

TRAUMA-INFORMED CHECKLIST FOR INVESTIGATORS

1

Preparation and Mindset

Understand the impacts of trauma on memory and behaviour, reflect on personal biases and review relevant policies before initiating contact.

2

Creating a Safe Environment

Choose a private, neutral and comfortable setting, offer participants the option of a support person and clearly explain the process, purpose and expectations at the outset.

3

Communication and Interviewing

Use open ended, non-leading questions, avoid judgmental language and tone, allow for pauses and emotional responses, and be transparent about note-taking, recording and confidentiality limits.

4

Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion

Consider cultural, linguistic and identify based factors that may influence how trauma is experienced and express, and adapt communication styles and supports accordingly.

5

Information Gathering and Documentation

Recognize that trauma may affect memory recall; avoid penalizing inconsistencies without context, document observations factually and sensitively and use credibility assessments that account for trauma informed behaviours.

6

Support and Referrals

Provide information about available mental health and support resources and follow up with participants to ensure they feel heard and supported.

7

Investigator Well-being

Engage in self-care and debriefing practices and seek supervision or peer support when needed.



A trauma-informed approach not only prioritizes the well-being of participants but also enhances the clarity and accuracy of investigative findings by maintaining a robust commitment to empathy and fairness.