownership.</p>
Security Flaws or "Bugs"	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> The company can clearly explain what happens when security flaws or bugs are discovered, including how they will be addressed and when your organization would be notified.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> The company doesn't have a clear process.</p>

**TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS, TRAINING, AND SUPPORT.** The database should meet your organization's needs, be easy to use, and the company should provide training and support.

Reports	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> The reports that come with the database fit your needs.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> There are template reports that meet your needs with minimal changes, and you can easily create custom reports.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> The company will need to customize reports for you.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> Reports can't be customized.</p>
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Equipment, Software, Internet Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> All of <i>your</i> equipment, operating systems, etc. meet the specifications needed for the database to run smoothly.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> Some upgrades are needed, but you have the financial capacity to make them.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> Upgrades are needed and you don't have the capacity to make them.</li> </ul>
Data Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> The company includes data migration in the purchase.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> There is an added cost for data migration, but you have the financial capacity to cover it or you can move the data yourself and the company provides support documentation or videos to help guide the process.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> You can't migrate your old data into the new system.</li> </ul>
Technical Support and Troubleshooting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> The company offers 24/7 technical support and customer service.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> The company does not have 24/7 technical support; however, they respond to questions in a reasonable time. The platform is easy to use, and your staff and volunteers can likely resolve common problems OR you have dedicated IT staff or consultants who can help.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> The company doesn't have dependable technical support or customer service. However, your organization has dedicated IT staff who are comfortable with the platform and have sufficient access to help.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> The company doesn't have dependable technical support and your organization does not have access to IT staff.</li> </ul>

<p>Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> Training is included and the system feels user-friendly to your staff and volunteers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> Training is an additional cost, or your staff will have to help other staff and volunteers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> Only written documentation or training videos are available.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unacceptable:</b> No training or documentation is provided.</li> </ul>
<p>Number of Users (from your organization)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> There are unlimited user accounts for your staff.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> Limits on users are well above your anticipated need, and cost for additional users is reasonable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> Limits on users are barely enough. Cost for additional users is significant.</li> </ul>
<p>Downtime and Maintenance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> The company has systems in place to avoid scheduled downtime and has a plan in place (including prompt notification) for when unexpected downtime occurs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> The company gives advance notice of scheduled downtime and works to ensure it will have minimal impact on users. They also have a plan for unexpected downtime.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> The company has scheduled downtime that interferes with your services, and/or they have no plan for unexpected downtime.</li> </ul>

Data Storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Best:</b> The storage space included is unlimited.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>OK:</b> The storage space is currently more than adequate.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Caution:</b> You will likely need to pay more in the next year or so for additional storage space.</li> </ul>
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To support your development of safe tech use policies, WSC has developed a [Use of Technology Policy Template Guide for Women’s Shelters and Transition Houses](#) (PDF, in English only).

*Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) is part of a continuum of violence that can be both online and in-person. If you or someone you know is experiencing TFGBV, you are not alone. You can use [sheltersafe.ca](https://sheltersafe.ca) to find a shelter/transition house near you to discuss options and create a [safety plan](#). You don’t need to stay in a shelter to access free, confidential services and support.*

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Adapted for Canada with permission from NNEDV’s Safety Net project, based on their resource [Database Review Chart](#).

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