

**Law Enforcement-Based
Victim Services –
*Template Package I:
Getting Started***

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Introduction

As a result of a strategic effort in 2018 to support the development of law enforcement-based direct victim services in the United States and to strengthen the capacity of these victim services and support partnerships with community-based programs, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) launched the *Law Enforcement-Based Direct Victim Services & Technical Assistance Program (LEV Program)*. As the provider of training and technical assistance for the *LEV Program*, the goal of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) is to enhance the capacity of law enforcement-based victim services by providing guidance on promising practices, protocols, and policies that aim to provide victims with the rights, services, and responses they need.

The IACP is known for its commitment to shaping the future of the police profession. Through timely research, programming, and unparalleled training opportunities, the IACP is preparing current and emerging police leaders—and the agencies and communities they serve—to succeed in addressing the most pressing issues, threats, and challenges of the day.

This document was developed as a compilation of templates to provide a starting place for jurisdictions seeking to establish or enhance direct victim service programs. In this pursuit it is imperative for the foundational elements of these programs to be thoughtfully created. Agencies should consider the roles and responsibilities of victim services personnel, including establishing program standards, ethical principles, and staffing procedures. The intent of promoting high standards for victim services personnel is to continue to professionalize this work, and ultimately ensure crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims receive ethical and seamless service delivery. The following templates should serve as a catalyst for determining policies and standards already in place, where gaps exist, and which need to be improved.

Definitions

Throughout this document series, the following definitions will apply. They were selected through a review of documents in the field including those from existing law enforcement-based victim services programs:

- **Agency** – the police department, sheriff's office, campus police department, prosecuting attorney's office, state attorney's office, or other governmental criminal justice entity that is employing victim services personnel.
- **Victim Services Personnel** – personnel (paid or unpaid) designated to provide law enforcement-based program oversight, crisis intervention, criminal justice support, community referrals and advocacy on behalf of those impacted by criminal events. Paid personnel include (see position descriptions): Victim Services Supervisor, Victim Services Volunteer & Intern Coordinator, Victim Services Specialist Senior, and Victim Services Specialist. Unpaid personnel include (see position descriptions): Victim Services Volunteer and Victim Services Student Intern.

Agencies utilize different language to refer to similar positions, including Victim Advocate, Victim/Witness Counselor, Victim Liaison, etc. For consistency across documents, this publication will utilize the above delineated terminology.

- **Victim Services Unit (VSU)** – the unit within the law enforcement agency that houses the victim services personnel.
- **Victim, Witness, Survivor, Co-victim**—any person (minor or adult) who directly experiences or is impacted by a crime or criminal activity.
 - Victim is an individual who is an independent participant in the criminal case under federal or state victims’ rights laws, denotes a person’s legal status (unavailable to the public), and defines the level and extent of participation that the individual is entitled to in the criminal matter.
 - Witness is an individual who has personal knowledge of information or actions that are relative to the incident being investigated.
 - Survivor is often used interchangeably with “victim” when conveying context related to resilience and healing.
 - Co-victim is an individual who has lost a loved one to homicide, including family members, other relatives, and friends of the decedent.

Explanation of Templates

Whether establishing or enhancing a Victim Services Unit, it is critical to create policies and standards to maintain expectations for victim services personnel and service delivery. The intent of this document is to provide templates to serve as a starting point for agencies, but this compilation is not an exhaustive list of resources for creating victim services policies or procedures. These templates were developed through a review of documents from existing law enforcement-based victim services programs.

This will be the first in a series of template packages and includes: (1) Position Descriptions, (2) Interview Information, (3) Code of Ethics, (4) Policies, and (5) Protocols.

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards within agencies. These templates should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent. It is recommended that all templates be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with agency, statutory and constitutional requirements within your jurisdiction and reviewed by internal human resources and legal departments.

Training

In addition to core practices and policies, victim services personnel must also receive discipline-specific training to stay current in the field and establish and maintain a consistent set of skills and knowledge.

Training that is skills-based and grounded in adult learning theory is not only beneficial to victim services personnel, but often that training can be maximized throughout agencies by sharing information learned with other disciplines, with system professionals, and with partners at community agencies. Additionally, quality training is essential to the process of ensuring crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims are afforded the rights, services, and responses they need.

Training can be resource intensive, but there are affordable and accessible options for all victim services personnel at any agency. While they are not intended to be an exhaustive list of training opportunities, starting points for agencies may include Victim Assistance Training (VAT) *Online* and State Victim Assistance Academies.

Victim Assistance Training (VAT) *Online*

The Victim Assistance Training (VAT) *Online* is a widely used learning management system (LMS) platform for victim services providers across the country. This is a no-cost, online program developed and hosted by the Office for Victims of Crime that is routinely updated to ensure access to the most current content.

VAT *Online* is a 40-hour training divided into modules, which include the basics of victim services, core competencies and skills, crime specific topics, and specific considerations for working with certain populations. More can be learned about the VAT program at www.ovcttac.gov/VATOnline.

State Victim Assistance Academy

Most states offer State Victim Assistance Academies to Victims Services providers. Often these offerings are in-person trainings, which allow for interactive education, skill building, and networking opportunities.

To learn more if your state offers this type of opportunity, please visit <https://www.ovc.gov/map.html> or www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/svaa.

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Templates

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Supervisor

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Victim Services Supervisor position description template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

Job Summary:

Directs the overall operations and staff of a comprehensive and complex systems-based social services program. Directs the day-to-day operations, plans and develops policies, procedures, and programs to accomplish goals and objectives. Oversees and performs managerial, consultative, technical, and administrative work, develops and recommends strategic plans and new program initiatives, and directs and prepares annual budget.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This is a job classification within the Victim Services job family. This classification is responsible for developing strategic plans, goals and objectives, initiatives, and budget for a large, comprehensive, complex program or programs. This classification has broad operational and staff responsibility scope.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Directs the planning and operations of a comprehensive and complex systems-based social services program. Directs subordinate staff, including hiring, training, performance evaluation, disciplinary actions and dismissals, ensuring activities are consistent with policies, procedures, laws, regulations, goals, and objectives.
- Creates opportunities for improved performance, learning and development of staff, and identifies and addresses problems or conflicts.
- Directs and participates in the planning, developing, and establishing of goals and objectives. Develops strategic plans, policies, and programs to accomplish the goals and objectives.
- Directs the service delivery and program operations. Oversees the establishing of procedures and priorities and directs the monitoring of activities and assignments to achieve desired results. Resolves problems.
- Understands, upholds, assists with education and exercise of, and ensures integration of victims' rights per statutory and constitutional laws into program and [Agency] responses.
- Evaluates effectiveness of programs and operations and develops new and modified initiatives to improve effectiveness. Directs the implementation and monitoring of new and existing programs.
- Provides high-level technical advice, policy interpretation, and guidance for application of appropriate procedures to managers and other staff.
- Directs and participates in development of annual program budget. Directs ongoing administration of approved budget and oversees expenditures. Prepares proposals for grant funding or funding continuation, as required.

- Represents the organization and collaborates with governmental and public agency representatives, community outreach and advocacy groups, service providers, and others. Plans, develops, and directs a variety of community development and community organizing activities. Identifies and resolves service gaps and barriers, stimulates interest in programs and services.
- Directs the development of, and participation in training and education programs for crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims; social service providers; community organizations; and others.
- Prepares periodic reports, financial analysis, and statistical reports on program activities, results, and performance.
- Attends appropriate [Agency] meetings and represents victim services philosophy agency wide.
- Performs other job-related duties as assigned.

Minimum Qualifications:

Education and Experience:

Bachelor's degree in Social or Behavioral Sciences, Criminal Justice Administration, or a directly related field AND seven (7) years increasingly responsible experience in social services, including two (2) years of supervisory or management experience;

OR

Any combination of education and experience that has been achieved and is equivalent to the stated education and experience and required knowledge, skills, and abilities sufficient to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of this job.

Licenses, Registrations, Certifications, or Special Requirements:

Valid Driver's License.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Master's degree in Social or Behavioral Sciences, Criminal Justice Administration, or a directly related field.
- Crisis and trauma intervention experience
- Experience in management of grant funding
- Experience in program administration and personnel management

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- Management and supervisory principles, practices, and techniques
- Program administration and oversight techniques
- Policies, practices, and procedures within area of assignment
- Federal, State, and Local program laws and requirements
- Advocacy groups, social service providers, and community outreach organizations

- Budgetary practices and techniques
- Modern office practices, procedures, and methods
- Computer equipment to include word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and a variety of software packages
- Business letter writing, grammar and punctuation, and report preparation
- May be required to develop knowledge of and adhere to federal and state laws requiring the confidential handling of certain health information

Skill in:

- Strategic planning, development, monitoring, and evaluation of social service programs and services
- Supervising others, allocating resources, and evaluating programs
- Leadership and community collaboration
- Conducting education, training session, and public speaking presentations
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Developing and monitoring program budgets
- Operating a variety of modern office equipment, including a computer
- Both verbal and written communication, including presentations

Ability to:

- Direct, motivate, train, develop, and evaluate staff
- Serve as technical consultant and liaison
- Create and recommend program initiatives
- Prepare administrative and statistical reports
- Communicate effectively
- Work independently
- Manage time well and perform multiple tasks and organize diverse activities
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with persons served by [Agency], employees and officials of [Agency], representatives of outside agencies and providers, and the public

Work Environment & Other Information:

Physical requirements include the ability to lift/carry up to 25 pounds occasionally, visual acuity, speech and hearing, hand and eye coordination, and manual dexterity necessary to operate a computer and office equipment. Subject to standing, sitting, walking, climbing stairs, bending, stooping, crouching, kneeling, pushing, pulling, reaching, twisting, balancing, repetitive motion, driving, customer contact, and squatting to perform the essential functions.

This job description is intended to be generic in nature. It is not necessarily an exhaustive list of all duties and responsibilities. The essential duties, functions and responsibilities and overtime eligibility may vary based on the specific tasks assigned to the position.

Note:

Applicant must perform all of the above duties and responsibilities without any bias or prejudice against any person on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, and the applicant must perform and accomplish other duties as directed by [Agency].

SAMPLE

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern Coordinator

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern Coordinator position description template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

Job Summary:

Coordinates all phases of activities and functions associated with Volunteers and Student Interns within the Victim Services Unit. Performs duties associated with recruitment, interviewing, training, and supervising Volunteers and Interns. Performs consultative, technical, and administrative work in the planning, development, coordination, implementation, and monitoring of Volunteers and Student Interns. Ensures that program goals and objectives are accomplished in accordance with established priorities. Analyzes program issues, completes policy and program analysis, conducts program research, and presents program-related training and education.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This is a job classification within the Victim Services job family. This classification is distinguished from a Victim Services Supervisor which has responsibility for an entire work unit. The Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern Coordinator organizes and manages all items related to the Volunteer and Student Intern program. This classification may require a flexible work schedule to meet the needs of the department.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Coordinates, supervises, trains, monitors, and evaluates Volunteers and Student Interns.
- Plans, develops, and recommends new or revised programs, goals, and objectives as related to Volunteer and Student Intern program.
- Develops and schedules work plans, oversees daily operations, and coordinates activities for the Volunteers and Student Interns.
- Assists in determining Volunteer and Student Intern program priorities.
- Evaluates Volunteer and Student Intern program effectiveness to develop improved methods. Devises evaluation methodology and coordinates implementation. Analyzes results and recommends or takes appropriate action.
- Monitors and approves program expenditures within established budget. May prepare or assist in preparing proposals for funding or funding continuation.
- Serves as technical consultant for Victim Services Volunteer and Student Intern program and related policy and provides technical and problem-solving assistance on program services.
- Analyzes and reviews analysis of Victim Services Volunteer and Student Intern program and program policy issues.
- Prepares periodic reports, financial analysis, and statistical reports on Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern program activities and program progress.

- Serves as liaison with and resource for community outreach and advocacy groups, service providers, and others. Coordinates, improves, and stimulates interest in the Volunteer and Student Intern program and recruits program participants.
- Plans, develops, and conducts Victim Services Volunteer and Student Intern program-related educational sessions and training. Speaks to community and other groups.
- Performs other job-related duties as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education and Experience:

Bachelor’s degree in Social or Behavioral Sciences, Criminal Justice Administration, or a directly related field AND five (5) years’ experience in counseling/social services or criminal justice work;

OR

Any combination of education and experience that has been achieved and is equivalent to the stated education and experience and required knowledge, skills, and abilities sufficient to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of this job.

Licenses, Registrations, Certifications, or Special Requirements:

Valid Driver’s License

Preferred:

- Master’s degree in Social or Behavioral Sciences, Criminal Justice Administration, or a directly related field
- Crisis and trauma intervention experience
- Experience in the development and delivery of training material

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- Supervisory principles, practices, and techniques
- Program Coordination and oversight techniques
- Policies, practices, and procedures within area of assignment
- Federal, State, and Local program laws and requirements
- Trauma response and crisis stabilization techniques and resources
- Advocacy groups, clinical and other service providers, and community outreach services.
- May be required to develop knowledge of and adhere to federal and state laws requiring the confidential handling of certain health information
- Computer equipment to include word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and a variety of software packages

Skill in:

- Program planning, development, monitoring, and evaluation
- Conducting education and training sessions and public speaking presentations
- Referring clients to appropriate social services organizations and programs
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Monitoring and recommending program expenditures
- Verbal and written communication

Ability to:

- Coordinate, supervise, and evaluate Volunteer and Student Intern program and activities
- Analyze, research, and evaluate findings
- Prepare administrative and statistical reports
- Serve as technical consultant and liaison
- Work independently
- Manage time well and meet deadlines
- Communicate effectively
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with persons served by [Agency], employees and officials of [Agency], representatives of outside agencies and providers, and the general public

Work Environment & Other Information:

Physical requirements include the ability to lift/carry up to 25 pounds occasionally, visual acuity, speech and hearing, hand and eye coordination, and manual dexterity necessary to operate a computer and office equipment. Subject to standing, sitting, walking, climbing stairs, bending, stooping, crouching, kneeling, pushing, pulling, reaching, twisting, balancing, repetitive motion, driving, customer contact, and squatting to perform the essential functions.

This job description is intended to be generic in nature. It is not necessarily an exhaustive list of all duties and responsibilities. The essential duties, functions and responsibilities, and overtime eligibility may vary based on the specific tasks assigned to the position.

Note:

Applicant must perform all of the above duties and responsibilities without any bias or prejudice against any person on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, and the applicant must perform and accomplish other duties as directed by [Agency].

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Specialist Senior

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Victim Services Specialist Senior position description template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

Job Summary:

Provides crisis stabilization and support services to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims and assists with identified concerns resulting from victimization. Assesses the psychosocial status of persons served, determines the types of referrals and services indicated, and coordinates the provision of those referrals and services. Serves as a liaison with criminal justice professionals and community agency representatives, in order to address the rights of and access to processes and services for crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims. Provides training to subordinate staff, interns, and volunteers and develops and provides training to departmental and community agencies upon request.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This is a job classification within the Victim Services job family. This classification is responsible for assessing the psychosocial status of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims, determining the types of referrals and services indicated, and coordinating the provision of those referrals and services. This classification typically performs advanced duties and may function in a lead capacity. This classification may require work in secure facilities. This classification may include response at crime scenes. This classification may require a flexible work schedule in order to meet the needs of [Agency].

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Provides crisis stabilization and support services to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims and assists with identified concerns resulting from victimization.
- Assesses the psychosocial status of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims and determines the types of referrals and services indicated. Coordinates the provision of referrals and services.
- Provides information using a trauma-informed approach to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims related to criminal event and/or associated criminal justice response, policies, and practices. Provides information to persons served related to legal issues, terms, and court procedures.
- Understands, upholds, and assists in the education and exercise of victims' rights per statutory and constitutional laws.
- Develops effective victim advocacy programs and trains staff, student interns, and volunteers.
- Prepares and maintains statistical records. Records case file information and appropriate documentation in identified system.
- Serves as a liaison with advocacy groups, clinical and other service providers, community outreach services, and law enforcement personnel.

- May function as lead over subordinate staff, student interns, and/or volunteers.
- Performs other job-related duties as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education and Experience:

Bachelor's degree in Social or Behavioral Sciences, Criminal Justice Administration, or a directly related field AND four (4) years' experience in counseling/social services or criminal justice work;

OR

Any combination of education and experience that has been achieved and is equivalent to the stated education and experience and required knowledge, skills, and abilities sufficient to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of this job.

Licenses, Registrations, Certifications, or Special Requirements:

Valid Driver's License

Preferred:

- Master's degree in Social or Behavioral Sciences, Criminal Justice Administration, or a directly related field
- Crisis and trauma intervention experience
- Experience in the development and delivery of training material

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- Policies, practices, and procedures within the criminal justice system
- Trauma response and crisis stabilization techniques and resources
- Advocacy groups, clinical and other service providers, and community outreach services
- Computer equipment to include word processing, spreadsheets, databases and a variety of software packages

Skill in:

- Trauma response and providing crisis stabilization and other assistance to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims
- Assessing the psychosocial status of persons served
- Determining types of referrals and services indicated for crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims
- Development and delivery of training material
- Obtaining information from persons served and other sources
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Verbal and written communication

Ability to:

- Explain legal issues, terms, court appearances, and processes
- Develop effective victim advocacy programs
- Train and supervise staff, student interns, and volunteers
- Work independently
- Manage time well and meet timelines
- Communicate effectively
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with persons served by [Agency], employees and officials of [Agency], representatives of outside agencies and providers, and the general public

Work Environment & Other Information:

Physical requirements include the ability to lift/carry up to 25 pounds occasionally, visual acuity, speech and hearing, hand and eye coordination, and manual dexterity necessary to operate a computer and office equipment. Subject to standing, sitting, walking, climbing stairs, bending, stooping, crouching, kneeling, pushing, pulling, reaching, twisting, balancing, repetitive motion, driving, customer contact, and squatting to perform the essential functions.

This job description is intended to be generic in nature. It is not necessarily an exhaustive list of all duties and responsibilities. The essential duties, functions and responsibilities and overtime eligibility may vary based on the specific tasks assigned to the position.

Note:

Applicant must perform all of the above duties and responsibilities without any bias or prejudice against any person on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, and the applicant must perform and accomplish other duties as directed by [Agency].

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Specialist

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Victim Services Specialist position description template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

Job Summary:

Provides crisis stabilization and support services to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims and assists with identified concerns resulting from victimization. Assesses the psychosocial status of persons served, determines the types of referrals and services indicated, and coordinates the provision of those referrals and services. Serves as a liaison with criminal justice professionals and community agency representatives, in order to address the rights of and access to processes and services for crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This is a job classification within the Victim Services job family. This classification is responsible for assessing the psychosocial status of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims, determining the types of referrals and services indicated and coordinating the provision of those referrals and services. This classification typically does not function in a lead capacity. This classification may require work in secure facilities. This classification may include response at crime scenes. This classification may require a flexible work schedule in order to meet the needs of [Agency].

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Provides crisis stabilization and support services to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims and assists with identified concerns resulting from victimization.
- Assesses the psychosocial status of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims and determines the types of referrals and services indicated. Coordinates the provision of referrals and services.
- Provides information using a trauma-informed approach to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims related to criminal event and/or associated criminal justice response, policies, and practices. Provides information to persons served related to legal issues, terms, and court procedures.
- Understands, upholds, and assists in the education and exercise of victims' rights per statutory and constitutional laws.
- Prepares and maintains statistical records. Records case file information and appropriate documentation in identified system.
- Serves as a liaison with advocacy groups, clinical and other service providers, community outreach services, and law enforcement personnel.
- Performs other job-related duties as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education and Experience:

Bachelor's degree in Social or Behavioral Sciences, Criminal Justice Administration, or a directly related field AND two (2) years' experience in counseling/social services or criminal justice work;

OR

Any combination of education and experience that has been achieved and is equivalent to the stated education and experience and required knowledge, skills, and abilities sufficient to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of this job.

Licenses, Registrations, Certifications, or Special Requirements:

Valid Driver's License

Preferred:

- Master's degree in Social or Behavioral Sciences, Criminal Justice Administration, or a directly related field
- Crisis and trauma intervention experience

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- Policies, practices, and procedures within the criminal justice system
- Trauma response and crisis stabilization techniques and resources
- Advocacy groups, clinical and other service providers, and community outreach services
- Computer equipment to include word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and a variety of software packages

Skill in:

- Trauma response and providing crisis stabilization and other assistance to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims
- Assessing the psychosocial status of persons served
- Determining types of referrals and services indicated for crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims
- Obtaining information from persons served and other sources
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Verbal and written communication

Ability to:

- Explain legal issues, terms, court appearances, and processes
- Develop effective victim advocacy programs
- Train and supervise staff, student interns, and volunteers

- Work independently
- Manage time well and meet timelines
- Communicate effectively
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with persons served by [Agency], employees and officials of [Agency], representatives of outside agencies and providers, and the general public

Work Environment & Other Information:

Physical requirements include the ability to lift/carry up to 25 pounds occasionally, visual acuity, speech and hearing, hand and eye coordination, and manual dexterity necessary to operate a computer and office equipment. Subject to standing, sitting, walking, climbing stairs, bending, stooping, crouching, kneeling, pushing, pulling, reaching, twisting, balancing, repetitive motion, driving, customer contact, and squatting to perform the essential functions.

This job description is intended to be generic in nature. It is not necessarily an exhaustive list of all duties and responsibilities. The essential duties, functions and responsibilities and overtime eligibility may vary based on the specific tasks assigned to the position.

Note:

Applicant must perform all of the above duties and responsibilities without any bias or prejudice against any person on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, and the applicant must perform and accomplish other duties as directed by [Agency].

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Volunteer

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Victim Services Volunteer position description template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

Job Summary:

Volunteers with the Victim Services Unit of [Agency] can assist the Unit in a variety of ways based on skillset and desire of applicant, as well as the needs of the Unit at that time. Volunteers may assist the Unit through administrative tasks (i.e., filing, answering phones, copying documents) or programmatic tasks (i.e., accompaniment of children/vulnerable adults; crisis intervention, criminal justice support and community referrals to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims). Volunteers must complete a comprehensive training program.

Requirements:

- 21 years of age or older.
- Have access to reliable transportation. If a reliable car, then required vehicle insurance.
- Have a working cell phone.
- Ability to pass a required background check.
- Availability in your schedule that would allow for a 4-hour shift of on-call per month.
- Ability to make a one-year commitment to the Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern Program.
- Ability to complete the specified training: Monday, Wednesday, Friday (6pm-9pm) for three consecutive weeks.
- Attend regular supervision with Volunteer & Student Intern Coordinator.

Volunteers of excellent moral standing who have the sensitivity and self-awareness required to provide effective assistance to those in crisis will be accepted into the program. Participating in our Volunteer program is an excellent opportunity to gain experience in crisis intervention, learn about the criminal justice system/law enforcement response, and enhance knowledge of community resources while performing a needed and rewarding service!

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Student Intern

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Victim Services Student Intern position description template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

Job Summary:

Student Interns with the Victim Services Unit of [Agency] can assist the Unit on the front lines of crisis intervention. Student Interns provide immediate response to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims. The Victim Services Unit provides services to victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims of all types of crime including, but not limited to: [*domestic violence, sexual assault, child/elder abuse, aggravated assaults, robberies/burglaries, and vehicular crimes*].

Student Interns are required to complete a comprehensive training program prior to direct service work. All internships require participation in programmatic tasks (i.e., accompaniment of children/vulnerable adults; crisis intervention, criminal justice support, and community referrals to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims) as well as administrative tasks (i.e., filing, answering phones, copying documents).

Requirements:

- Current enrollment with a higher education institution.
- 21 years of age or older.
- Have access to reliable transportation.
- Have a working cell phone.
- Ability to pass a background check.
- Availability in your schedule that would allow for a 4-hour shift of on-call per month.
- Ability to make a one-year commitment to the Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern Program.
- Ability to complete the specified training: Monday, Wednesday, Friday (6pm-9pm) for three consecutive weeks
- Attend weekly supervision with Victim Services Volunteer & Intern Coordinator.

Student Interns of excellent moral standing who have the sensitivity and self-awareness required to provide effective assistance to those in crisis are accepted into the program. Participating in our Student Intern program is an excellent opportunity to gain experience in crisis intervention, learn about the criminal justice system/law enforcement response, and enhance knowledge of community resources while performing a needed and rewarding service!

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Personnel Interviewing

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Victim Services Personnel Interviewing template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

Considerations

- What is the hiring process for new professional staff?
- Who participates in the hiring committee? Is it possible for individuals with victim services experience to be present (a community partner)?
- What position is being sought: Victim Services Specialist, Senior Specialist, Supervisor?

Sample – Victim Services Interview Questions

- Describe your perception of the role of victim services within a law enforcement agency.
- Describe the difference between systems-based and community-based advocacy.
- Describe your understanding of victim-centered and trauma-informed response to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims.
- What do you consider the most important idea you contributed or your most noteworthy accomplishment in your last job?
- What would your most recent supervisor recommend for your professional growth?
- Describe a situation in your most recent job when you had to adapt to and manage change.
- Describe a situation in which you experienced conflict with a colleague. Describe the steps you took to resolve it. In reflecting back, would you have done anything differently?
- Describe an experience working with law enforcement where you had a difference of opinion on how to approach a victim of crime. How did you convey your opinion? What were the results?
- Give an example of when you trained law enforcement on a topic relevant to improving response to victims and how you developed the training curriculum. Was the training successful? What would you do differently next time?
- Victim services personnel are exposed to high levels of crisis and trauma. How would you manage your own needs in this setting? What type of self-care do you practice?

Sample – Supplemental Supervisor Interview Questions

- What is your philosophy of supervision?
- What is your experience with managing a program budget? Grant management?
- Describe an experience of leading staff through a difficult decision or policy change. What would you have done differently?
- Describe a situation where you managed conflict between two or more personnel. How did you solve the issue? What could you have done differently?

Sample – Supplemental Volunteer & Student Intern Coordinator Questions

- What is your experience supervising staff?
- Describe a time when you developed and executed training a group. Was it successful? What would you do differently next time?

Sample – Supplemental Volunteer Interview Questions

- Why are you interested in volunteering with the Victim Services Unit?
- What do you want to gain from this volunteer position?

Sample – Supplemental Student Intern Interview Questions

- Why are you interested in interning with the Victim Services Unit?
- How do you think your coursework is relevant to this internship position?
- How do you think this internship will enhance your education and experience?
- What skills do you want to gain from this internship?

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Code of Ethics

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Victim Services Code of Ethics template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

[Agency]

Victim Services Code of Ethics

The victim services profession developed in response to needs of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims. Victim services personnel (staff, volunteers, student interns) appreciate and encourage the inherent diversity and unique values of all human beings through adherence to an established Code of Ethics. In so doing, victim services personnel demonstrate competent and responsible practice, aid in protecting the public from exploitation and safeguard the reputation of the profession.

Victim services personnel take on many roles including crisis interventionist, resource provider, educator, consultant, and liaison. The following standards are written with these multi-faceted roles in mind, and with the knowledge that all crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims deserve to be ethically treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.

Role of Victim Services Personnel

- Victim services personnel understand their legal responsibilities, limitations, and the implications of their actions within the service delivery setting and perform duties in accordance with laws, regulations, policies, and legislated rights of persons served.
- Victim services personnel accurately represent their professional title, qualifications, and/or credentials to persons served and the general public.
- Victim services personnel achieve and maintain a high level of professional competence and conduct. Victim services personnel work within their area of competence and strive towards continued professional development.

Direct Services

- Victim services personnel respect and protect the statutory rights of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims to the best of their ability.
- Victim services personnel recognize the interest of the person served as a primary responsibility.
- Victim services personnel identify the nature of the helping relationship from the onset, as well as inform crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims of the limitations of services.
- Victim services personnel respect and protect the capacity for self-determination for all crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims. They also recognize each person's ability to receive or refuse services.

- Victim services personnel refrain from behaviors that communicate victim blame, suspicion regarding victim accounts of the crime, condemnation for past behavior, or other judgmental, anti-victim sentiment.
- Victim services personnel maintain the privacy of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims when possible and abide by agency guidelines, local, state, and federal laws. Privacy is maintained before, during, and after the course of the professional relationship. Confidentiality is limited for system-based advocates. Victim services personnel clearly understand limitation of confidentiality and communicate this limitation to persons served.
- If it is suspected that danger or harm may occur to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, or co-victims or to others as a result of the behavior of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, or co-victims; victim services personnel act in an appropriate and professional manner to protect the safety of those individuals. This may involve seeking consultation, supervision, and/or breaking the privacy of the relationship.
- Victim services personnel avoid conflicts of interest and disclose any possible conflict to the program, prospective programs, and persons served.
- Victim services personnel do not engage in personal relationships with persons served which exploit professional trust or which could impair objectivity and professional judgment. Victim services personnel never engage in any kind of social, business, friendship, dating, or sexual relationship with persons involved in victim services cases, including crime victims, witnesses, survivors, co-victims, family members, friends, and offenders.
- Victim services personnel do not accept any type of gratuities or gifts from persons involved in Victim services cases including crime victims, witnesses, survivors, co-victims, family members, friends, and offenders.
- Victim services personnel terminate services and refer victims to appropriate agencies after their needs are met within the Victim Services Unit.
- Victim services personnel participate in opportunities and activities that promote self-care and reduce compassion fatigue to aid in the provision of optimal services to victims.

Dignity and Respect of the Individual

- Victim services personnel respect the integrity and welfare of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims always. Each person served is treated with fairness, dignity, respect, and acceptance.
- Victim services personnel do not discriminate against crime victims, witnesses, survivors, or co-victims or another staff member based on race/ethnicity, language, sex/gender, age, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, social class, economic status, education, marital status, religious affiliation, residency, HIV status, or medical condition.
- Victim services personnel acknowledge the cultures and communities within which they are active. They are aware of and respect multiculturalism in society and its impact on the beliefs of individuals and groups within the community. Victim services personnel are aware of their own

cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and values, recognizing the potential for impact on their relationships with others.

- Victim services personnel make good-faith efforts to ensure that services are accessible, suitable, and secure for clients from a variety of personal backgrounds.

Community Collaboration

- Victim services personnel conduct relationships with colleagues and other professionals in such a way as to promote mutual respect, public confidence, and improved service.
- Victim services personnel share knowledge and encourage proficiency in victim assistance among colleagues and other professionals.
- Victim services personnel support colleagues, who may be experiencing secondary trauma, and seek to encourage appropriate services.
- Victim services personnel serve the public interest by contributing to the improvement of systems that impact crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims.

Administration and Evaluation

- When victim services personnel experience conflict with or observe unethical behavior by another advocate, human service professional, or criminal justice representative, they first attempt to address the issue with that person. If necessary, victim services personnel seek appropriate supervisory guidance to address the issue. If no resolution is forthcoming, victim services personnel will report the behavior to supervisory/administrative staff and/or the organization to which the individual belongs.
- Victim services personnel report to appropriate authorities the conduct of any colleague or other professional (including oneself) that constitutes mistreatment of a person served or that brings the profession into dishonor.

I understand the above Code of Ethics and agree to abide by all terms during the duration of my tenure with [Agency] Victim Services.

Victim services personnel	Signature	Date
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Victim Services Supervisor	Signature	Date
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[Agency leader]	Signature	Date
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Adapted from [OVC Model Standards](#) (n.d.) and [NASW Code of Ethics](#) (2017).

TEMPLATE – Personnel Responsibilities

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Personnel Responsibilities template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

PURPOSE:

To describe the personnel responsibilities of the Victim Services Unit (VSU).

POLICY:

It is the policy of the VSU to provide trauma-informed, victim-centered, culturally appropriate crisis intervention, criminal justice support, referrals to community services, and advocacy to those impacted by criminal circumstances; ensure the availability of consistent and comprehensive information to all crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims and [Agency] personnel regarding the constitutional and statutory rights of crime victims; and to conduct relationships with community members, colleagues, and other professionals in such a way as to promote mutual respect and public confidence.

PROCEDURE:

- All Victim Services personnel are expected to adhere to the line of supervision structure regarding communication and assigned duties as follows:
 - Victim Services Supervisor
 - Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern Coordinator
 - Victim Services Specialist Senior
 - Victim Services Specialist
 - Victim Services Volunteers and Student Interns
- All victim services personnel are expected to adhere to the following assigned duties:
 - Documentation – timely and appropriate documentation of services as defined by Documentation and Record Maintenance Standard;
 - External Funding Source Compliance – performance of duties and completion of reporting requirements that are expressly specified by external funding sources;
 - Advocacy – engagement in conduct (at the discretion of the Victim Services Supervisor) that aims to influence policy and resource allocation in support of the reduction of trauma experienced by crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims;
 - Training – provision of training and information delivery to other agencies and community members (at the discretion of the Victim Services Supervisor) on subject matters that contribute to the improvement of outcomes for crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims; and
 - Other duties as assigned – performance of duties as assigned that will support the overall mission of the VSU.

- Specific job requirements for the victim services personnel are as follows:
 - Victim Services Supervisor – reports directly to the [Position Title] and is responsible for the management of the VSU. Duties include, but are not limited to:
 - Recommending action to ensure [Agency] compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements pertaining to Rights of Crime Victims;
 - Oversight of all VSU activities and processes (on-scene response, direct service provision, Volunteer and Student Intern Program, Community Collaboration) to include strategic planning, development of VSU goals/objectives, identification of service gaps/barriers, creation/revision of policies/protocols pertaining to VSU activities, and assigning/supervising the responsibilities of VSU personnel;
 - Developing and implementing training material for VSU and [Agency] personnel;
 - Preparing and interpreting statistical/programmatic reports related to VSU operations. Preparing and monitoring VSU budget expenditures to include management of grant funding that supports Unit needs;
 - Representing [Agency] with community collaborations and the media pertaining to VSU activities; and
 - Provision of services to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims, as necessary.
 - Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern Coordinator – reports directly to the Victim Services Supervisor. Duties include, but are not limited to:
 - Recruitment and placement of VSU Volunteers and Student Interns;
 - Coordination of background process for VSU Volunteers and Student Interns;
 - Development and implementation of training material for VSU Volunteers and Student Interns;
 - Planning, assigning, and coordinating responsibilities of VSU Volunteers and Student Interns;
 - Provision of services to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims as assigned; and
 - Completion of assigned duties in the absence of the VSU Supervisor.
 - Victim Services Specialist Senior & Victim Services Specialist – reports directly to the Victim Services Supervisor. Personnel in this position are responsible for making contact with crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims, which includes, but is not limited to:
 - Crisis Intervention – support that will enable a person(s) faced with a crisis to:
 - Cope with immediate acute demands influenced by circumstances related and non-related to the victimization; and
 - Return to pre-crisis functioning.

- General office duties; and
- Victim Services Volunteers and Student Interns shall:
 - Meet minimum age requirements;
 - Submit to required background processes;
 - Have and maintain reliable transportation/required vehicle insurance;
 - Have and maintain established communication methods;
 - Meet established time and shift commitments;
 - Participate in required training opportunities;
 - Identify themselves as a Volunteer/Student Intern during assigned duties and while participating in VSU and [Agency] events; and
- All victim services personnel are expected to adhere to the [Agency] VSU Code of Ethics.
- All victim services personnel are expected to adhere to personnel responsibilities regarding Crime Victims' Rights. Victim services personnel will provide information to crime victims as per [statutory citations]. The Victim Services Supervisor will ensure the following actions by victim services personnel:
 - Development of informational material pertaining to Rights of Crime Victims that is accessible to [Agency] personnel and crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims; and
 - Development of training material and the provision of instruction to [Agency] personnel on Rights of Crime Victims as requested.
- All victim services personnel are expected to adhere to the personnel responsibilities regarding community collaboration. Victim services personnel will, as directed by the Victim Services Supervisor:
 - Participate in community-based collaborative teams to contribute to the improvement of systems that impact crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims;
 - Assist other criminal justice agencies within the county in service provision to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims as needed and appropriate; and
 - Provide training and information to other agencies and community members to contribute to the improvement of outcomes for crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims.
- All victim services personnel, per direction of the Victim Services Supervisor, are expected to adhere to the personnel responsibilities regarding the regular review and evaluation of the operations of the VSU, which typically occurs once every two years. The VSU Analysis Report will be approved by the Victim Services Supervisor and submitted to the [supervisor of VSU Supervisor] for review and will include, but is not limited to:
 - Discussion of the extent and major types of victimization within the jurisdiction;
 - Discussion of information and service needs of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims;

- Discussion of victim assistance and related community services available within jurisdiction;
- Discussion of services provided by victim services personnel;
- Discussion of unmet needs of crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims;
- Identification of appropriate needs to be met by [Agency]; and
- Based on the VSU Analysis Report, the Victim Services Supervisor will:
 - Set goals and objectives to address identified areas of concern;
 - Develop and/or revise policies and procedures to address identified areas of concern.

SAMPLE

TEMPLATE – Personnel Standards

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Victim Services Unit Personnel Standards template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

PURPOSE:

To establish and promulgate the Personnel Standards within the Victim Services Unit (VSU).

POLICY:

It is the policy of the VSU to ensure consistent conduct by all personnel (paid, volunteer, and student interns) which encompasses both Personnel and Victim Considerations.

PROCEDURE:

The established Personnel Considerations and Victim Considerations of the VSU are:

- As per regulations established by [State professional licensing and certification board]:
 - Victim services personnel in their capacity with the [Agency] are not licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors, Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, Clinical Social Workers, or health professionals.
 - Victim services personnel are not able to diagnose, engage in clinical treatment, or provide professional recommendations pertaining to medical and/or mental health of persons served.
 - Victim services personnel who hold licensure are prohibited from utilizing that licensure in a clinical or medical capacity during contact with crime victims, witnesses, survivors, or co-victims.
- [Agency] employee assistance:
 - Employees who are crime victims, witnesses, survivors, or co-victims and require [Agency] response will be treated in accordance with established practices for non-employed victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims.
 - Employees who are crime victims, witnesses, survivors, or co-victims that do not require [Agency] response shall:
 - Be advised that conversations with victim services personnel are not subject to HIPAA protection and are not covered by legal privilege prior to any service provision; and
 - Consent to involvement of victim services personnel prior to referral.
 - All contact by victim services personnel (while performing in their official capacity) with [Agency] employees shall be documented in accordance with established practices within the VSU.
- Investigative processes:

- In their interaction with crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims; victim services personnel are prohibited from conducting interviews, line-ups, collection of statements, and identification/collection/preservation of physical or electronic evidence for the purposes of furthering the responsibilities of sworn personnel.
 - Upon request, victim services personnel with secondary language fluency may provide interpretation assistance for necessary interaction with crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims, but are prohibited from initiating questions, interjecting comments, or providing opinions about the information provided through interpretation efforts.
 - Victim services personnel are prohibited from providing interpretation assistance for necessary interaction with suspects.
 - Any case-related information that is conveyed to victim services personnel by crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims will be documented and shared with sworn personnel according to established standards. It is the duty of victim services personnel to alert crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims of this obligation.
- Availability for Duty:
 - On-call — Victim services personnel are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and may be requested through the [Agency] established protocol.
 - Case response — Victim services personnel are available for service provision to all crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims, to include Federal crimes.
 - Subpoena response — Victim services personnel are subject to subpoena for any actions taken, circumstances observed, or information received and/or provided while performing assigned duties.
- Mandated Reporting:
 - Victim services personnel who hold a reasonable belief that a minor or vulnerable adult is or has been the victim of abuse (sexual and/or physical), neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation shall immediately report this concern to [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency].
 - Victim services personnel who hold a reasonable belief that crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims are at imminent risk of causing harm to themselves or to another person shall immediately report this concern to a sworn [Agency] member and determine what type of immediate response is needed.
 - Victim services personnel shall report any contact with law enforcement when identified as a suspect or that results in impact to driving abilities, either while on-duty or off-duty, to their supervisor within 24 hours of the contact.
- Ethics:
 - Victim services personnel shall abide by the most current [Agency] Victim Services Code of Ethics in the performance of all duties.

- [Agency] Victim Services Code of Ethics is intended to compliment and not contradict the [Agency] Code of Ethics.
- Confidentiality:
 - Crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims shall be informed of the parameters surrounding confidentiality prior to service provision. Due to the nature of limitations of confidentiality around system-based advocates, crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims shall be informed of the limitations before service provision.
 - Crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims shall be informed of the possibility of media involvement when applicable. All media requests for information shall be directed to the Public Information Officer (PIO).
 - Victim services personnel shall not communicate with or share accessible information with any representative of the media without the expressed permission of the Victim Services Supervisor and/or the Public Information Officer (PIO).
 - Information provided to victim services personnel by crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims and information accessible to victim services personnel shall only be released without consent of the persons served in accordance to the state law and [Agency] policy. Victim Services personnel will inform persons served of this policy.
- Declination of Services:
 - Crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims may decline any service offered by victim services personnel.
 - Upon request, victim services personnel may provide additional services to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims at any time, regardless of prior declinations.
- Complaints:
 - Victim services personnel will provide crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims with contact information for appropriate supervisor(s) and/or Internal Affairs when there is a voiced concern regarding the conduct of any [Agency] personnel (sworn or professional).
 - Victim services personnel will immediately report any complaint regarding a violation of Rights of Crime Victims to the Victim Services Supervisor for review and determination of appropriate action.

TEMPLATE – Documentation and Record Maintenance Standards

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This Documentation and Record Maintenance Standards template should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

PURPOSE:

To establish and promulgate the Documentation and Record Maintenance Standards within the Victim Services Unit (VSU).

POLICY:

It is the policy of the VSU to reliably document, distribute, and maintain information regarding service provision to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims and VSU activities.

PROCEDURE:

- Documentation. Established documentation, reporting requirements, and retention schedule are:
 - Victim services personnel shall document contact regarding crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims through established standards to include, but not limited to:
 - Personal contact, phone conversations, and written correspondence (letter, email, text messages),
 - Consultations with representatives of internal departments and external agencies, and
 - Provision of services.
 - Victim services personnel shall document VSU activities through established standards to include, but not limited to:
 - Statistical data;
 - Training records; and
 - Equipment maintenance records.
 - Requests to view or obtain copies of documentation generated by victim services personnel shall be directed to proper [Agency] channels and the Victim Services Supervisor for appropriate review to ensure compliance with statutory, policy and funding requirements.
- Reporting Requirements:
 - To ensure compliance with external funding sources, victim services personnel shall complete all required documentation according to the established standards of external funding sources.
 - To ensure compliance with goals and objectives of the [Agency] and the VSU, victim services personnel shall complete all required documentation according to established standards.

- The Victim Services Supervisor will determine the frequency and categorical content of all documentation completed.
- Retention Schedule. All documentation generated by victim services personnel will be retained according to [*state record retention policy*] and external funding sources.

SAMPLE

TEMPLATE – Language Access Protocol

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This scenario and the documentation sample templates should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this protocol is to establish consistent guidelines surrounding contact with crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims with identified language access needs (including a primary language other than English and/or deafness or hearing impairment). This protocol establishes that all victim services personnel have access to a telephonic language access service, interpreter services, and translation services to aid in communication with crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims with identified language access needs. This protocol establishes that victim services personnel who have secondary language capabilities will not carry additional responsibilities outside of their normal scheduled hours and duties due to those language abilities. Exceptions to this will be determined by the Victim Services Supervisor.

PROCEDURE:

1. During routine contact on assigned cases, victim services personnel will respond to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims with identified language access needs (including, non-English speakers, limited English speakers, and/or those who are deaf or hearing impaired) as follows:
 - a. In-Person (office- or field-based contact) or Phone Response – Contact the victim utilizing [Language Access Service] or authorized interpreter services.
 - b. Written Communication – Use [Translation Service] to translate a contact letter into the identified language if phone contact is unsuccessful.
2. For all forms of direct contact (in person and/or telephonic) consideration should be utilized when accessing an interpreter outside of the [Language Access Service] or authorized interpreter services. Consider the following:
 - a. Relatives and persons having an existing relationship with the crime victim, witness, survivor, or co-victim may only be utilized in emergency situations.
 - b. Minors shall not be utilized as interpreters.
 - c. Suspects shall not be utilized as interpreters.
3. Use of an interpreter and language of interpretation shall be included in the documentation of contact.

Language Access Protocol, [revision date]

TEMPLATE – Mandated Reporting Protocol

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This scenario and the documentation sample templates should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this protocol is to establish consistent guidelines when completing mandated reporting for incidents of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of a minor child or vulnerable adult¹ and when reporting incidents of danger to others or danger to self.

PROCEDURE:

1. All victim services personnel are considered mandated reporters,² as such all victim services personnel must complete [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] training within [number] days/weeks of hire and must renew training every [number] years.
2. During routine case contact, victim services personnel will notify [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency], pursuant to [statutory citation], under the following circumstances:
 - a. Reasonable belief that a minor child has been abused or neglected,
 - b. Reasonable belief that a minor child has died as a result of abuse or neglect, or
 - c. Reasonable belief that a vulnerable adult has been abused, neglected, or exploited.
3. Immediately upon suspecting abuse, neglect, or exploitation, victim services personnel shall do the following:
 - a. Determine if a report has been made by other [Agency] personnel.
 - b. If a report has not been made, determine urgency and report accordingly:
 - i. For cases requiring action in less than 24 hours, contact [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] at [phone number].
 - ii. For all other cases, contact [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] at [website].
 - c. Obtain the [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report number for documentation.
4. During routine case contact, victim services personnel will notify the most appropriate law enforcement personnel under the following circumstances:
 - a. Victim, witness, survivor, co-victim or a support person poses a danger to others.
 - b. Victim, witness, survivor, co-victim or a support person poses an imminent danger to self.
5. During routine case contact, victim services personnel will address non-imminent expressions of self-harm, when appropriate, through contact with
 - a. [Agency] Crisis Intervention Team, or
 - b. [Community Mental Health Response Agency] [phone number].

Mandated Reporting Protocol, [revision date]

¹ Refer to the state statute for legal age of minor and definition of vulnerable adult.

² Review state statutes and [Agency] policies on mandated reporting. Additional consideration is given to victim services personnel with a professional license (e.g., social work, counseling, or nursing license) or other affiliation (e.g., volunteer EMS, soccer coach) that may have mandated reporting requirements.

TEMPLATE – Parent/Guardian Information Protocol

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This scenario and the documentation sample templates should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this protocol is to establish consistent guidelines for victim services personnel when obtaining parent/guardian information for minors that are involved in criminal events.

PROCEDURE:

1. During routine case contacts involving minors, victim services personnel will request the following information:

Legal Guardian(s)

Name:

DOB:

Address:

Custody arrangement – legal or informal:

Minor(s)

Name:

DOB:

Address:

Name and address of school/daycare/other addresses for [Protection Order]:

2. If law enforcement personnel in charge of the scene or case do not have the above information, victim services personnel will obtain information from the victim.
3. In the event the victim does not have the identifying information for the other parent or guardian, attempts to gather information will be included in victim services personnel documentation.
4. Identifying information obtained for all parents or guardians and minors will be included in victim services personnel documentation.

Parent/Guardian Information Protocol, [revision date]

TEMPLATE – Victim/Witness Interview Protocol

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This scenario and the documentation sample templates should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this protocol is to establish consistent guidelines for victim services personnel assistance during victim/witness interviews.

PROCEDURE:

1. Investigators will notify and coordinate with the assigned victim services personnel when they plan to schedule an interview with a crime victim or witness. Investigators may also request that the victim services personnel contact the victim/witness to schedule the interview. Logistical concerns, such as the need for transportation assistance or short-term accompaniment of children or vulnerable adults during the interview, will be identified by the assigned victim services personnel.
2. When the victim/witness arrives for the scheduled interview, the victim services personnel will meet the victim/witness in the lobby, adhere to established check-in procedures, and escort the victim/witness to the victim services office. The victim/witness will be assessed for comfort and immediate basic needs (e.g., beverage, snack, blanket, shoes).
3. If additional people (other victims or witnesses, family members, etc.) who are not being interviewed by investigators are present with the victim/witness and
 - a. the interview is being held after regular business hours, or
 - b. if the interview is likely to last beyond regular business hours,the victim services personnel will adhere to established check-in procedures and escort these individuals to the victim services office to wait.
4. The victim services personnel will review the following information with the victim/witness prior to the interview:
 - a. Roles of the parties involved in the criminal justice process (e.g., law enforcement officer, investigators, prosecutors, victim services personnel, crime scene personnel)
 - b. Limits of confidentiality
 - c. What to expect during the interview process (e.g., description of the room, format of the interview, procedure for crime scene personnel involvement—related to photos and/or evidence collection, procedure for taking breaks, location of restrooms and water fountains)
 - d. What to expect during the investigative process and the overall criminal justice system
5. The victim services personnel will offer to accompany the victim/witness during the interview. If the investigator determines that victim services personnel should not be present during the

interview, the investigator will notify the victim services personnel of this in advance, so this option is not offered to the victim/witness. If the victim services personnel accompany the victim/witness during the interview, the victim services personnel will identify themselves by name and position, so this information is recorded during the interview process.

6. Prior to engaging in the victim/witness interview, the investigator and victim services personnel will discuss their respective roles and expectations related to the interview process.
7. The investigator will meet the victim/witness in the victim services office and escort the victim/witness to the interview room.
8. During the interview, the victim services personnel will provide emotional support for the victim/witness.
9. The victim services personnel will not participate in the interview, ask questions, interject comments or opinions, or discuss resources with the victim/witness during the interview. The victim services personnel may communicate with the victim/witness during the interview under the following circumstances:
 - a. The victim services personnel may check on the victim's/witness's emotional state by asking questions such as "Are you doing okay?" or "Would you like to take a break?"
 - b. The victim services personnel may provide support and encouragement by making statements such as "You are doing great" or "We are almost finished."
 - c. The victim services personnel may assist if the victim services personnel believe the victim/witness has misunderstood or misinterpreted something the investigator said or asked. The victim services personnel may provide the victim/witness a neutral prompt such as "Would you like the investigator to explain that again?"
 - d. The victim services personnel may assist the victim/witness in utilizing relaxation techniques such as deep breathing or grounding.
10. After the interview is completed, the victim services personnel will escort the victim/witness to the victim services office. The victim/witness will be offered a drink and snack.
11. The victim services personnel will review community resources and provide additional services (e.g., safety planning), as appropriate.
12. The victim services personnel will escort the victim/witness and any other individuals who came with the victim/witness out of the building.

Victim/Witness Interview Protocol, [revision date]

TEMPLATE – Employee Assistance Protocol

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This scenario and the documentation sample templates should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this protocol is to establish consistent guidelines surrounding contact with [Agency] employees who are identified as crime victims, witnesses, survivors or co-victims.

PROCEDURE:

1. Prior to service provision, victim services personnel shall determine if the criminal event has been reported to [Agency], another law enforcement agency, or not reported.
2. Victim services personnel who have an existing relationship with the [Agency] employee, who is identified as a crime victim, witness, survivor, or co-victim shall alert the Victim Services Supervisor of that relationship prior to the provision of services.
3. For cases reported to [Agency], the following will occur:
 - a. Employees of [Agency] who are identified as crime victims, witnesses, survivors or co-victims will be treated in accordance with established victim services practices, and
 - i. referred to the assigned victim services personnel, or
 - ii. referred to the Victim Services Supervisor if the case has not yet been assigned.
 - b. Service provision will be documented according to established victim services practices.
4. For cases reported to another law enforcement agency (not [Agency]), or unreported the following will occur:
 - a. Victim services personnel, who receive a request for service provision to an [Agency] employee from an [Agency] supervisor or employee, shall
 - i. provide victim services information for [Agency] and, when applicable, for victim services with the law enforcement agency for which the report was made, and
 - ii. advise that services will be provided upon request of the impacted employee.
 - b. Victim services personnel who receive a request for service provision from an [Agency] employee shall
 - i. advise the employee that conversations with victim services personnel are not confidential,
 - ii. advise the employee that service provision will be documented according to established practices,
 - iii. obtain consent for involvement with victim services personnel prior to the provision of services, and
 - iv. provide victim services contact information, when applicable, for victim services personnel with the law enforcement agency for which the report was made.

Employee Assistance Protocol, [revision date]

TEMPLATE – On-Call Response Protocol

These templates are intended to provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine program and professional victim service standards. This scenario and the documentation sample templates should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent and be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with requirements within the local jurisdiction, including a full review by [Agency] legal and human resources.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this protocol is to establish guidelines for on-call response by victim services personnel, including paid personnel, volunteers, and student interns.

PROCEDURE:

ON-CALL RESPONSE:

For all on-call response requests, the following steps will be taken:

1. Communications personnel will be contacted by victim services personnel to confirm receipt of requests.
2. Communications personnel can be utilized to acquire necessary and additional information that will aid in victim services personnel response efforts.
3. Victim services personnel will ensure requests for phone contact at a later time are fulfilled by the victim services personnel on the schedule at the time of the requested contact.
4. Victim services personnel will initiate response within [*no. minutes*] of the receipt of requests.
5. Response/entry to the scene will be coordinated jointly by victim personnel and law enforcement personnel to minimize the impact on the victim, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims.
6. The following factors will be taken into consideration:
 - a. safety and autonomy of the persons receiving services,
 - b. safety of victim services personnel, and
 - c. severity of service needs when multiple requests are received simultaneously.

For on-call response requests that ask for multiple victim services personnel, victim services personnel who are scheduled at the time of the request

1. will consider if more than one location is involved.
2. are encouraged to respond to the scene and assess the need for additional personnel; and
3. if additional personnel are needed, utilize the contact structure identified in this protocol.

CONTACT STRUCTURE:

Victim services personnel, who are scheduled as on-call at the time of the request, are expected to respond to the initial request.

When additional on-call response is needed (either for a separate request or for additional personnel on the initial request), utilize the following contact structure:

1. On-duty victim services personnel, but not on-call
2. Off-duty victim services personnel,¹ if available and willing to respond
 - a. Off-duty victim services personnel who agree to assist will use flex time for time spent on-call response during the current work week.
 - b. Off-duty victim services personnel who agree to assist will communicate schedule modifications to the Victim Services Supervisor.
 - c. Off-duty victim services personnel are prohibited from responding while judgment or physical condition has been impaired by alcohol, drugs, or other mind-altering substance.
3. Victim Services Supervisor (or designee)

ON-CALL COMMUNICATION AND DOCUMENTATION:

If the victim services personnel who are on-call determine they are unable to fulfill those responsibilities, the Victim Services Supervisor (or designee) will be notified as follows:

1. Urgent circumstances – communicate with the Victim Services Supervisor (or designee) and assistance will be provided in finding alternative coverage.
2. Non-urgent circumstances – send a request to all victim services personnel and request assistance of coverage needs. Communicate any changes to the Victim Services Supervisor (or designee) so that calendars can be updated.
3. Volunteers and student interns are not able to cover on-call responsibilities for paid victim services personnel and will not be contacted for this purpose.
4. Volunteers and student interns will only be contacted to take on additional shifts by the Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern Coordinator (or designee).

If a volunteer or student intern is scheduled on-call and subsequently cancels or does not respond, the Victim Services Volunteer & Student Intern Coordinator (or designee) will be notified by email.

Victim services personnel on-call will complete entry of:

1. Data on the response request log within 24 hours of each on-call response request, and
2. Documentation of actions taken, and services provided within 48 hours of the receipt of each on-call response request.

ON-CALL RESPONSE SCENARIOS:

The scenarios detailed in this section serve as guiding information for victim services personnel during on-call response.

SCENARIO 1:

You are requested to respond to and contact the parents of a 12-year-old girl with a diagnosed developmental disability who has reported sexual contact with a 20-year-old male whom she met through church. Because the timeline for the sexual contact is not clear, a decision has been made to proceed with a sexual assault forensic exam. Parents provide that she has started her period and expressed concerns about the possibility of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. The parents have had no previous

¹ For victim services personnel under union contract, on-call scheduling should defer to existing agreements.

involvement with law enforcement or [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] and are fearful that if they bring their daughter in for the interview, she will be taken away from them. What do you do?

Victim services personnel will respond to the scene and review the following information with the victim and parents:

- Role of victim services and responding personnel
- Limits of confidentiality
- Role of [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency]
- Location and process for forensic medical exam (e.g., hospital, Family Justice Center, Rape Crisis Center)
- Forensic Interview process
- Community referrals
- Expected emotional and physical responses and identified needs of minor victim and parents
- Victim services personnel will communicate with minor victim alone only with the permission of the protective parent/guardian

SCENARIO 2:

You are requested to respond to and contact a 67-year-old male victim of domestic violence. His 35-year-old son has been identified as the suspect but has not been arrested. The victim relates this is his first contact with the criminal justice system and is not sure how to protect himself in the future. He also expresses ambivalence about his son being arrested and expresses concern for the safety of himself and his wife if his son returns. What do you do?

Victim services personnel will respond to the scene and review the following information with victim:

- Role of victim services and responding personnel
- Limits of confidentiality
- Role of [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] and the need to make a report
- Safety planning
- Community referrals
- Expected emotional and physical responses

SCENARIO 3:

You receive a request to respond to a traffic fatality involving two minor occupants (one deceased, one being transported to the hospital) with the involved driver of the second vehicle still on scene. Multiple victim services personnel have been requested. What do you do?

Due to the need to provide services to multiple parties, utilize the contact structure identified in this protocol for additional assistance.

- Victim services personnel will provide the following information to parents/guardians of the decedent:

- Notification of the death²
- Role of victim services and responding personnel
- Limits of confidentiality
- Investigative and criminal justice processes
- Community referrals
- Expected emotional and physical responses
- Victim services personnel will provide the following information to the involved secondary driver:
 - Role of victim services and responding personnel
 - Limits of confidentiality
 - Community referrals
 - Expected emotional and physical responses
- Victim services personnel will provide the following information to the parents/guardians of the injured minor:
 - Role of victim services and responding personnel
 - Limits of confidentiality
 - Investigative and criminal justice processes
 - Community referrals
 - Expected emotional and physical responses

SCENARIO 4:

A 20-year-old male was found deceased by his roommate upon coming home from work. Investigators and [Death Investigation Agency] personnel are involved and investigating to determine a cause of death. You have been instructed to notify his next of kin regarding the death. The roommate shares information that the parents of the decedent both live locally (in separate residences due to a recent acrimonious divorce). The roommate also shares that both parents speak Vietnamese. What do you do?

Due to the acrimonious nature of the relationship of the next of kin, utilize the contact structure identified in this protocol for additional assistance.

- Coordinate the timing of notifications to both parents.
- Utilize the [Language Access Service] to ensure appropriate and consistent information is conveyed.
- Have a preparatory conversation with [Language Access Service] personnel prior to notifications to their comfort and proficiency of delivering the information.
- Victim services personnel will provide the following information to both parents:
 - Role of victim services and responding personnel
 - Limits of confidentiality

² If parents are the suspect, staff with the assigned investigator.

- Role of [Death Investigation Agency]
- Investigative and criminal justice process
- Community referrals
- Expected emotional and physical responses

SCENARIO 5:

You respond to a call in the north area of the jurisdiction involving the sexual assault of an 18-year-old male. You will be expected to provide the victim with transportation to the hospital for a forensic exam as family members are on their way from out of town. He expresses concern about his stepdad being informed of details but is comfortable with his mom knowing everything. While you are on scene, you receive a request to make phone contact with a victim of domestic violence. What do you do?

Victim services personnel will respond to the scene and review the following information with the victim of sexual assault:

- Role of victim services and responding personnel
- Limits of confidentiality
- Forensic exam process and role of community-based advocate (rape crisis center advocate)
- Investigative and criminal justice process
- Community referrals
- Expected emotional and physical responses of the victim and family members

When the request for a phone call is received, victim services personnel can enlist the assistance of the community-based advocate to be present for the victim and step outside to make a call to communications personnel or requesting officer for the victim of domestic violence.

- If possible, arrange to contact the victim of domestic violence after concluding the response with the victim of sexual assault.
- If immediate contact needs to be made with the victim of domestic violence, utilize the contact structure identified in this protocol for additional assistance.

SCENARIO 6:

You are asked to respond to a domestic violence incident in which the suspect has been arrested and the victim needs safety planning assistance. As you are responding to the scene, the law enforcement officer provides an update via phone that the victim has found a family member to stay with but will need transportation to her residence to get belongings and then to her family's home. Shortly after arrival you receive a request for response to a local hospital for a victim of a stabbing. What do you do?

Victim services personnel will respond to the scene and review the following information with the domestic violence victim:

- Role of victim services and responding personnel
- Limits of confidentiality
- Safety planning
- Investigative and criminal justice process

- Community referrals
- Expected emotional and physical responses

When the request for the second response is received, victim services personnel can find a private location to make a call to communications personnel or requesting officer for the stabbing victim.

- If possible, arrange to contact the stabbing victim after concluding the response with the victim of domestic violence.
- If immediate contact needs to be made with the stabbing victim, utilize the contact structure identified in this protocol for additional assistance.

SCENARIO 7:

You are asked to respond to a hospital for a victim of domestic violence. Shortly after arrival you receive a request for a response to a domestic violence incident in which the suspect is at large. Simultaneously, a third request is received for phone contact with a domestic violence victim. What do you do?

Victim services personnel will respond to the hospital and review the following information with the victim of domestic violence:

- Role of victim services and responding personnel
- Limits of confidentiality
- Immediate safety planning

Provide reassurance that you will return after responding to the other request.

Victim services personnel will respond to the location and review the following information with the victim of domestic violence:

- Role of victim services and responding personnel
- Limits of confidentiality
- Role of investigative and criminal justice process
- Safety planning
- Community referrals
- Expected emotional and physical responses

When the request for the third response is received, victim services personnel can find a private location to make a call to communications personnel or requesting officer for the victim.

- If possible, arrange to contact the victim of domestic violence after concluding the responses.
- If immediate contact needs to be made with victim, utilize the contact structure identified in this protocol for additional assistance.

SCENARIO 8:

You are requested to make phone contact with a 34-year-old female who was reported to be an involved party in a family disturbance. The law enforcement officer advised the female avoided eye contact and appeared scared but did not provide any information that would support criminal charges. Upon contact with the female by victim services personnel, she disclosed her boyfriend physically assaulted her and her

10-year-old child the night before, but he threatened further harm to them both if she told law enforcement. What do you do?

Victim services personnel will call the identified female and review the following information:

- Role of victim services and responding personnel
- Limits of confidentiality
- Role of [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] and the need to make a report
- Her desire about reporting the violence or of her being assaulted to police
- Safety planning
- Community referrals
- Expected emotional and physical responses and identified needs of adults and children

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