

**Law Enforcement-Based  
Victim Services:  
*Template Package II –  
Next Steps***

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### Introduction

Victim-centered responses and services are vital to the safety, stability, and healing of crime victims, as their use can ultimately reduce and prevent future victimization.<sup>1</sup> In 2018, to support the development of law enforcement-based victim services in the United States, to strengthen their capacity, and to support partnerships with community-based programs, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) launched the Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services & Technical Assistance Program (LEV Program). Providing training and technical assistance for the LEV Program, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) aims to enhance the capacity of law enforcement-based victim services by providing guidance on promising practices, protocols, and policies to support victims' access to their legal rights and the services and responses they need.

The IACP is committed 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.

### Explanation of Templates

Whether establishing or enhancing a law enforcement-based victim services program, strong policies and standards promote high expectations for victim services personnel and service delivery. This publication includes sample crime type-specific case protocols and sample scenarios with documentation excerpts. This collection of templates was developed to provide a starting point for agencies but is not an exhaustive list of victim services policies or procedures. These templates were developed through a review of documents from existing law enforcement-based victim services programs.

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. The scenarios and documentation samples contained in this document are intended to be used as training tools and to guide conversations around documentation practices for law enforcement-based victim services personnel.

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<sup>1</sup> Brian A. Reaves, [Police Response to Domestic Violence, 2006–2015](#) (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2017).

### 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.
- **Crime Victim Compensation**—a state-based<sup>1</sup> reimbursement program for victims of crime, found in every U.S. state and territory, but with eligibility criteria and specific benefits that are unique to each state.
- **Death Investigation Agency** – this refers to the local government office that is specifically trained to investigate the pathology of death.
- **Domestic Violence** – This is intended to be used as an umbrella term to capture all types of abuse or neglect between family members, former or current intimate partners, or individuals cohabiting. Across the United States criminal codes have utilized different terms, including domestic battery, domestic abuse, domestic assault, family violence, etc.
- **Mandated Reporting** – obligations per state law about concerns of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of minors or elder or vulnerable adults.
- **Protection Orders** – This term refers to a civil order that provides protection from abuse or harm to a victim/plaintiff/petitioner by a respondent. Typically, there are qualifying conditions for obtaining an order, including the relationship between the victim and the respondent being family (blood or marriage), a former or current intimate partner, share a child together, or a co-habitant. Other terms used for protection order include restraining order, protection from abuse order, protective order, etc.
- **Sexual Assault** – This is intended to be used as an umbrella term to capture all types of sexual violence crimes or crimes of a sexual nature. Across the United States criminal codes have utilized different terms to classify sexual violence, including sexual assault, rape, sexual battery, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, indecent assault, institutional sexual assault, statutory sexual assault, etc.
- **Suspect** – this refers to an individual who is thought to be guilty of a crime(s).
- **Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ)** – an immigration classification for certain foreign children present in the United States who have been abused, neglected, or abandoned by a parent. SIJ

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<sup>1</sup> There are currently two states, [Arizona](#) and [Colorado](#), that administer victim compensation funds using a decentralized system.

classification allows these individuals to apply for lawful permanent resident (LPR) status (also known as getting a green card).<sup>1</sup>

- **T nonimmigrant status (T Visa)** – Temporary immigration benefit for victims of severe forms of human trafficking who are aiding law enforcement in the criminal investigation or prosecution. In addition, **continued presence (CP)** is a type of immigration status that can be granted to victims of human trafficking aiding law enforcement in the criminal investigation or prosecution.
- **U nonimmigrant status (U Visa)** – Visa for victims of qualifying crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are aiding law enforcement or government officials in the criminal investigation or prosecution.
- **Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE)** – An online platform that provides victims and other individuals reliable information regarding offender’s custody status. This service can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week without charge. The VINE service provides information by phone, email, TTY, and text message.
- **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 crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims.
- **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 general 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.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, [Immigration Relief for Abused Children](#), M-1114B (2016).

## Accompanying Publications & Webinars

The LEV Program aims to guide agencies to provide high-quality services (coordinated, collaborative, culturally responsive, multidisciplinary, and trauma-informed) that address the broader needs and rights of all crime victims. The following publications can assist in these efforts.

- [Key Considerations](#) and the accompanying checklist provide an overview of foundational topics for law enforcement-based victim services.
- [Victims' Rights Jurisdiction Profiles](#) provide state-specific information on the intersections of victims' rights and communication with victim services personnel.
- [Advocacy Parameters](#) discusses the structure of law enforcement-based victim services, personnel supervision, and service delivery.
- [Documentation Standards](#) discusses victim services documentation location, content, access, and legal intersections.
- [Effective Partnerships](#) discusses the benefits of partnerships and encourages agencies to consider both internal and external partners to strengthen community response to victims.
- [Using Technology to Communicate with Victims](#) discusses considerations when using virtual technology to communicate with victims.
- [Agency Incorporation](#) discusses integrating victim services within the agency including models of services provision, strategic planning, unit structure, budget considerations, crisis response, and workplace culture change.

This is the second document of the Template Package series. Additional template packaged published include:

- [Template Package I - Getting Started](#) provides victim services personnel job descriptions, interview questions, code of ethics, and personnel standards and responsibilities.
- [Template Package III - Student Interns & Volunteers](#) provides templates for recruiting, screening and selection, training, supervision, and other agency considerations for student interns and volunteers.
- [Template Package IV - Pamphlets](#) includes sample crime-specific and topic-specific informational pamphlets for agencies to customize and disseminate to victims of crime.
- [Template Package V - Training](#) includes customizable presentations and activity workbooks agencies can use for victim services personnel training.

To supplement the publications, IACP developed a virtual training series, which is accessible through the [LEV webpage](#). Each topic covered has content intended for program personnel, including sworn and professional staff. This model promotes a thorough understanding of the intricacies of victim services at all levels of a law enforcement agency.

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## *Templates*

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## TEMPLATE – Assault/Aggravated Assault

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **ASSAULT/AGGRAVATED ASSAULT CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the criminal event, any injuries that resulted from the crime, if the victim is currently hospitalized, and any relationship between the individuals involved.

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for the following:

- **Communication issues** – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim.<sup>1</sup>
- **Age of victim (adult or minor)** – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible only with parent/guardian authorization.
- **Safety issues** – At times, the same contact number is documented for the victim and the suspect; exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the victim, do not identify [*Agency*] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.
- **Medical needs** – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital, coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact the victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience and how they are feeling. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Victims might not readily identify themselves as victims. There may be issues with the victim's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional attachment to the suspect, or other factors. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
4. If a child or children were present in the home, speak with the parent/guardian about common age-specific reactions and feelings children might be feeling but have a difficult time expressing

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).



*For example, fear, anxiety, anger, possible changes in behavior and school performance, or regression in toileting behavior.*

5. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
  - If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and the conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [*Juvenile Detention Center*].
  - If no arrest was made on scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
6. Explain what safety and resource concerns are observed in the situation and discuss safety planning with the victim. *For example: Does the suspect still have access to the victim? Will the victim require ongoing medical care?*
7. Consider other relevant issues—and address them accordingly. *For example: Is the victim able to care for themselves? Is a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report warranted? Are the victim's basic needs being met?*
8. Explain available resources: mental health counseling, medical services, legal services, VINE, and Crime Victim Compensation.
9. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
10. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.
11. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
12. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim's preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim's well-being.
13. If, as a result of the assault/aggravated assault, the victim dies, the classification of the criminal event may change to a homicide investigation (see [Homicide Case Protocol](#)).

## Assault/Aggravated Assault Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship:			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language:		Accommodations:	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain:		Explain:	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number:			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency:			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic violence agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	

**NOTES:**

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**ASSAULT/AGGRAVATED ASSAULT SCENARIO:**

[Name] is an adult transgender male victim of an assault by an unknown suspect that occurred while he was walking home from the store. On the day of the incident, [Name] was noted to have multiple abrasions on his face, upper arms, knees, and hands. [Name] also voiced complaints of pain from being kicked in the stomach and described feeling disoriented after the assault due to being hit on the head. The responding officer noted bruising to his left eye and torn clothing. Medical personnel responded to the scene and transported [Name] to the emergency room for evaluation and treatment.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

April 22, 2019

On this date at approximately 6:50 p.m., I responded to [Hospital Name] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. Upon arrival, I met with Officer [Name] who briefed me on the situation and introduced me to the victim:

[Legal Name & Preferred Name]  
[race/identified gender (preferred pronouns)]  
[DOB]

In speaking with [Name] (preferred pronouns are he/him), I explained the investigative process to him, including the roles of the responding officer, the investigator, and victim services personnel. Introducing myself as a victim services specialist with the department. We reviewed limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices.

[Name] advised the doctors told him that he would be discharged tonight, and he is worried about going home as he recently moved into a new apartment and lives by himself. We reviewed safety planning measures to include securing all doors and windows, requesting support from friends or family, installing affordable home security options, intentionally changing travel patterns, being aware of surroundings, calling for law enforcement assistance should he feel unsafe, and proactively getting to know his neighbors. [Name] requested my assistance in calling a friend who agreed to pick him up from the hospital and stay with him for a couple of days.

[Name] stated he did not mention this to the officer, but he feels he was targeted by the suspect since he is transgender. [Name] asked if there are specific state laws regarding hate crimes, and if additional charges could be considered if the suspect is apprehended. I briefly explained that there are certain elements that must be met for a hate crime, and I asked if he would feel comfortable speaking with the assigned investigator about this. [Name] stated he would and asked for assistance from me in this conversation, I confirmed I would be available for follow-up conversation with the assigned investigator.

I provided [Name] with common responses to trauma and counseling options. I explained the Crime Victim Compensation program and provided him with an application. I assured him that I would be happy to assist him with completing and submitting the application. After confirming that [Name] had arrived, I provided [Name] with victim services contact information and encouraged him to call if he needed further assistance.

**SUPPLEMENTAL CONTACT:**

The victim called and shared with the victim advocate that his anxiety has escalated since the attack. He related that he called 911 over the weekend because he “felt like he was going crazy.” He agreed to go to a psychiatric hospital to get back on his medications. He had not previously disclosed his diagnosis but says he has been managing his mental health condition since he was a teenager. He related feeling better now that he is back on medication.

He said that he trusts the advocate because she has been helpful to him since he was attacked, but he does not want the investigator to know about his diagnosis. He said people treated him differently when they found out about his mental health diagnosis in the past, and he wants the investigator to believe him and take him seriously. He asks if he can meet with the investigator to talk about what he remembers, after he has had a few more days to stabilize on his medications.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

April 29, 2019

A call was received from [Name] who said he continues to be fearful following the assault. He stated he has reached out to some of the service providers discussed during our first meeting. He also stated that he remembered more details about the night of the assault that he wants to tell the investigator. He asked if a meeting could be arranged. We reviewed how to contact the investigator when he is ready, and I offered to accompany him to the meeting.

During the conversation, safety planning was reviewed with [Name]. Crime Victim Compensation was reviewed, and [Name] indicated he was waiting to get the bills from the hospital before submitting the application. [Name] asked if I could help him with the application next week, and we agreed that I could call him next week to check on him and schedule a time that would work for him.

**SUPPLEMENTAL CONTACT:**

The victim called the advocate again and asked if he had to tell the investigator about his mental health diagnosis. The advocate asked him to share more about why this causes him concern. He stated he wants the investigator to believe him, and he is worried that the investigator will think he is crazy. He stated during a previous encounter with law enforcement, he disclosed his mental health diagnosis and felt that the officer treated him differently and “the case never went anywhere.” He also explained that since coming out as transgender he feels that he is treated differently by law enforcement. The advocate explained that it was the victim’s choice whether to share this information or not. The advocate explained it may be helpful for the investigator to know any information that may help support the victim’s participation in the investigation. The advocate also explained that all sworn personnel in the department are required to take training on how to support crime victims who have mental health needs and crime victims who identify as LGBTQ+. The advocate explained that sometimes people who experience anxiety feel more comfortable talking to law enforcement in their own home or a neutral location (rather than

the police station), or they prefer to communicate only by phone. The advocate provided these as examples of accommodations that could be made to ensure [Name] can fully participate.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

May 8, 2019

I received a phone call from [Name] today to follow up on last week's conversation regarding Crime Victim Compensation. [Name] also informed me that he remembered more details from the night of the assault. I confirmed it is common for a person who has experienced trauma to remember additional details after time passes. I asked [Name] if he has contacted the investigator assigned to the case to provide the investigator with this new information. He stated he has not. I offered to assist him in scheduling an appointment with the investigator, and he agreed.

I provided options for the location of the meeting (e.g., at the police station, at his home), and he stated he would prefer to meet at his home. I let him know I would coordinate this with the investigator and call him back with possible dates and times. I reviewed the rights afforded to him as a victim of a crime and answered his questions about the investigative process.

## TEMPLATE – Burglary

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.

### **BURGLARY CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the criminal event, including if the potential for Fraud/ID Theft exists due to personal documents, computers, bank account information, medication, or credit card information being stolen (see [Fraud/ID Theft Case Protocol](#)). Determine if anyone was home during the burglary, including children; if anyone was harmed during the incident; and relationships between individuals involved in the criminal event.

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for the following:

- Communication issues – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim.<sup>1</sup>
- Age of victim (adult or minor) – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible with parent/guardian authorization.
- Safety issues – At times, the same contact number is documented for the victim and the suspect; exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the victim, do not identify [*Agency*] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience, how they are feeling, and what information may have been lost or accessed. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Victims might not readily identify themselves as victims. There may be issues with the victim's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional attachment to the suspect, or other factors. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
4. If a child or children were present in the home, speak with the parent/guardian about common age-specific reactions and feelings children might be feeling but have a difficult time expressing. *For example, fear, anxiety, anger, possible changes in behavior and school performance, or regression in toileting behavior.*

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

5. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
  - b. If no arrest was made on scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
6. Explain what safety and resource concerns are observed in the situation and discuss safety planning. *For example: safety of their home, physical safety concerns, identity/personal information concerns, or medical/mental health needs. What type of security/surveillance system does the residence have, if any? Have all garage door openers/house keys been accounted for? Have access codes been changed?*
7. Consider other relevant issues—and address accordingly. *For example: Is the victim able to care for himself/herself? Is a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report warranted? Are the victim's basic needs being met?*
8. Encourage the victim to make a list of any additional items that they find missing so that the information can be given to the assigned investigator. Also encourage the victim to provide the investigator with any pictures and serial numbers of missing items.
9. Remind the victim that they will need to contact their landlord and/or homeowner's/rental insurance company, if applicable.
10. Explain available resources: home safety surveys, credit counseling, credit agencies, legal services, Crime Victim Compensation, mental health counseling, and VINE.
11. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
12. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.
13. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
14. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim's preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim's well-being.

## Burglary Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship: _____			
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language: _____		Accommodations: _____	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain: _____		Explain: _____	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number: _____			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency: _____			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
Does the victim need information on replacing SSN/ID/driver's license?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the victim need information on cancelling credit/debit cards?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the victim need assistance in contacting their insurance provider?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	

**NOTES:**

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**BURGLARY SCENARIO:**

[Name] is a homeowner who was out of town on business when a burglary occurred at her residence. She had left town on Monday, April 5, at approximately 6:15 p.m. and returned at approximately 11:00 a.m. Wednesday morning. Multiple items were missing, including laptops, jewelry, and money from her office cabinet. Two windows were broken, several pieces of furniture were turned over, cabinets and dressers had their contents emptied, and their dog was found locked in a bathroom. [Name] is a sales representative for a pharmaceutical company and often makes short trips out of town. [Name] was quite shaken from this incident as her teenage daughter often stays in the house alone and she is fearful about what could have happened to her daughter had her daughter been home.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

April 7, 2019

On this date at approximately 1:30 p.m., I responded to [Location] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. Upon arrival, I met with [Officer Name] who briefed me on the situation and introduced me to the victim:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

I provided [Name] with information on the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. We reviewed her primary concerns of being able to secure her home as the broken windows were near the front door, and she expressed concern for the safety for her daughter and their dog. [Name]'s daughter was identified as

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

[Name] told me she is friendly with a retired neighbor, [Name], who lives next door and keeps an eye on her house when she is away on business. During my time on scene, [Name – neighbor] came over to check on [Name]. [Name – neighbor] mentioned seeing a truck with two men in it in the cul-de-sac before leaving this morning. When asked if she had provided this information to the officer, [Name – neighbor] stated she had not. I introduced [Name – neighbor] to [Officer Name] so she could share pertinent information.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

[Name] requested my assistance in contacting her insurance company to report the incident. During the call, the insurance company agreed to send a representative to the home today to assist with replacement windows and indicated it would be a few hours before their arrival. I discussed the importance of completing a full inventory within the next few days to ensure all missing items were identified for both law enforcement and her insurance company.

[Name] and I discussed installing affordable home security options and reviewed alternative plans for her daughter when [Name] travels.

[Name] was provided with information on the investigative process and prepared to receive a call from the assigned investigator. I also provided [Name] with victim services contact information before I departed.

April 23, 2019

On this date, I called [Name] to check on the well-being of both her and her daughter. [Name] indicated they were doing well and identified several additional missing items from the home. [Name] confirmed she had updated both the assigned investigator and her insurance company.

[Name] declined the need for any additional assistance at this time.

Following this call, I emailed the assigned investigator to confirm that she was aware of the additional items [Name] reported missing. The investigator responded and confirmed receipt of the information via email from [Name].

## TEMPLATE – Child Abuse

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **CHILD ABUSE CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the criminal event, any injuries that resulted from the crime, if the victim is currently hospitalized, and the relationship between the individuals involved. It is important to remember that suspects in child abuse cases are likely to be individuals who are known to the child, such as family, friends, or caregivers. Therefore, prior to making contact, first ensure that the identified parent/guardian has been confirmed as protective by evaluating information in the report, staffing with assigned investigator, or (if applicable) staffing with assigned [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] investigator.

Prior to contact, assess for the following:

- **Communication issues** – If the victim or parent/guardian has an identified language access need, utilize [Language Access Service] or another translation service to communicate with the parent/guardian.<sup>1</sup>
- **Parent(s)/Guardian(s) who are protective** (see explanation below)
- **Safety issues** – At times the same contact number is documented for the victim or parent/guardian and the suspect; exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the parent/guardian or victim, do not identify [Agency] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.
- **Medical needs** – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess for the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit.

If a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report has not been made by a law enforcement officer or investigator, the responding victim services personnel may need to file a report).<sup>2</sup> If there are immediate or new concerns for safety, contact the [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] at [phone number]; otherwise, utilize the option of reporting online at [website].

If only one parent/guardian is listed in the report, attempt to gather information on secondary parent/guardian to determine appropriateness of notification and service provision. If protectiveness of parent/guardian is of concern, staff case with assigned investigator to determine what information about the case can be released. If the parent/guardian is identified as the suspect or currently lives with the suspect, staff case with assigned investigator and/or [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] investigator to help identify a protective guardian for service provision.

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

<sup>2</sup> See Mandated Reporting Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

Attempt contact with the parent/guardian by phone – if there is no answer, leave a message identifying victim services role and provide contact information. If a forensic interview is scheduled by the investigator or [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] investigator, attempt to make contact a second time before the appointment. If contact is not made before the forensic interview, then the first contact will be at the appointment.

If a forensic interview is not scheduled, contact the parent/guardian and provide services by phone. Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact the parent/guardian in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact is made with an identified parent/guardian prior to the forensic interview, do the following:

1. Discuss the role of victim services and reference the case as the reason for the call. Confidentiality limitations should be addressed with the parent/guardian.
2. Listen to the parent/guardian regarding this experience—and ask how the victim and parent/guardian are feeling. Address any questions or concerns they may have. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. When appropriate, explain child abuse dynamics, including delayed disclosure, grooming behavior by suspect, age-specific responses to stressful or traumatic events, and the reoccurrence of these responses due to disclosure or criminal justice system involvement.
4. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
  - b. If no arrest was made on scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
5. Describe the forensic interview process in detail by explaining its purpose and the role of forensic interviewers.
  - a. Explain the steps involved with the forensic interview appointment. Provide information on personnel involved, where the interview will take place, and where the guardian/parent will be waiting.
  - b. Discuss the impact of repetitive questioning and encourage the parent/guardian and others to provide their child with validation and support but refrain from asking their child questions about the incident(s).
  - c. Assure the parent/guardian that their child is in charge of the process and they can ask for the interview to stop or decide not to speak or answer questions if they choose. Assure the parent/guardian forensic interviewers receive significant training in the skill of forensic

- interviewing and will conduct the interview in an age-appropriate manner.
- d. Inform the parent/guardian that after the interview is completed the investigator will meet with them to explain the next steps in the process.
  - e. Review how to explain the forensic interview process to the child. Encourage the parent/guardian not to overwhelm the child with too much information, but let the child know they will be going to a safe place to talk to someone.
6. Explain the role of [*State Child/Adult Welfare Agency*] and encourage the parent/guardian to participate with the investigation.
  7. Address immediate safety concerns and complete safety planning.
  8. Advise the parent/guardian victim services personnel will be present during the forensic interview to continue service provision and provide contact information.
  9. If the parent/guardian relays any information that would be important for the investigator to know, include this in the documentation and immediately communicate it to the investigator.
  10. Be mindful that a parent/guardian expressing doubt does not necessarily indicate they are non-protective. In these cases, there may be issues with the parent/guardian's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional attachment to the suspect, financial challenges, custody issues, immigration concerns, their own trauma history, or other factors. If this occurs, validate their feelings and concerns, acknowledge the difficulty of the situation, and reassure them the role of victim services is to provide them with support and advocacy through this process by helping them identify resources to overcome barriers to protecting their child.

**DAY OF THE FORENSIC INTERVIEW:**

Plan on arriving to the appointment 15 minutes prior to the scheduled time. Forensic interviews are completed at [*Child Advocacy Center (CAC) or Family Justice Center (FJC)*].

1. Attend staffing with forensic interviewer, assigned investigator, [*State Child/Adult Welfare Agency*] investigator, and prosecutor; provide any relevant information.
2. Coordinate with forensic interviewer to include the parent/guardian in the pre-interview meeting.
3. Victim services personnel will make introductions to parent/guardian and child. Inform child the victim services personnel will be meeting with parent/guardian and ask the child to remain in the waiting area with another adult.
4. Advise child that, [*Forensic Interviewer Name*] will be coming by shortly to meet with them.
5. Escort the parent/guardian to the interview room for the pre-interview meeting. Show parent/guardian the interview room prior to the pre-interview meeting. Facilitate introductions with the forensic interviewer, assigned investigator, [*State Child/Adult Welfare Agency*] investigator, and prosecutor.
6. After pre-interview meeting is completed, escort the parent/guardian to the waiting area.
7. If possible, observe the rapport phase of the forensic interview from the observation room to provide parent/guardian an update on how their child is doing.
8. After rapport phase is completed, exit the observation room to meet with the parent/guardian and address any new concerns or questions.
9. Identify supportive persons to the child and to the parent/guardian. Review community resources and assist them with locating additional support services such as counseling (for child and/or

parent/guardian), parenting classes, case management services, support groups, mentorship programs, school programs, and mental health resources.

10. Consult with the parent/guardian regarding notification of the secondary parent/guardian. Identify any concerns and assist in addressing further needs. Explain alternative ways the secondary parent/guardian can be made aware of the investigation, and, if appropriate, offer to notify the secondary parent/guardian on their behalf. If secondary parent is the identified suspect, consult with the investigator.
11. If skin-to-skin contact occurred during the abuse, explain a non-acute forensic examination and advise the parent/guardian that the investigator may submit a referral for this exam. If submitted, the parent/guardian will be notified, and someone from [*Child Advocacy Center or Hospital SANE Unit*] will contact them to schedule the exam.
12. Discuss [*Protection Order*] processes. Discuss child custody, if appropriate, as well as supervised visitation and child exchange services.
  - a. If applicable, ensure the parent/guardian has a copy of the [*Protection Order*] and understands the terms of the order.
  - b. Discuss how to request a [*Protection Order*] and how a [*Protection Order*] can affect child support and custody issues. Encourage parent/guardian to speak with civil law attorney, if needed.
  - c. Provide information on notifying children's schools, daycare, and after-school care of [*Protection Order*]. Encourage the parent/guardian to carry a copy of the [*Protection Order*] with them.
13. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
14. Explain Crime Victim Compensation and assist with completing application if needed.
15. Discuss common emotional and behavioral responses their child may experience after the interview. Review ways to be gentle and supportive, while also maintaining boundaries and setting limitations.
16. After the forensic interview is completed, staff the case with the investigator to determine what information can be provided to the parent/guardian.
17. Escort the parent/guardian to the briefing with the forensic interviewer, assigned investigator, [*State Child/Adult Welfare Agency*] investigator, and prosecutor. If new case information (additional suspects, additional forms of abuse) is provided, ensure the parent/guardian is given ample time to process it. Allow the parent/guardian an opportunity to address any new concerns.
18. Escort the parent/guardian to reunite with their child.

#### **MID-/POST-INTERVIEW:**

Victim services personnel may be requested to check in with a child mid- or post-interview for concerns related to mental health, self-harming behavior, or reactions to information disclosed during the forensic interview.

1. Request permission to speak with the child from the parent/guardian.
2. Meet with the child independently in a non-recorded, private area. Discuss victim services role and confidentiality limitations in an age-appropriate way.
3. Ask how the child is feeling, identify supports, review coping skills, and address needs.

4. If appropriate, offer to assist with facilitating communication between the child and the parent/guardian.
5. Complete a mental health screening to include the following:
  - a. Determine baseline functioning and current/past mental health treatment to include medication compliance (if applicable).
  - b. Determine current/past substance use.
  - c. Determine if there have been any recent major life events.
  - d. Note if there is a presence of recent self-harm injuries (cuts, burns, etc.).
  - e. Note if there are signs of deterioration (hygiene deficits, sleep/appetite disruption, etc.).
  - f. Inquire if the child is having thoughts of self-harm, thoughts of harming others, or thoughts of suicide. If so, determine how, when, and any related details.
6. If imminent mental health concerns exist, contact [Agency] Crisis Intervention Team response or [Community Mental Health Agency] for an assessment of the child.
7. Staff case and notify the parent/guardian of information.

**ADDITIONAL CONTACT:**

An arrest or issuance of a warrant may cause the family and/or child to go back into crisis. Determine if the parent/guardian has already been notified. If so, proceed with contact. If not, discuss who will be notifying the parent/guardian. If victim services personnel will be making notification, request relevant information (bond conditions, [Protection Order], etc.) to provide to the parent/guardian.

If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain to the parent/guardian how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond. Review [Protection Order] process and safety plan information. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].

**HELPFUL INFORMATION:**

1. It is good practice to check with the assigned investigator for scheduled forensic interviews.
2. Once a forensic interview is scheduled, contact the front desk at the [Child Advocacy Center or Family Justice Center], identify yourself, reference the case and assigned investigator, and ask to be placed on the calendar as attending the forensic interview.
3. If assigned victim services personnel are double-booked or scheduled off, request assistance from another [Agency] victim services personnel. If none are available, request assistance from [Community-based Advocacy Organization]. Contact supervisor at [Community-based Advocacy Organization] as soon as possible with a request for coverage. If the community-based advocate provides coverage, note this in documentation. If no coverage is available, inform the parent/guardian of this change and advise them follow-up contact will take place after the forensic interview.
4. Utilize [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] investigator in this process. [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] investigators can be instrumental to gaining information on cases that are not investigated by law enforcement.

### Child Abuse Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship: _____			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language: _____		Accommodations: _____	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain: _____		Explain: _____	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Has a protective parent/guardian been identified?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number: _____			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency: _____			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	

**NOTES:**

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**CHILD ABUSE SCENARIO:**

[Name], mother of 14-year-old [Child Name], has been through a lengthy and contentious divorce with [Child Name]'s father, [Father Name]. During that process, [Name] sought assistance from the minister at church for counseling for both her and [Child Name]. Recently, [Child Name] told her mom that during one of the counseling sessions last month, the minister "touched" her. [Name] confronted the minister after services on Sunday, and, after seeing his reaction, she decided to report the incident to law enforcement.

During the first contact with the advocate, the victim's mother was very tearful and expressed concern that her daughter is being bullied at school as a result of this report. She stated that she is not sure how, but everyone seems to know about the report. She stated her daughter is refusing to go back to school and will not come out of her room. She stated she noticed a cut on her daughter's arm yesterday and is concerned her daughter may be self-harming. She stated she is also currently in the middle of an "ugly custody battle" with her daughter's father, and she expressed concern about how this case will impact the custody case. [Name] also relayed that some members of the church are accusing her of trying to ruin the minister's name, and she does not feel comfortable returning to that church. [Name] stated her family is out of state, and she feels very alone trying to deal with everything.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

March 19, 2019

On this date at approximately 4:50 p.m., I responded to [Location] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. I arrived at the location and met with [Officer Name] who advised me that due to the timing of the reported incident, a sexual assault forensic exam would not be requested. [Officer Name] then introduced me to the mother of the victim:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

The victim was identified as  
[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

Information on the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices were provided to [Name]. We discussed how her daughter has been doing since the report was made, and I provided information about support services available in the community. I also encouraged her to ask about support services available at her daughter's school.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

In speaking with [Name], I explained the investigative process to her and prepared her for contact from [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] due to mandated reporting obligations. I explained the forensic interview process to her, advising that the investigator would notify her of the date and time. We discussed options for how to respond to questions her daughter has and how to provide additional information related to the case to law enforcement. I also advised [Name] of the possibility that [Daughter Name] would need to be examined by a medical doctor, who would check for possible injuries and ensure [Daughter Name]'s physical well-being. [Name] asked if I would be there when [Daughter Name] is being interviewed. I explained that I could coordinate with the investigator to be present for support before and after the interview but that the forensic interviewer would be the only person in the room with [Daughter Name].

We discussed safety concerns for [Daughter Name] and the importance of seeking immediate assistance if she felt [Daughter Name] is at risk of self-harm or suicide. I provided [Name] with counseling resource information and explained the Crime Victim Compensation program to her. I provided [Name] with victim services contact information and encouraged her to call if she needed further assistance.

**SUPPLEMENTAL CONTACT:**

The investigator contacted Victim Services Specialist to provide the day and time for the scheduled forensic interview. Investigator and victim services specialist jointly agreed it was best for the victim services specialist to contact [Name] to notify her of the day, time, and process for the interview.

Victim Services Specialist called [Name] to provide the day and time of the forensic interview and discussed [Name]'s concerns including [Daughter Name]'s hesitancy to discuss the incident and what would happen if [Daughter Name] did not disclose anything during the forensic interview. Victim Services Specialist discussed the forensic interview process and how it relates to the overall investigative process. Victim Services Specialists encouraged [Name] to provide a supportive space for [Daughter Name] to discuss what happened, but not to ask for details before the forensic interview.

Additionally, [Name] mentioned that her car has been in the shop for the last few days, and that she cannot pay for the repairs until she receives her next paycheck. [Name] is concerned she and her daughter will arrive late to the forensic interview due to bus schedules. Victim Services Specialist offered to provide transportation to both [Name] and [Daughter Name] and [Name] accepted the offer.

On the day of the forensic interview, Victim Services Specialist picked up [Name] from her work and drove to [Location] to pick up [Daughter Name]. During the drive, [Name] shared that her daughter seemed to be doing better since making the report. [Name] said [Daughter Name] denied suicidal thoughts and has been coming out of her room more often. [Name] said they have not discussed the incident again, but she is anxious to find out exactly what happened.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

March 22, 2019

On this date, the assigned investigator advised the forensic interview for [Daughter Name] has been scheduled for March 26, 2019. We agreed that I would call [Name] to ensure they arrived on time. A call was placed to [Name], and she was advised of the scheduled date and time for the forensic interview. [Name] advised she is scheduled to work that morning and is concerned she won't be able to pick up her daughter and make it to the appointment on time due to bus schedules. An offer was extended for me to provide her and her daughter with transportation, and she accepted.

March 26, 2019

I arrived at [Location] to pick up [Name]. We proceeded to [Location] to pick up [Daughter Name] from school. During the drive, [Name] discussed how her daughter has been doing since last contact. After picking up [Daughter Name], we proceeded to [Location] for the forensic interview.

As the forensic interview occurred, I spoke with [Name] to review the investigative process. We discussed the status of [Daughter Name]'s father and that his parental rights have not been removed and they currently have joint custody with established visitation rights. We reviewed the importance of him being aware of current events, so he is prepared when [Daughter Name] is at his house. [Name] shared that she has already told him, and he is being supportive. [Name] was encouraged to provide my contact information to [Daughter Name]'s father, and I offered to call him directly to address his questions.

We reviewed ways that [Name] could expand her support options. We reviewed counseling options for both her and [Daughter Name]. During our time together, we completed a Crime Victim Compensation application.

Following the completion of the forensic interview, the assigned investigator met with [Name] to review details of the interview and next steps. [Name] and [Daughter Name] were both provided with victim services contact information during the drive back to their residence. We agreed to touch base soon for updates to case status and efforts to establish counseling.

## TEMPLATE – Death Notification

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **DEATH NOTIFICATION CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the event, the individual(s) involved, and the need for notification. Death notification or assistance in death notification may require on-scene response and/or phone contact.

Identify who is the legal next of kin of the decedent for service provision in this case. Be aware there may be more than one next of kin (e.g., divorced parents of the decedent or adult siblings). Identify the [Death Investigation Agency] involved in processing the decedent. Be cognizant that the legal next of kin must be identified as the individual(s) to make certain decisions. However, there may be additional individuals who will receive notification or service provision. This may include different families connected to the decedent (e.g., parent or paramour).

Afterlife arrangements will need to be determined soon after the decedent is identified, and notification is delivered. Providing the next of kin with information on funeral homes will need to take place upon first contact. Be cognizant of the decedent's culture and if there are cultural implications for afterlife arrangements (preparation of the body, burial, etc.). These cultural aspects may need to be relayed to the [Death Investigation Agency] to discuss possible accommodations.

Prior to contact, assess for the following:

- Communication issues – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [Language Access Service] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim.<sup>1</sup>
- Age of decedent (minor or adult) – Determine if a [State Child/Adult Welfare] report will need to be made.<sup>2</sup>
- Safety Issues – Identify the physical and emotional safety of the decedent's family and the individual(s) who located the decedent.

Be cognizant that sudden death (accidental, suicide, natural death) is often traumatic for all impacted individuals. This includes family members and friends of the decedent, as well as individual(s) who might not have known the decedent but located the body. Consider the following items for death notification:

1. Introduce yourself, offer condolences, and explain victim services' role to the individual who located the decedent. Listen to the individual regarding their experience. Provide emotional support and review common reactions to trauma.
2. Along with law enforcement officer/investigator, identify the decedent's legal next of kin and other individuals who need to be notified. In-person notification is preferred, so arrange to do so when possible. Telephone contact is acceptable, if in-person contact is not an option. Use caution

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

<sup>2</sup> See Mandated Reporting Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

when making telephone notifications to ensure the recipient of the information is in a safe location/setting (e.g., not driving). Be cognizant that the decedent's legal next of kin may be more than one person (e.g., divorced parents to the decedent). Introduce yourself and provide information on the role of victim services. Along with the law enforcement officer/investigator, provide official death notification and offer condolences.

3. Listen to the individuals and ask how they are feeling. Provide emotional and bereavement support. Review common reactions to trauma and support services (use checklist below).
4. Offer to make additional phone calls or arrangements to notify other individuals of the death.
5. If a child or children were present or are impacted by this death, speak with the parent/guardian about common age-specific reactions and feelings that children might be feeling but have a difficult time expressing. *For example, fear, anxiety, anger, possible changes in behavior and school performance, or regression in toileting behavior.*
6. Provide information on the processes of the [Death Investigation Agency], including accurate expectations of the next of kin's involvement. Discuss the need to identify a funeral home.
7. Determine if a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report needs to be made. Notify the next of kin that a report will be made and explain the purpose of the [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] and what the process may include.
8. Provide appropriate resources, including funeral home lists, bereavement counseling, etc.
9. Inquire if the individuals have any further questions or concerns, address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.

## Death Notification Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>				
Name and DOB of Decedent:				
Next of kin Name:				
Relationship to Decedent:				
Contact information for next of kin:				
Has a funeral home been identified?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, describe relationship:				
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>				
Translator Needed?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Able?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language:		Accommodations:		
Housing instability?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain:		Explain:		
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>				
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, report number:				
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, new report number and agency:				
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, describe:				
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Funeral Homes		
<input type="checkbox"/> [Death Investigation Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime scene clean-up referrals		
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals		
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources		

**NOTES:**

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**DEATH NOTIFICATION SCENARIO:**

A 13-year-old female called 911 after discovering her 16-year-old brother deceased in their parents' bedroom via hanging. Her parents, who speak only Spanish, are currently out of town, and she has not been able to reach them by phone.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

February 9, 2019

On this date at approximately 10:00 a.m., I responded to [Location] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. I arrived at the location and met with [Officer Name] who briefed me on the incident and advised me that they have been unable to contact any adults in connection with the minor identified as:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

Upon arrival, I met with [Name] and explained who I was and my role. I also reviewed limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices using age-appropriate language. After receiving permission from [Officer Name], I relocated with [Name] down the street to provide some distance from the first responders and activity at the family home. After providing reassurance to [Name] about what would need to happen and the importance of her being with her parents right now, she provided me with their phone number.

In tandem with [Officer Name] and utilizing [Language Access Service], I called [Name]'s parents to advise them that a serious incident had occurred at their home and that [Name] was currently with me until they could get home. They were identified as

[Name]                      [Name]  
[race/gender]              [race/gender]  
[DOB]                        [DOB]

[Parent 1 Name] and [Parent 2 Name] stated they were on their way to the residence and would be there within two hours. They identified a family friend who could go to the house to be with [Name] until they arrived. The friend was identified as

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

While waiting for [Name]'s parents to arrive, the assigned investigator [Investigator Name] arrived at the location and I briefed him on [Name]'s parents' anticipated arrival time and phone number. A short time later, [Family Friend Name] arrived at the scene to support [Name].

Upon their arrival, the investigator introduced himself and provided official death notification to [Parent 1 Name] and [Parent 2 Name], utilizing [Language Access Service]. Immediate grief support was provided to everyone present. [Parent 1 Name] and [Parent 2 Name] expressed worry about how [Name] will cope after finding her brother and how they were going to explain [Decedent Name]'s death to their family.

We reviewed that as a matter of policy, [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] would be contacted due to the death of a minor in their home. We discussed the role of [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] and their primary concern for the well-being of [Name]. I also explained that [Decedent Name] will be taken to the [Death Investigation Agency], and we discussed afterlife arrangement options. [Parent 1 Name] stated they want to bury [Decedent Name] in [Country] in their family cemetery. With their permission, I contacted [Consulate Name] who agreed to assist with transportation arrangements for burial in [Country].

Written information in Spanish for the [Death Investigation Agency], grief counseling resources, legal services resources, and victim services contact information was provided to [Parent 1 Name] and [Parent 2 Name]. They were encouraged to call with any questions and advised that I would be making contact soon to check on their well-being.

February 12, 2019

On this date, I called [Parent 1 Name] and [Parent 2 Name] through [Language Access Service] to check on their well-being and the well-being of [Name]. They said that they have been able to make burial and transportation arrangements.

They relayed that [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] had been to their home and offered additional counseling resources to their family. They also advised the assigned [Agency] investigator requested to meet with them tomorrow and they asked about a translator. I reassured them I would coordinate with the investigator to ensure this happens. After speaking with [Parent 1 Name] and [Parent 2 Name] I called [Investigator Name] to coordinate translation services for his meeting with the family tomorrow.



VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

February 13, 2019

[*Parent 1 Name*] and [*Parent 2 Name*] arrived for their scheduled appointment. At their request, I accompanied them to the meeting with the assigned investigator. [*Language Access Service*] was utilized during the meeting to address language needs of [*Parent 1 Name*] and [*Parent 2 Name*]. The assigned investigator reviewed details of the case and conclusions of the [*Death Investigation Agency*] investigation. After ensuring that all questions of [*Parent 1 Name*] and [*Parent 2 Name*] were answered, I again expressed my condolences and urged them to contact me with any other needs.

## TEMPLATE – Domestic Violence

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly and determine the nature of the criminal event, any injuries that resulted from the crime, if the victim is currently hospitalized, and the relationship between the individuals involved. Review the elements of the report and assess the severity of the situation. Incidents involving strangulation are extremely severe and are potentially lethal (see [Strangulation Case Protocol](#)). Risk factors that increase safety concerns for victims include, but are not limited to, victim has children from a partner other than the suspect; pregnancy of the victim; suspect's access to weapons; indication from the victim of intentions to terminate the relationship; and suspect has made threats to kill self, victim, and/or victim's children.

Be cognizant of the dynamics of the relationship of the individuals involved in the incident. These incidents can involve intimate partners, former intimate partners, co-parents, co-habitants, and familial relations. Patterns of domestic violence can be present in heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and queer relationships. Additional sensitivity should be extended when male, transgender, and gender non-conforming individuals report domestic violence, as these situations often go unreported. Cultural differences should be considered in incidents of domestic violence. In some cultures, abusive or violent behavior may be acceptable in relationships; however, it is never appropriate in the United States and some forms of behaviors are considered criminal. It is important to remember that often many types of abuse, neglect, or other crimes are co-occurring (see [Elder/Vulnerable Adult Abuse](#), [Harassment/Stalking](#), and [Sexual Assault Case](#) Protocols). Some incidents will generate multiple reports.

Some domestic violence incidents will require notification to [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] based on the disclosure or reasonable belief of abuse or neglect of children, adults 65 years of age or older, or adults with disabilities. Determine if a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report has already been made by a law enforcement officer or investigator. If not, victim services personnel may need to file a report.

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for the following:

- **Communication issues** – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim.<sup>1</sup>
- **Age of victim (minor or adult)** – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible with parent/guardian authorization.
- **Safety issues** – At times, the same contact number is documented for the victim and the suspect, exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the victim, do not identify [*Agency*] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.
- **Medical needs** – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess for the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital, coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter with additional consideration of safety concerns. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. Be mindful if the suspect is unaware the victim made a report with law enforcement or if the victim has expressed concern about the suspect discovering a report has been made. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations. Local domestic violence agencies are a safe and confidential source of counseling and support.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience and how they are feeling. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Victims might not readily identify themselves as victims. There may be issues with the victim's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional attachment to the suspect, or other factors. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
4. If a child or children were present in the home, speak with the parent/guardian about common age-specific reactions and feelings that the children might be feeling but have a difficult time expressing. *For example, fear, anxiety, anger, possible changes in behavior and school performance, or regression in toileting behavior.*
5. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
  - b. If no arrest was made on scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
6. Explain what safety concerns are observed in the situation and safety plan with the victim.
  - a. Address the severity and lethality of incidents involving strangulation and any past/future medical attention required.
  - b. Discuss safety regarding transportation. *For example, changing routes to/from home, changing daily/weekly routine.*
  - c. Discuss safety regarding social media. *For example, removing all location information from social media, blocking/disconnecting from suspect on social media platforms, saving harassing content.*

- d. Acknowledge criminal justice involvement impact on suspect's behavior. *For example, does suspect know about report to law enforcement? How will suspect react to investigation?*
7. Discuss protection order processes.
  - a. If applicable, ensure the victim has a copy of the [Protection Order] and understands the terms.
  - b. Discuss how to file for a [Protection Order] and how a [Protection Order] can affect child support and custody issues. Encourage the victim to speak with a civil law attorney, if needed.
  - c. Provide information on notifying children's schools, daycare, and after-school care of [Protection Order], encourage the victim to carry a copy of it with them, and consider discussing the [Protection Order] with their employer.
8. Find out if they are in a safe housing situation or if they will need emergency shelter:
  - a. If they require emergency shelter, talk to them about shelter availability and procedures. Let them know what to expect if they do get into emergency shelter. The victim must decide if the shelter is the right choice for them. Coordinate transportation to the shelter, if necessary.
  - b. Many victims will not get into, or feel comfortable going to, an emergency shelter. If they choose to stay in their home or have made other housing arrangements, talk to them in detail about safety planning, including changing locks, alarm systems, and requesting a close patrol. Explain to them about requesting a law enforcement accompaniment or stand-by if they need to go back to the scene to get their belongings. If moving out or if the process will take a while, then explain to them assistance options through the [Agency].
  - c. Provide information about eviction processes, statutes pertaining to lease terminations, and relocation benefits available through Crime Victim Compensation.
9. Explain available resources (be mindful that not all resources will apply to all domestic violence situations): Crime Victim Compensation, [State/County Child Support/Custody Office], counseling resources, sexual assault forensic exams, legal services, [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency], Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE), medical services, supervised visitation and child exchange services, resources specific to victims belonging to marginalized groups (LGBT, immigrant, deaf, disabled), appropriate addiction/substance abuse referrals (if applicable).
10. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
11. Consider other relevant issues and address accordingly. *For example: Is the victim able to care for themselves? Is a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report needed? Are victim's basic needs met?*
12. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.
13. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
14. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim's preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on victim's well-being.

## Domestic Violence Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did emotional abuse, threats, or stalking occur?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship:			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language:		Accommodations:	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain:		Explain:	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Has a protective parent/guardian been identified?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number:			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency:			
Does victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	

**NOTES:**

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**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SCENARIO:**

[Officer name] co-responded to a domestic violence call for service made by [Woman 1 Name] against her partner [Woman 2 Name]. [Officer Name] saw that one of the women, [Woman 1 Name], had bruises around her wrists and neck (evidence of previous abuse), and her nose was actively bleeding. [Woman 1 Name] seemed terrified but submissive to the other, more outspoken woman, [Woman 2 Name]. [Woman 1 Name] readily agreed with [Woman 2 Name]’s story that [Woman 1 Name] ran into a door and broke her nose. Although [Officer Name] thought an arrest should have been made for assault, he perceived the other officer treated the women with indifference and left without making an arrest. In the car, the other officer told [Officer Name] that “a couple of dykes can beat each other up all they want” as far as she is concerned. The case was referred to an investigator, but [Woman 1 Name] did not return calls. The case was subsequently closed.

Three weeks later, [Officer Name] responds to another domestic violence call at [Location]. This time, [Woman 1 Name] is transported to the hospital after reporting [Woman 2 Name] physically assaulted her during an argument to the point that she lost consciousness. [Officer Name] arrests [Woman 2 Name].

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION

March 19, 2019

On this date, at approximately 3:15 p.m., I responded to [Hospital Name] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. Upon arrival, I met with [Officer Name] who briefed me on the situation and introduced me to the victim:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

I introduced myself and explained the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. [Name] expressed concern about her safety when [Suspect Name] is released from jail. [Name] briefly told me about the incident that occurred and about a history of abuse from the suspect:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

[Name] stated [Suspect Name] is the only person in their household who works, and she cannot afford rent on her own. [Name] explained she is fearful of [Suspect Name] and feels that [Suspect Name]’s behavior cannot be predicted. [Name] stated that she would be going to stay at an alternate location as she did not feel safe returning to her home today.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

I discussed the importance of safety planning with [Name] and provided her with the contact information for [Domestic Violence Agency] and explained their services, including emergency shelter and counseling. I discussed with [Name] her ability to apply for a [Protection Order].

[Name] then said she wants to move out of the home where she currently lives. [Name] stated she does not feel safe there because [Suspect Name] has been able to break in. [Name] stated she would try and talk with her landlord about terminating her lease early. I offered to provide [Name] with a letter from victim services referencing the state laws that allow a victim of domestic violence to terminate a lease early and without penalty. [Name] said she would communicate with me if she determined she needs me to provide her with this letter. We also discussed Crime Victim Compensation as a possible means to assist with relocation and counseling. I provided [Name] with a Crime Victim Compensation application.

I ensured that [Name] had my contact information and encouraged her to call should she have any future questions or concerns pertaining to this case.

March 22, 2019

On this date, a call was placed to [Name], and a message was left checking on her well-being and requesting a return call.

April 3, 2019

On this date, a call was placed to [Name], and a message was left checking on her well-being and requesting a return call.

April 5, 2019

Due to lack of victim contact, this case was discussed with the Victim Services Supervisor. After reviewing ongoing safety concerns, a decision was reached not to send any written correspondence at this time. Additional services will be provided to [Name] upon receiving contact.

## TEMPLATE – Elder/Vulnerable Adult Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **ELDER/VULNERABLE ADULT CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case and determine the nature of the criminal event, any injuries that resulted from the crime, if the victim is currently hospitalized, and the relationship between the individuals involved. Remember that elder and vulnerable adults<sup>1</sup> are often targeted for ID Theft/Fraud as well (see [Fraud/ID Theft Case Protocol](#)). It is also important to remember that many types of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or other crimes often are co-occurring (see [Assault/Aggravated Assault](#), [Domestic Violence](#), [Sexual Assault](#), and [Strangulation Case](#) Protocols).

Determine if a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report has already been made by a law enforcement officer or investigator. If not, victim services personnel may need to file a report ).<sup>2</sup> Individuals who are elderly or vulnerable may qualify for services through [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency]: [phone number and website].

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for the following:

- **Communication issues** – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [Language Access Service] or another translation service to communicate with the victim.<sup>3</sup> The victim may be unable to speak for themselves due to hearing, cognitive, or neurological impairments. It may be necessary to consult with the assigned investigator or [State Adult Welfare] investigator to identify the victim’s communication needs.
- **Safety Issues** – In cases of elder abuse, the suspect is often a family member, cohabitant, or caregiver who might be the point of contact for the victim. At times, the same contact number is documented for the victim and the suspect; exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the victim, do not identify [Agency] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.
- **Medical needs** – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess for the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital, coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact the victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter with additional consideration for safety concerns. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to state statute for legal definition of elderly or vulnerable adult.

<sup>2</sup> See Mandated Reporting Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

<sup>3</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).



If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations. Local domestic violence agencies are a safe and confidential source of counseling and support.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience and what information may have been lost or accessed. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. There may be issues with the victim's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional or financial attachment to the suspect, or other factors. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
4. Explain what safety and resource concerns are observed in the situation safety plan with the victim. *For example, does the suspect still have access to the victim or the victim's residence? Will the victim require ongoing medical care?*
  - a. Discuss safety planning, including how to access safety planning resources if there are mobility or cognitive limitations that prevent normal accessibility. *For example, applying for a [Protection Order] if the victim is bed bound.*
  - b. If the suspect is a relative/caregiver, discuss other relatives or supportive persons that might be able to assist the victim with safety planning or caregiver change.
5. Consider other relevant issues and address accordingly. *For example, is the suspect a legal guardian? Is the victim able to care for themselves? Are the victim's basic needs being met?*
6. Explain available resources: [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency], home health agencies, protection orders, sexual assault forensic exams, legal services, guardianship information, how to report a paid caregiver to their employer or to the state licensing board, and medical services.
7. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
8. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigator (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
  - b. If no arrest was made on the scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
9. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns and address appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain answers will be provided in a future contact.
10. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
11. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim's preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim's well-being.

## Elder/Vulnerable Adult Abuse Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did neglect (by others or self) or financial exploitation occur?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship:			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language:		Accommodations:	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain:		Explain:	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Has a protective parent/guardian been identified?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number:			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency:			
Does victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior service referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Assisted living referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial institution referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid/Medicare referral	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**NOTES:**

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**ELDER/VULNERABLE ADULT ABUSE SCENARIO:**

[Name] is 87 years old and currently resides independently at her residence but requires some assistance with routine chores and activities. Her daughter comes by every couple of weeks to bring her groceries, check on her, and help her around the home. In exchange for her help, [Name] gives her daughter checks in varying amounts. During the last several visits, [Daughter Name] has expressed frustration with the amount of money being provided and has raised her voice and pushed her mom. During the most recent visit, [Name]’s neighbor heard the altercation and contacted law enforcement. [Name]’s daughter left the residence before law enforcement arrived, and, during their time on scene, they noted bruising on [Name]’s arm and minimal food in the refrigerator/cabinets.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

January 30, 2019

On this date, at approximately 2:00 p.m., I responded to [Location] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. Upon arrival, I met with [Officer Name] who briefed me on the situation and introduced me to the victim:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

I provide information on the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. We also discussed the role of the responding officers.

[Name] relayed she had been living in her current home for over 65 years and has no desire to live anywhere else. She stated that her daughter is her only child and that she is disappointed by her daughter’s behavior. [Name] said her daughter had a history of alcohol/drug abuse and stated it has gotten worse since her husband passed away two years ago. When asked about previous incidents of physical violence, [Name] acknowledged several incidents where her daughter has grabbed her by the arms and shaken her to the point of leaving bruises. [Name] also acknowledged a previous incident when her daughter pushed her and she fell, causing a bruise on her buttocks and leg when she landed on a box. I asked if this information had been described to [Officer], [Name] said it had not, but she is willing to provide this background information.

[Name] declined medical treatment today but acknowledged some soreness on her arm. [Name] states she has been going to the same doctor for years and is willing to make an appointment to see him but does not have transportation.

[Name] stated she is unsure where her daughter lives, and she sometimes has difficulty getting in touch with her. [Name] became tearful and stated she gets scared when her daughter becomes upset, so she tries not to make her mad.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

When asked what assistance could be provided to make her more comfortable, [Name] indicated she needed help with transportation to appointments and the grocery store. She also indicated she needed help with minor household chores (laundry, cleaning, cooking). [Name] also asked if she had to keep giving her daughter money and if we could keep her daughter from coming to her house.

I expressed my concern for her safety and discussed my obligation to contact [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency]. After I explained their services, [Name] indicated she would like to talk to them. A call was placed to [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency], and they agreed to send a representative to meet with [Name] in the next couple of days.

With [Name]'s permission and a signed release of information, contact was made with her doctor to schedule an appointment. A referral was made to [Transportation Service Agency], and they indicated they would be able to start services for [Name] within the next 30–60 days. I suggested asking her neighbor for help in getting to her next medical appointment, to which she agreed.

We also discussed changing the locks on her home as an option to enhance her safety. [Name] indicated she would like this to happen, and arrangements were made for [Locksmith Agency] to come to the residence today. We also reviewed her right to prohibit any unwanted persons from coming into her home, and she was instructed to call law enforcement whenever she feels her safety is at risk.

After ensuring that [Name] had enough food for a couple of days, I offered to come back in a couple of days to check on her. [Name] said she would call me if she needed anything before my next visit.

February 1, 2019

On this date, I responded to [Location] to check on the well-being of [Name]. She let me know that [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] had been to her home yesterday and will be providing assistance. She detailed that arrangements had been made for [Meal Delivery Service], friendly visits from [Senior Services Agency], and assistance with household chores. [Name] said she has an appointment with her doctor next week, and her neighbor has been checking on her.

[Name] said her daughter has called her several times, but she told her she is not welcome at her home. We reviewed the importance of calling law enforcement if her daughter comes by or threatens her in any way. [Name] asked what will happen to her daughter, and we reviewed the investigative process for the most recent incident. [Name] was provided information on the role of the investigator and reminded that he may be contacting her soon to talk to her in more detail about what happened. Before leaving, I made sure [Name] had victim services contact information.

## TEMPLATE – Fraud/ID Theft

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.

### **FRAUD/ID THEFT CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly and determine what type of Fraud or ID Theft has occurred and the relationship between the individuals involved. Remember that Fraud/ID Theft often co-occurs with other crimes (see [Burglary](#) and [Domestic Violence Case](#) Protocols). Determine if any personally identifiable information has been compromised. Remember that computer and online information (shopping accounts, details in emails, social media accounts) can contain multiple forms of personally identifiable information.

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for the following:

- Communication issues – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim).<sup>1</sup>
- Age of victim (adult or minor) – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible with parent/guardian authorization.
- Safety issues – At times, the same contact number is documented for the victim and the suspect; exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the victim, do not identify [*Agency*] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact the victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience and what information may have been lost or accessed. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Victims might not readily identify themselves as victims. There may be issues with the victim's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional attachment to the suspect, or other factors. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
4. Explain what personally identifiable information compromises are observed in the case and gather details to determine which ones need to be addressed. Some people do not recognize these breaches right away and may need assistance in recognizing the issue. *For example, if a*

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

*woman's purse is stolen, including her unlocked smart phone, she may need to change all of her PINs and passwords, including email, social media, banks, shopping sites; cancel her phone service; report her debit/credit cards stolen; check her credit; place an alert or freeze on her credit accounts; and request new account numbers. She may want to set up new security measures on her accounts and/or begin checking her credit regularly.*

5. Consider other relevant issues—and address accordingly. *For example, does the victim know the suspect? Is the victim elderly and/or unfamiliar with new technologies? Is a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report warranted? Are there other types of abuse, neglect, or exploitation occurring? Is mental health an issue?*
6. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and the conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
  - b. If no arrest was made on scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
7. Provide information on completing an Identity Theft Report through the Federal Trade Commission ([www.identitytheft.gov](http://www.identitytheft.gov)).
8. Discuss security precautions including how to get a free credit report three times a year on [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com); how to create strong passwords; how to cancel accounts; how to use “Find my phone” (law enforcement should be notified if located); etc.
9. Explain available resources: credit counseling, credit agencies, Crime Victim Compensation, mental health counseling, legal services, and VINE.
10. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.
11. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If the investigator's case is closed, try to determine if there is another agency/jurisdiction that may be able to help. Ask the investigator if they have forwarded the case to another agency. *For example, if the case involves U.S. mail at all, the U.S. Postal Inspectors may be able to help.* If the case is closed and will not be referred on, victim services personnel may refer them to the investigator to explain the status.
12. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim's preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim's well-being.

## Fraud/ID Theft Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
If Fraud occurred, mark applicable:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial accounts	<input type="checkbox"/> SSI/Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment ID	<input type="checkbox"/> Guardian/caregiver misuse of funds
<input type="checkbox"/> Wire fraud scam	<input type="checkbox"/> Tax fraud	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical/Insurance ID	
If ID Theft occurred, mark applicable:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Computer	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Institution Information: _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> ID (license, passport)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other; specify: _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security number			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language:		Accommodations:	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain:		Explain:	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number:			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency:			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
Does the victim need assistance with any of the following?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Replacing ID (SS card, ID/DL license, passport)	<input type="checkbox"/> Canceling debit/credit cards		
<input type="checkbox"/> Changing passwords	<input type="checkbox"/> Closing accounts		
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Credit Bureaus	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Trade Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information		

**NOTES:**

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## FRAUD/ID THEFT SCENARIO:

[Name] was on vacation with a group of friends when she began receiving alerts from her bank about suspicious activity. She initially assumed it was because she was in a new location and had made several large purchases. After returning home, she accessed her account and realized that multiple checks from her account had been written to companies that she did not authorize. [Name] alerted her bank, and they suggested she make a police report. [Name] was distressed as her rent is due this week and she does not have enough money to pay her bills.

### VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

May 2, 2019

On this date, a call was placed to [Name], and a message was left briefly describing the role of victim services and requesting a return call.

May 6, 2019

On this date, I received a message from [Name] that was left on May 4, 2019, requesting a return call. A call was placed to [Name]. I introduced myself and provided information on the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. On the phone, [Name] relayed that in addition to the false checks she told law enforcement about originally, she has discovered several other charges to her account. She also stated her checkbook is missing. She expressed frustration and concern about the ongoing impact of the crime on her life.

After providing some immediate crisis response, [Name] was assured that we could spend as much time on the phone today as necessary. When asked if law enforcement was aware of the additional missing items, [Name] stated she did not know whom to call. After confirming case status, [Name] was provided with the name and contact information for the assigned investigator. The first concern we discussed was the status of her accounts with the bank. [Name] said she had contacted the bank again after discovering the additional charges, and they have placed a fraud alert on her account and offered her the option of closing her accounts.

I provided validation to [Name] about the possible impacts of unexpected events. An offer was extended to meet with [Name] in person to help her come up with a plan of action. [Name] was appreciative and asked if she could come to my office tomorrow after she gets off work. We scheduled an appointment for 3:00 p.m. and [Name] was provided with the address and my contact number.

Following the phone call with [Name], I spoke with [Investigator Name] and provided the updated information. [Investigator Name] said she could meet with [Name] when she came to the office the following day.



VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

May 7, 2019

On this date, [Name] arrived for our scheduled meeting. I let her know about my conversation with [Investigator Name] yesterday, and she was relieved to hear she would have the chance to meet with [Investigator Name] today. I suggested [Name] meet with the investigator first and then we could meet afterward to review information and possible next steps. [Name] was agreeable with this suggestion, so I introduced [Name] to [Investigator Name] and advised them to come back to my office when they were done.

Following her conversation with [Investigator Name], I met with [Name] to provide additional support and information. [Name] indicated she was able to share all pertinent information with [Investigator Name] and feels comfortable that the investigator will provide updates to her on the status of the case. I inquired about [Name]'s overall well-being. I reviewed points of concern that she shared with me during our first conversation and suggested we start working through them.

[Name] confirmed she was able to get a new cellphone over the weekend through her plan with no immediate financial costs. We discussed the status of her rent, and [Name] shared that she has a good relationship with her landlord and felt like he would be understanding if he knew about her circumstances. An offer was extended to draft a letter verifying the reported incident—[Name] felt that would be helpful.

[Name] stated that her bank had placed a fraud alert on her accounts and offered her the option of closing them. We discussed the pros and cons of closing the account, and [Name] said she would feel better if she opened new accounts. [Name] stated she will contact her bank to make these arrangements and will contact her employer to change her direct deposits. I provided contact information for Experian, Equifax, and Transunion to [Name], and we reviewed the process for obtaining a copy of her credit report.

[Name] shared that she believes items were taken from her car when it was parked at work. We reviewed basic information on protecting personally identifiable information. [Name] was also provided with a pamphlet on fraud/ID theft containing additional resource information. After ensuring she had victim services contact information, [Name] was encouraged to reach out with any other needs.

## TEMPLATE – Harassment/Stalking

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **HARASSMENT/STALKING CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the criminal event, any injuries that resulted from the crime, if the victim is hospitalized, and any relationship between the individuals involved. It is important to remember that often other types of crimes are co-occurring, to include domestic violence and strangulation (see [Domestic Violence](#) and [Strangulation](#) Protocols).

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for the following:

- **Communication issues** – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim).<sup>1</sup>
- **Age of victim (adult or minor)** – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible with parent/guardian authorization.
- **Safety issues** – At times, the same contact number is documented for the victim and the suspect; exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the victim, do not identify [*Agency*] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.
- **Medical needs** – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess for the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital, coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact the victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter with additional consideration for safety concerns. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations. Local domestic violence agencies are a safe and confidential source of counseling and support.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience; how they are feeling; and what, if anything, is continuing to take place. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Victims might not readily identify themselves as victims. There may be issues with the victim's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional attachments to the suspect, or other factors. Validate their

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

- feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
4. If a child or children were present for the harassment, speak with the parent/guardian about common age-specific reactions and feelings that the children might be feeling but have a difficult time expressing. *For example, fear, anxiety, anger, possible changes in behavior and school performance, or regression in toileting behavior.*
  5. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
    - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
    - b. If no arrest was made on the scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
  6. Explain what safety concerns are observed in the situation and safety plan with the victim.
    - a. Discuss ongoing harassing behavior since initial report was made.
    - b. Discuss safety regarding transportation. *For example, changing routes to/from home, changing daily/weekly routine.*
    - c. Discuss safety regarding social media. *For example, removing all location information from social media, blocking suspect's account, saving harassing content*
  7. Consider other relevant issues and address accordingly. *For example, are there children between the suspect and the victim and custody issues that need to be addressed? If the suspect is a family member or current or former intimate partner, has there been unreported violence? Is the suspect also threatening or stalking the victim?*
  8. If there have been multiple occurrences of unwanted contact, discuss making additional reports.
  9. Provide the victim with information about the protection order process.
  10. Encourage the victim to keep any text messages, email messages, voicemail messages, social media messages/posts, so the investigator can collect that information. Encourage the victim to keep a log of all contact and attempted contact made by the suspect to the victim or to victim's family/friend (third-party contact).
  11. Tell the victim to not engage the suspect and provide the victim with instructions on contacting law enforcement for emergency and non-emergency situations.
  12. Explain available resources: mental health counseling, Crime Victim Compensation, VINE, protection order process, and legal services.
  13. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
  14. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns, address appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain answers will be provided in a future contact.
  15. If the victim has a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
  16. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim's preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim's well-being.

## Harassment/Stalking Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did emotional abuse, threats, or stalking occur?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship:			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language:		Accommodations:	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain:		Explain:	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Has a protective parent/guardian been identified?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number:			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency:			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	

**NOTES:**

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**HARASSMENT/STALKING SCENARIO:**

[Name] is a professor at [University Name] and has been employed there for 12 years. During the past year, she has experienced several incidents of gifts and notes being left in her classroom; in her office; on her car; and, more recently, at her home. Initially, the notes and gifts were complimentary in nature and were sporadic. Now they are being left more frequently, and the tone has changed, causing her to be uncomfortable and afraid. The most recent one at her home prompted her to file a report with campus police who agreed to take a courtesy report for local law enforcement.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

April 9, 2019

On this date, a call was placed to [Name], and I provided her with information about the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. She indicated she would be more comfortable having a conversation in person. [Name] was provided with information about my office location on campus, and we arranged to meet next Monday. [Name] was also prepared to receive a call from the assigned investigator and was provided with his name.

April 15, 2019

On this date, [Name] arrived for our scheduled meeting. She confirmed that she had received contact from [Investigator Name], but, due to her class schedule, she was unable to speak with him in detail. We reviewed information that would be helpful to provide when they are able to make contact. We discussed the ongoing impact the case is having on her, and I validated her expressed concerns.

[Name] was provided with a stalking log, and we spent some time filling in information associated with various gifts and notes she had received. During this process, [Name] also relayed she had received several text messages from an unidentified number. [Name] was encouraged to share this information with [Investigator Name], and she asked if she could bring the log with her when she met with the investigator. She was encouraged to and provided with reassurance that the investigator would want access to as much information as she could provide. [Name] was provided with information about the role of the investigator and the investigative process.

Upon inquiring about her well-being, [Name] reported being very fearful. She reported becoming fearful when the notes and gifts referenced personal information that she did not openly discuss with others. [Name] shared that due to the timing of the gifts and notes, she is concerned a student may be involved as she did not receive notes and gifts during the most recent breaks. [Name] shared she is really scared now that a gift has been left at her home. To her recollection, she stated she has not shared her address with her students so she is unsure how someone would know where she lives.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

Safety planning was reviewed with [Name], including modifying travel patterns to and from work and home, safety measures she can take while on campus, and requesting safe escorts to and from her vehicle. When asked, [Name] identified two colleagues that she felt safe sharing information with, and she was encouraged to keep them updated so they could assist her in being mindful of unusual activity. [Name] was also provided with information on protecting personally identifiable information and encouraged to rely on her innate protective instincts. She was provided with information on how to contact law enforcement if she feels unsafe.

I shared information on common responses to unexpected events to include sleep and appetite disruption, changes in energy levels, and emotional fluctuations. Healthy coping mechanisms were reviewed, and I provided [Name] with counseling and support group options. I let [Name] know that I would check in with her in a couple of weeks but encouraged her to call if she needed anything in the meantime.

May 2, 2019

A call was placed to [Name]. She indicated she could not speak freely and would call me back later.

May 6, 2019

On this date, a call was received from [Name] and she advised that [Investigator Name] let her know that a suspect had been identified, but they did not have enough information to make an arrest. [Name] was unable to provide any other details and said after hearing that no one had been arrested she became upset and hung up. We reviewed the impact these events are having on her and reviewed available resources. [Name] expressed regret for being abrupt with [Investigator Name] and stated she later called him back to continue the conversation.

Resource information was sent to [Name] via text per her request, and she was encouraged to reach out with any other needs.

[Investigator Name] was contacted and provided an update on the call.

## TEMPLATE – Homicide

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **HOMICIDE CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the criminal events, the individuals involved, and their relationships. Identify if there is more than one decedent from the homicide, if there are co-victims (see [Assault/Aggravated Assault Case Protocol](#)), or if death notifications need to be made (see [Death Notification Case Protocol](#)).

Identify the legal next of kin of the decedent and be aware there may be more than one legal next of kin (e.g., divorced parents or adult siblings of the decedent). Identify the [Death Investigation Agency] involved in processing the homicide and determine the contact that has already been made with the legal next of kin. There may be additional co-victims connected to the decedent (e.g., parent of decedent, paramour of the decedent) who will receive services throughout the course of the criminal investigation. Afterlife arrangements will need to be determined soon after the homicide. Providing the next of kin with information on funeral homes and Crime Victim Compensation will need to take place upon first contact. Be cognizant of the decedent's culture and if there are cultural implications for afterlife arrangements (preparation of the body, burial, etc.). These cultural aspects may need to be relayed to the [Death Investigation Agency] to discuss possible accommodations.

Prior to contacting the co-victim, assess for the following:

- **Communication issues** – If the co-victim has an identified language access need, utilize [Language Access Service] or another translation services to communicate with the co-victim).<sup>1</sup>
- **Age of co-victim (adult or minor)** – In cases where the co-victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor co-victims is permissible with parent/guardian authorization.
- **Safety Issues** – Be cognizant of reported concerns for safety by co-victims. *For example, retaliation for reporting the crime or fear due to the decedent's unpaid debts.*

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact any co-victims in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter. Sometimes phone numbers for co-victims or are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. Be aware that the first days and weeks following a homicide are filled with grief, phone calls, and decisions and plans to be made. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of co-victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the co-victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer condolences for their loss. Discuss confidentiality limitations.
2. Listen to the co-victim regarding their experience and how they are feeling. Take notes of the

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

- details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional and bereavement support and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Following a homicide, co-victims may experience an array of emotions (shock, denial, guilt, sadness, anger, confusion, etc.) and behaviors that are not common for them. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
  4. Offer to make additional phone calls or arrangements to notify other individuals of the death.
  5. If a child or children were present at the scene, acknowledge common age-specific reactions and emotions that the children might be feeling but have a difficult time expressing. *For example, fear, anxiety, anger, possible changes in behavior and school performance, or regression in toileting behavior.*
  6. Provide information on the processes of the [Death Investigation Agency], including accurate expectations of the next of kin's involvement. Discuss the need to identify a funeral home.
  7. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable).
    - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
    - b. If no arrest was made on the scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the co-victim for possible case outcomes including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
  8. Explain what safety and resource concerns are observed in the situation and discuss safety planning with the co-victim. *For example, does the suspect have access to the co-victim?*
  9. Consider other relevant issues and address them accordingly. *For example, is the co-victim able to care for themselves? Is a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report warranted? Are the co-victim's basic needs being met?*
  10. Explain available resources: mental health counseling, grief support, VINE, legal services, and Crime Victim Compensation.
  11. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
  12. Inquire if the co-victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.
  13. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the co-victim.
  14. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the co-victim through their preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the co-victim's well-being.



## Homicide Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Name and DOB of Decedent:			
Next of kin Name:			
Relationship to Decedent:			
Contact information for next of kin:			
Has a funeral home been identified?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship:			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do any of the following apply?	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple victims (deceased or surviving): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple suspects (deceased or living): _____		
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Able?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language:			Accommodations:
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain:			Explain:
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number:			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency:			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Funeral Homes	
<input type="checkbox"/> [Death Investigation Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime scene clean-up referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	

**NOTES:**

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**HOMICIDE SCENARIO:**

[Name] is the father of 19-year-old [Son Name] who was shot and died in the parking lot of an apartment complex. Investigators responded to the scene, and the case is being investigated as a homicide. Drugs were found in the vehicle [Son Name] was driving the night he was killed, and the vehicle has been impounded. [Son Name]’s mother is the registered owner of the vehicle.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

March 16, 2019

On this date at approximately 11:00 p.m., I responded to [Location] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. I arrived at the location and met with [Officer Name] who explained that the decedent

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

had been shot by an unknown suspect and had died. [Officer Name] advised the father of the decedent

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

is on scene and is quite agitated. I met with [Investigator Name] to obtain incident information and expected actions on scene. [Investigator Name] advised he had already notified [Name] of his son’s death. Per [Investigator Name], the father is upset and declined to provide information related to friends of the decedent. [Investigator Name] advised the vehicle is in the name of the decedent’s mother, and they will be going to her current location to notify her of the death of her son. [Investigator Name] advised [Son Name]’s parents are married but living separately and requested victim services personnel be available to go with an investigator to deliver the death notification to her. Arrangements were made for [Victim Services Personnel Name] to meet with [Investigator Name] at [Location] for death notification to

[Mother Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

I introduced myself to [Name] and offered my condolences. I provided an explanation of the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. I provided grief support to [Name] who was tearful and upset. I offered to call any family members or friends who could be supportive, and he stated he did not need anyone called at this time. After several minutes, [Name] inquired about his son's mother and asked if he should call her. He was informed that my colleagues were on their way to inform her of the circumstances. I reviewed his support system and he stated he is currently living with his brother. He also described a network of friends and colleagues at work that would be helpful to him.

I informed him of the immediate next steps to include the presence of [Death Investigation Agency] and their process for determining cause and nature of [Son Name]'s death. We also discussed the need to identify a funeral home in the next few days. [Name] was advised this would need to be completed in coordination with [Mother Name] as they are both considered legal next of kin. [Name] was provided with contact information for [Death Investigation Agency], legal services, and a list of local funeral homes. We reviewed Crime Victim Compensation to help offset funeral costs, and I assisted [Name] with the application. [Name] was provided with victim services information and advised that I would be calling him in a couple of days.

March 18, 2019

A call was placed to [Name]. He stated that he and [Mother Name] have made funeral arrangements and received confirmation that Crime Victim Compensation would be paying for most of the associated costs. [Name] asked if he could call me back in a couple of weeks as he has a lot of family in town. He was assured that he could call whenever it was convenient for him.

April 4, 2019

I received a call from [Name] this morning. He expressed frustration about the pace of the investigation and inquired about why it is taking so long to find out who shot his son. I explained that homicide investigations can be lengthy and validated how difficult this must be for him and his family. [Name] stated he believes the police department is not taking the case seriously because there were drugs found in his son's car. I explained they are required to get as much information as possible during the investigation and small details may lead them to find the person who shot his son.

[Name] continued to speak in a raised voice and said he wants to file a complaint. I directed him to the public website for the Internal Affairs division and provided him with the phone number. He also asked if the case could be assigned to another investigator. I explained this decision would be outside the scope of the victim services role. He asked who he could talk to, and I provided him with the name and phone number for the investigator's immediate supervisor. I attempted to inquire about additional resources he and his family may need, but [Name] disconnected the call.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

After the call, I contacted [*Investigator Name*] and provided him with the information from my call with [*Name*]. I suggested we schedule a time to meet with [*Name*] to discuss the status of the case and answer questions he may have. [*Investigator Name*] stated he would follow up with his supervisor and contact me before the end of the day.

SAMPLE

## TEMPLATE – Human Trafficking

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the criminal events, any injuries that resulted from the criminal events, if the victim is currently hospitalized, and the relationship of the individuals involved. It is important to remember that human trafficking is often co-occurring with other crimes (see [Assault/Aggravated Assault](#), [Domestic Violence](#), [Fraud/ID Theft](#), [Sexual Assault](#), and [Strangulation](#) protocols).

The Department of Justice defines human trafficking as exploiting a person through forced labor, trafficking with respect to peonage, slavery, or involuntary servitude, and sex trafficking of children or of others by force, fraud or coercion.<sup>1</sup> Human trafficking can involve victims from the local area, from another location domestically, or from an international location. Human trafficking does not imply/require the movement of the victim from one location to another (across state or country borders) and may involve labor and/or sex trafficking. Effort should be made to determine if more than one investigating agency is involved in the case (e.g., FBI, Homeland Security).

Due to the nature of exploitation, victims of human trafficking often fear the suspect(s) involved. This may include fear of physical and/or sexual assault, financial security, documentation/legal safety (i.e., the suspect may be in possession of victim's documentation and/or may threaten to report a victim without documentation to authorities). There may be circumstances when the victim may feel an emotional connection to the suspect, so the dynamic between victim and suspect may mirror that of a domestic violence relationship.

For many victims of human trafficking, there are significant barriers to reporting the criminal activity. This may be due to physical obstacles, lack of access to others or the outside, legal status, financial security, fear of the suspect, prior criminal involvement (potentially due to their victimization), or a lack of understanding of the criminal justice system. For some victims this may include a lack of trust in law enforcement. Often this means victims may engage and disengage from the criminal justice system even after a report is initially made. Additionally, there may be multiple or ongoing incidents related to human trafficking, and it could be difficult for victims to provide details to distinguish criminal events.

Consideration should be made about the victim's basic needs: housing, medical and dental care, mental health counseling, access to food, financial resources. Community partnerships will be particularly helpful when trying to address these needs.

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for the following:

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from <https://www.justice.gov/humantrafficking>. Refer to state statute for full definition of individuals included in human trafficking.

- Communication issues – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim).<sup>1</sup>
- Age of victim (adult or minor) – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a protective parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible with protective parent/guardian authorization.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) who are protective -- If only one parent/guardian is listed in the report, attempt to gather information on secondary parent/guardian to determine appropriateness of notification and service provision. If protectiveness of parent/guardian is of concern, staff case with assigned investigator to determine what information about the case can be released. If the parent/guardian is identified as the suspect or currently lives with the suspect, staff case with assigned investigator and/or [*State Child/Adult Welfare Agency*] investigator to help identify a protective guardian for service provision.
- Safety issues – At times, the same contact number is documented for the victim and the suspect; exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the victim, do not identify [*Agency*] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.
- Medical needs – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess for the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact the victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter with consideration of safety concerns. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. Be mindful of concerns related to safety and security of the victim when attempting contact. The victim may still be living with or under surveillance by the suspect or the suspect may have access to or be in possession of the victim's phone. If the suspect is unaware the victim made a report with law enforcement or if the victim has expressed concern about the suspect discovering a report has been made, take great care in victim contact. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations. Discuss confidential community agencies, as applicable.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience and how they are feeling. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Victims might not readily identify themselves as victims. There may be issues with the victim's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional attachment to the suspect, or other factors. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

4. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable). Provide information on processes by additional investigative agencies involved. Describe possibility of involvement from federal investigators and/or other jurisdictions.
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
  - b. If no arrest was made on the scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
5. Explain what safety and resource concerns are observed in the situation and discuss safety planning with the victim. *For example, does the suspect still have access to the victim? Does the victim have secure housing? Will the victim require ongoing medical care? Does the victim have access to important documents (e.g., passport) and other items (e.g., bank card)?*
6. Consider other relevant issues and address accordingly. *For example, is the victim able to care for themselves? Is a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report warranted? Are the victim's basic needs being met?*
7. Discuss [Protection Order] processes, if applicable.
  - a. Ensure the victim has a copy of the [Protection Order] and understands the terms.
  - b. Discuss how to file for a [Protection Order] and how a [Protection Order] may affect child support, custody issues, and criminal cases. Encourage the victim to speak with an attorney (e.g., civil law, victims' rights, immigration), if needed.
  - c. Provide information on notifying children's schools, daycare, and after-school care of a [Protection Order], encourage the victim to carry a copy of it with them, and consider discussing the [Protection Order] with their employer.
8. Find out if they are in a safe housing situation or if they will need emergency shelter:
  - a. If they require emergency shelter, talk to them about shelter availability and procedures. Let them know what to expect if they do get into emergency shelter. The victim must decide if the shelter is the right choice for them. Coordinate transportation to the shelter, if necessary.
  - b. Many victims will not get into, or feel comfortable going to, an emergency shelter. If they choose to stay in their home or have made other housing arrangements, talk to them in detail about safety planning, including changing locks, alarm systems, and requesting a close patrol. Explain to them about requesting a law enforcement accompaniment or stand-by if they need to go back to the scene to get belongings. If moving out or if the process will take a while, then explain to them assistance options through the [Agency].
  - c. Provide information about eviction processes, statutes pertaining to lease terminations, and relocation benefits available through Crime Victims Compensation.
9. Explain available resources: mental health counseling, VINE, legal services, medical services, and Crime Victim Compensation.
10. Provide information on the U-Visa, T-Visa, Continued Presence, Special Immigrant Juvenile classification processes (if applicable).

11. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.
12. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
13. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim’s preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim’s well-being.

SAMPLE



## Human Trafficking Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do any of the following apply?	<input type="checkbox"/> sex trafficking <input type="checkbox"/> forced labor		
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship:			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language:		Accommodations:	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain:		Explain:	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Has a protective parent/guardian been identified?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number:			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency:			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
Does victim need assistance with obtaining ID/documentation?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, which ones?: <input type="checkbox"/> ID/driver's license <input type="checkbox"/> SS card <input type="checkbox"/> passport <input type="checkbox"/> immigration documents			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	<input type="checkbox"/> [Human Trafficking Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> T-Visa information		

**NOTES:**

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**HUMAN TRAFFICKING SCENARIO:**

[Name] is a 19-year-old female who is currently living at the residence of [Woman 1 Name] and [Man 1 Name] and has reportedly been living there for 18 months. [Name]’s mother had previously worked for the couple who reside in the home and when a family member became ill, they paid for her trip back to [Country]. Due to a lengthy illness and eventual death of the family member, [Name]’s mother never returned to work in the home. [Name] reportedly came to live in the residence under the promise of being able to attend school and eventually college, after working off her mother’s debt. Upon arrival, the couple took [Name]’s paperwork and phone. They forced her to care for their children and complete household work. [Name] has no money, identification, access to a phone, or appropriate clothing or shoes for the current climate in [Location].

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

January 8, 2019

On this date at approximately 6:00pm, I responded to [Location] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. I arrived at the location and met with [Officer Name] who briefed me on the situation and introduced me to the victim:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

[Name] was observed to be timid, withdrawn, and shivering from being outside for several hours. I introduced myself and provided information on the role of victim services. [Name] confirmed that while English is not her first language, she is comfortable proceeding without an interpreter as she has been speaking English for many years. [Name] was made aware if she would like to request an interpreter for certain conversations or to clarify certain words, to please make such request. I explained the limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. I expressed concern for her safety and well-being and provided [Name] with some clothes, shoes, and a blanket to warm up. [Name] expressed a desire to go back to [Country] and asked if she could speak with her mom. Arrangements were made to call [Name]’s mother, identified as

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]  
[phone number]

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

Arrangements were made with [Human Trafficking Agency] who agreed to provide temporary shelter for [Name]. We reviewed what she could expect from her temporary stay and a prepaid cellphone was provided to [Name] so that she could have periodic contact with her mother until travel arrangements could be made for her return to [Country]. [Name] was advised she would be provided with assistance in contacting the consulate during office hours.

[Name] was provided with reassurance that she now had people looking out for her safety, and I validated her choice to seek help and tell people about how she had been treated. [Name] was provided with my contact information, and I let her know I would come by to check on her tomorrow.

Representatives of [Human Trafficking Agency] arrived and were introduced to [Name]. They were provided with victim services contact information and legal services resources and advised I would be visiting tomorrow to continue plans to assist [Name] in her desire to return home to [Country].

January 9, 2019

Upon arrival at [Human Trafficking Agency], I was escorted to see [Name]. I was introduced to [Caseworker Name] who will be [Names]'s assigned caseworker during her stay. We discussed the need to contact the consulate to begin the process of ensuring updated travel documents for [Name]. [Caseworker Name] shared she would take care of that this morning. [Caseworker Name] also shared they would likely be able to assist with costs associated with [Name]'s return flight home.

We reviewed typical investigative procedures and timelines and [Name] was advised that an investigator would be assigned. [Name] was advised the assigned investigator would likely want to meet with her to gather additional information and details about what happened. [Name] was provided with information about her rights, and she was reassured that arrangements could be made for the investigator to meet with her at a time and location that were comfortable for her. [Name] indicated she would like to talk to the investigator.

Before departing, I let [Name] know that I would be meeting with the assigned investigator to update the investigator and ask him to meet with her in the next couple of days. I confirmed [Name] had victim services contact information and told her to contact me with any questions or needs she may have.

January 11, 2019

On this date, at the request of [Investigator Name], arrangements were made to pick up [Name] at the [Human Trafficking Agency] and bring her to [Location] for an interview. During the drive, we reviewed the purpose of the interview. [Name] was reminded that she could ask for clarification any time she does not understand a question and validated it is okay for her to say "I don't know" or to ask for a break if she needs one. We reviewed that while I would be in the room, I would not be asking her any questions.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

Upon arrival, [Name] was introduced to [Investigator Name], and we proceeded to his office for the interview. After the interview, [Investigator Name] advised her of his intention to present the case to a prosecutor with a recommendation for charges to be filed. [Name] expressed relief and appreciation. On the drive back to [Human Trafficking Agency] we reviewed next steps, and I confirmed she still had victim services contact information.

SAMPLE

## TEMPLATE – Robbery

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.

### **ROBBERY CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the criminal event, any injuries that resulted from the crime, if the victim is currently hospitalized, and any relationship between the individuals involved.

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for:

- **Communication issues** – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim).<sup>1</sup>
- **Age of victim (adult or minor)** – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible with parent/guardian authorization.
- **Medical needs** – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess for the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience, how they are feeling, and what items may have been lost or accessed. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
4. If a child or children were present during the robbery, speak with the parent/guardian about common age-specific reactions and feelings that the children might be feeling but have a difficult time expressing. *For example, fear, anxiety, possible changes in behavior and school performance, or regression in toileting behaviors.*
5. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [*Agency*] investigators (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [*Juvenile Detention Center*].

- b. If no arrest was made on scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
6. Explain what safety and resource concerns are observed in the situation and discuss safety planning with the victim. *For example: What type of security/surveillance system does the residence/business have, if any?* Discuss the risks of meeting with strangers for the sale of property and how to do so safely. *For example: meeting in a public place, rather than at a private residence or neighborhood.*
7. Consider other relevant issues and address accordingly. *For example: Is the suspect a legal guardian? Is the victim able to care for himself/herself? Is a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report warranted? Are the victim's basic needs being met?*
8. Explain available resources: mental health counseling, VINE, medical services, legal services, and Crime Victim Compensation.
9. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
10. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.
11. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
12. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim's preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim's well-being.

## Robbery Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship: _____			
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language: _____		Accommodations: _____	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain: _____		Explain: _____	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number: _____			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency: _____			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
Does the victim need information on replacing SSN/ID/driver's license?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the victim need information on cancelling credit/debit cards?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the victim need assistance in contacting their insurance provider?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	

**NOTES:**

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**ROBBERY SCENARIO:**

[Name] is an adult male who was withdrawing money from an ATM location outside the branch office of a bank. A second adult male was waiting in the vehicle and witnessed two men approach [Name] in a threatening manner. One of the men assaulted [Name] by hitting him in the head and upper torso. The witness exited the vehicle to assist, and the second man pulled out a gun and fired it twice. One of the bullets grazed [Name] in the leg. Both suspects left the scene, grabbing [Name]’s money as they ran away. Medical personnel responded and transported [Name] to the emergency room for treatment.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

January 21, 2019

On this date at approximately 10:30 p.m., I responded to [Hospital Name] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. Upon arrival, I met with [Officer Name] who briefed me on the situation and advised [Name] is also employed as a Crime Analyst with this agency. [Officer Name] introduced me to the victim:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

[Name] immediately recognized me from prior contact on cases. I provided [Name] with information on the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. We specifically reviewed the option of having another victim services staff member respond due to our existing professional connection—[Name] declined this option.

[Name] expressed being a private person and asked what information he would be required to share with agency personnel. We reviewed his status as an identified victim of a crime and the rights associated with that status. We discussed typical investigative processes, and he was informed that the assigned investigator would likely be in contact with him in the next couple of days to obtain more information from him. [Name] asked if he would have to be interviewed at work, and he was encouraged to request whatever accommodations would make him feel more comfortable.

We reviewed information pertaining to this incident that would be available to employees of the agency and to personnel of other agencies associated with the criminal justice process. [Name] expressed he did not want to share details of the incident with his supervisor. [Name] was encouraged to seek further guidance from Human Resources regarding his rights and obligations as an employee and benefits available to him as a result of his employment. Legal services resources were also provided.



VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

[Name] was provided with information on possible responses to traumatic events and we discussed resources that could be accessed to assist with these responses—those offering confidential services were highlighted.

I confirmed that [Name] had a support system available and had a safe ride home following his discharge from the hospital. I provided him with victim services information and encouraged him to call if I could assist further. Before departing, [Name] asked if I would be able to provide information about assistance options to the witness, identified as

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

I assured [Name] that [Witness Name] was welcome to reach out to me, and I would provide information and assistance as appropriate.

January 29, 2019

On this date, I received a call from [Witness Name] a listed witness in this case. [Witness Name] relayed he got my number from [Name]. We reviewed the role of victim services to include limitations of confidentiality. [Witness Name] indicated that he did not want to talk about the incident in detail but did want to know if some of the things he is experiencing are normal. [Witness Name] described having difficulty sleeping through the night and having a hard time concentrating at work. [Witness Name] also described repeatedly checking to see if his doors are locked and having an overall jumpy feeling.

[Witness Name] was provided with information on common responses to trauma, and I stated that his experiences and responses were valid. [Witness Name] expressed feeling like he should have taken more action during the incident. We discussed how our bodies and our brains are designed to protect us during major events.

[Witness Name] asked what would happen next with the case. We reviewed his role as an identified witness and the potential to be called for testimony should the suspects be arrested and charged. We reviewed the role of law enforcement and the role of prosecutors. [Witness Name] asked about possible outcomes if the suspects are arrested, and we reviewed possible future steps to include grand jury, plea agreements, and trial. [Witness Name] asked if he would have to attend all the court hearings. We reviewed that he could attend any public court hearing if he chose to do so, but he would be required to attend only if he received a subpoena.

[Witness Name] was provided with counseling options, and he shared he has access to an Employee Assistance Program through work. [Witness Name] was encouraged to call back with any questions.

## TEMPLATE – Sexual Assault

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **SEXUAL ASSAULT CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly and determine the nature of the criminal event, any injuries that resulted from the crime, if the victim is currently hospitalized, and any relationship between the individuals involved.

Be cognizant of sexual violence dynamics, including the relationship between the individuals involved. Most sexual assaults are perpetrated by individuals known to the victim, including current or former intimate partners, employers or coworkers, neighbors, and acquaintances. Sexual violence can be present in heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and queer relationships (see [Domestic Violence](#) and [Strangulation](#) Protocols). Additional sensitivity should be extended when male, transgender, and gender non-conforming individuals report sexual assault, as these situations often go unreported.

Frequently, victims of sexual assault delay reporting the sexual assault to law enforcement for a multitude of reasons. This does not mean the assault did not occur or that it was not as traumatic to the victim. Often, when victims of sexual assault do disclose the occurrence of sexual assault, they are not believed or blamed for certain behavior. This is often referred to as secondary victimization and can be detrimental to the victim, causing the victim to be distrusting of their support system and the criminal justice system. Most sexual assaults do not result in physical injuries; however, a forensic medical exam can be completed within [no. of hours] from the sexual assault. A forensic medical exam (sometimes referred to as a “rape kit”) is usually performed by a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) for the purpose of medical treatment (physical wounds, pregnancy, and STI prophylaxis) and collection of evidence.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

- **Communication issues** – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim).<sup>1</sup>
- **Age of victim (adult or minor)** – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible with parent/guardian authorization. (If the victim is a minor see [Child Abuse Case Protocol](#))
- **Safety issues** – At times, the same contact number is documented for the victim and the suspect; exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the victim, do not identify [*Agency*] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.
- **Medical needs** – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess for the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit. Most sexual assault cases do not include physical injuries, but a sexual assault forensic medical exam may be strongly encouraged.

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact the victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter with consideration for safety concerns. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. Be mindful if the suspect is known and may be unaware the victim made a report to law enforcement or if the victim has expressed concern about the suspect discovering a report has been made. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations. Local rape crisis agencies are a safe and confidential source of counseling and support.
2. Discuss the option of using a pseudonym (if applicable). Explain parameters of pseudonym use and request process.
3. Listen to the victim regarding their experience and how they are feeling. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
4. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Victims might not readily identify themselves as victims. There may be issues with the victim's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional attachment to the suspect, or other factors. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
5. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
  - b. If no arrest was made on the scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
6. Explain what safety and resource concerns are observed in the situation and discuss safety planning with the victim. *For example, does the suspect still have access to the victim? Will the victim require ongoing medical care?*
7. Consider other relevant issues and address accordingly. *For example, is the victim able to care for themselves? Is a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report warranted? Are the victim's basic needs being met?*
8. Discuss protection order processes, if applicable.
  - a. Ensure the victim has a copy of the [Protection Order] and understands the terms.
  - b. Discuss how to file for a [Protection Order] and how a [Protection Order] can affect child support and custody issues. Encourage the victim to speak with a civil law attorney, if needed.

- c. Provide information on notifying children’s schools, daycare, and after-school care of [*Protection Order*], encourage the victim to carry a copy of it with them, and consider discussing the [*Protection Order*] with their employer.
9. Find out if they are in a safe housing situation or if they will need emergency shelter:
  - a. If they require emergency shelter, talk to them about shelter availability and procedures. Let them know what to expect if they do get into emergency shelter. The victim must decide if the shelter is the right choice for them. Coordinate transportation to the shelter, if necessary.
  - b. Many victims will not get into, or feel comfortable going to, an emergency shelter. If they choose to stay in their home or have made other housing arrangements, talk to them in detail about safety planning, including changing locks, alarm systems, and requesting a close patrol. Explain to them about requesting a law enforcement accompaniment or stand-by if they need to go back to the scene to get their belongings. If moving out or if the process will take a while, then explain to them assistance options through the [*Agency*].
  - c. Provide information about eviction processes, statutes pertaining to lease terminations, and relocation benefits available through Crime Victim Compensation.
10. Explain available resources: mental health counseling, VINE, legal services, medical services, and Crime Victim Compensation.
11. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
12. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.
13. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
14. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim’s preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim’s well-being.

## Sexual Assault Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did emotional abuse, threats, or stalking occur?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship: _____			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language: _____		Accommodations: _____	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain: _____		Explain: _____	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number: _____			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency: _____			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> SANE nurse or hospital information			

**NOTES:**

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**SEXUAL ASSAULT SCENARIO:**

[Name] reported to law enforcement that she was sexually assaulted by her boyfriend. [Name] was 17 years old at the time of the sexual assault, and the male was 25 years old. [Name] has since turned 18 years old. [Name] reports she was terrified of her boyfriend, and he threatened to kill her if she went to the police. She lives with her boyfriend (the listed offender), and he controls her money and access to her cellphone and computer.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

March 12, 2019

On this date I responded to [Location] at approximately 3:50 a.m. in reference to a [Report Title] incident. I arrived and met with [Officer Name] who briefed me on the situation and introduced me to the victim:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]  
[email address]

I provided information to [Name] on the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. She shared that her boyfriend had just gotten a new job and had to attend a training class out of town. She convinced him to leave her a cellphone in case anything happened while he was gone.

I provided emotional support to [Name] who was tearful and upset. I offered to call family members for additional support. She stated she did not have family in the area. As [Name] bent down to pick up a piece of paper she dropped, bruises were visible on her lower back. When I asked about them, [Name] became increasingly tearful and disclosed her boyfriend "raped and beat me" last night. When asked if she had shared this information with law enforcement, she stated she had not. I let [Name] know that officers would need to be aware of this information and offered to sit with her when she told them.

[Officer Name] was advised of the new information and proceeded to ask [Name] additional questions. After consulting with a supervisor, [Officer Name] advised that a sexual assault forensic exam had been requested. [Name] had several questions related to the sexual assault forensic exam, and we reviewed the process and discussed its purpose as a medical exam and its investigative/prosecutorial relevance. I agreed to transport [Name] to [Hospital Name] as she does not have a car. While driving to the hospital, reporting options were reviewed with [Name] and she indicated she would like to use a pseudonym. Upon arrival, arrangements were made for completion of the pseudonym form by law enforcement.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

We discussed typical reactions to trauma and [Name] shared her feelings of fear of the suspect and shame associated with the incident. Her feelings were validated, and she was reassured that the incident and her boyfriend's conduct were not her fault. We discussed [sexual assault agency] as a possible resource for her, and she was advised a representative would be arriving to meet with her.

I expressed concern for [Name]'s safety. She acknowledged several incidents of physical violence in the history of their relationship, and we reviewed the process for obtaining a [Protection Order]. [Name] indicated she would have a friend take her to apply in the next day or so. We discussed dynamics of abuse and [Domestic Violence Agency] as a possible resource.

I discussed the Crime Victim Compensation program with [Name] as a means of possible assistance with relocation, counseling, the medical portion of the sexual assault forensic exam, and medical bills from the physical assault. I assisted [Name] with the completion of the application and explained how she could submit the application and required documentation.

We reviewed safe housing options to include shelter and getting to supportive family out of town. [Name] advised her boyfriend will be out of town for a few more days and she would like to think about her options. I provided [Name] with an emergency cellphone and transportation home. [Name] requested contact through the email address (listed above) explaining this is a private email address she created, so she can contact family. She said her boyfriend does not know about it, and she checks it from the library. I shared contact information for victim services and encouraged her to call with additional needs.

March 14, 2019

On this date, [Name] called to relay she applied for a [Protection Order]. The hearing is scheduled for March 27. [Name] said she is scared about what will happen when her boyfriend gets served with the paperwork. [Name] shared that she spoke with [Investigator Name], and he is planning to talk to her boyfriend at the upcoming hearing. [Name] says she has to go but will call me in a few days.

March 19, 2019

[Name] called today and stated that she does not want to move forward with the case or the [Protection Order]. I expressed this was a change from previous conversations and asked if something had happened. She denied anything had changed since we last spoke. She stated she did not tell the officers the truth before. I asked for clarification, and she said she was mad at her boyfriend at the time, but they are now engaged. She provided short answers to all my questions. I asked if she could come to meet with the investigator about her decision. She said no and asked me to tell the investigator.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

I expressed concern for her safety and reviewed previous information regarding her boyfriend's threats to kill her, her reports that he was controlling, and her report that she was afraid of him. She remained quiet and reiterated that she wanted everything dropped. I validated there are many reasons victims sometimes choose not to participate in the criminal justice process and this is her choice to make. I explained that, regardless of her decision to move forward with the case, she can still access support services. I encouraged her to call 911 immediately if she is concerned for her safety. I also explained that the prosecutor may choose to move forward with the case. She stated she understood and ended the call.

SAMPLE



## TEMPLATE – Strangulation

*Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.*

### **STRANGULATION CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the criminal event, any injuries that resulted from the crime, if the victim is currently hospitalized, and the relationship between the individuals involved.

Incidents involving strangulation are extremely severe and potentially lethal. Strangulation is one of the best predictors for the subsequent homicide of domestic violence victims. Victims may have no visible injuries, yet because of underlying brain damage due to the lack of oxygen during the strangulation assault, they may have serious internal injuries or die days, even weeks, later. The lack of external injuries and the lack of medical training among criminal justice system professionals have led to the minimization of this type of violence, exposing victims to potentially serious health consequences, further violence, and even death. Strangulation is also a form of power and control, which can have a devastating psychological effect on victims in addition to a potentially fatal outcome, including suicide.<sup>1</sup>

Be cognizant of the dynamics of the relationship of the individuals involved in the incident. These incidents can involve intimate partners, former intimate partners, roommates, familial relations, and non-related parties. Patterns of domestic violence can be present in heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and queer relationships (see [Assault/Aggravated Assault](#), [Domestic Violence](#), and [Sexual Assault Case](#) Protocols). Additional sensitivity should be extended when male, transgender, and gender non-conforming individuals report domestic violence, as these situations often go unreported. Some incidents will generate multiple reports depending on the situation (e.g., Assault with Injury, Criminal Mischief, and Sexual Assault).

Some strangulation incidents will require notification to [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] based on the disclosure of or reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect of children, adults who are 65 years of age or older, or disabled adults. Determine if a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report has already been made by a law enforcement officer or investigator. If not, victim services personnel may need to file a report).<sup>2</sup>

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for:

- **Communication issues** – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim).<sup>3</sup>
- **Age of victim (adult or minor)** – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible with parent/guardian authorization.
- **Safety issues** – At times, the same contact number is documented for the victim and the suspect; exercise caution in these situations. If the suspect answers during contact attempts with the victim, do not identify [Agency] or victim services. Determine how to make a safe second attempt.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention, "[Online Strangulation Training](#),"

<sup>2</sup> See Mandated Reporting Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package 1 – Getting Started](#).

<sup>3</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package 1 – Getting Started](#).

- Medical needs – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess for the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital, coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact the victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter with consideration for safety concerns. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. Be mindful if the suspect is known and may be unaware the victim made a report to law enforcement or if the victim has expressed concern about the suspect discovering a report has been made. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss limitations of confidentiality. Local domestic violence and rape crisis agencies are safe and confidential sources of counseling and support.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience and how they are feeling. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Assess the need for medical care. Verify if the victim was medically evaluated after the report was made. If no medical care was received, strongly recommend that the victim seek a medical evaluation.
4. Discuss potential imminent dangers of strangulation, possible symptoms, and the importance of documenting (written and photography) any injuries, bruises, or signs of trauma. Explain to the victim that the assigned investigator may want to meet with the victim at a later date to take additional photographs of the injuries, possibly to include using a [*Specialized*] camera. Explain to the victim that the assigned investigator may suggest follow-up medical care due to ongoing medical issues (e.g., shortness of breath, scratchy throat, and bruises) for official medical documentation of injury.
5. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Victims might not readily identify themselves as victims. There may be issues with the victim's understanding of the situation due to cognitive impairments, emotional attachment to the suspect, or other factors. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
6. If a child or children were present in the home, speak with the parent/guardian about common age-specific reactions and feelings that the children might be feeling but have a difficult time expressing. *For example, fear, anxiety, anger, possible changes in behavior and school performance, or regression in toileting behavior.*
7. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [*Agency*] investigator (if applicable). Clarify the difference between a misdemeanor and felony offense.
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE).

- Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
- b. If no arrest was made on the scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
8. Explain what safety concerns are observed in the situation and discuss safety planning with the victim. Concerns may include physical safety concerns, medical or mental health needs, exposure of children or vulnerable adults to violence. Specifically address the severity and lethality of incidents involving strangulation and any past or future medical attention required.
  9. Discuss [Protection Order] processes.
    - a. If applicable, ensure the victim has a copy of the [Protection Order] and understands the terms.
    - b. Discuss how to file for a [Protection Order] and how a [Protection Order] can affect child support and custody issues. Encourage the victim to speak with a civil law attorney, if needed.
    - c. Provide information on notifying children's schools, daycare, and after-school care of [Protection Order], encourage the victim to carry a copy of the order with them, and consider discussing the [Protection Order] with their employer.
  10. Find out if they are in a safe housing situation or if they will need emergency shelter:
    - a. If they require emergency shelter, talk to them about shelter availability and procedures. Let them know what to expect if they do get into emergency shelter. The victim must decide if the shelter is the right choice for them. Coordinate transportation to the shelter, if necessary.
    - b. Many victims will not get into, or feel comfortable going to, an emergency shelter. If they choose to stay in their home or have made other housing arrangements, talk to them in detail about safety planning, including changing locks, alarm systems, and requesting a close patrol. Explain to them about requesting a law enforcement accompaniment or stand-by if they need to go back to the scene to get their belongings. If moving out or if the process will take a while, then explain to them assistance options through the [Agency].
    - c. Provide information about eviction processes, statutes pertaining to lease terminations, and relocation benefits available through Crime Victim Compensation.
  11. Explain available resources (be mindful that not all resources will apply to all domestic violence situations): Crime Victim Compensation, [State/County Child Support/Custody Office], counseling resources, sexual assault forensic exams, legal services, [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency], VINE, medical services, supervised visitation and child exchange services, resources specific to victims belonging to marginalized groups (LGBT, immigrant, deaf, disabled), and appropriate addiction/substance abuse referrals, if applicable.
  12. Provide information on the U-Visa process (if applicable).
  13. Consider other relevant issues and address accordingly. *For example, is the victim able to care for themselves? Is a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report warranted? Are the victim's basic needs being met?*
  14. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If

answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.

15. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
16. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim's preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim's well-being.

SAMPLE

## Strangulation Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Did a strangulation occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did a sexual assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did emotional abuse, threats, or stalking occur?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Any symptoms related to strangulation?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Breathing changes <input type="checkbox"/> Voice changes <input type="checkbox"/> Vision changes <input type="checkbox"/> Swallowing changes <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing changes <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral changes <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of consciousness <input type="checkbox"/> Unexplained injury <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____			
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship: _____			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language: _____		Accommodations: _____	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain: _____		Explain: _____	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number: _____			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency: _____			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe: _____			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	

**NOTES:**

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### **STRANGULATION SCENARIO:**

[Name] is an adult victim of domestic violence. She reported being assaulted and strangled by her boyfriend, but he fled the scene before law enforcement arrived. No physical injuries were observed on [Name], and she was advised the case would be forwarded for further investigation.

#### VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

May 17, 2019

On this date, a call was placed to [Name] after reviewing the report. The role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices were explained. I expressed concern for her physical well-being due to the risks associated with strangulation. We reviewed some of the common symptoms, and [Name] denied any of them being present currently but stated she would go to a doctor if that changed. We reviewed the process for taking follow-up photographs to document injuries not visible immediately after an incident. [Name] relayed she is not able to come to the office today but agreed to come next week.

We reviewed that an investigator would be assigned to the case and would be calling her to get more details about the incident. I inquired about her overall safety concerns and the well-being of her children. [Name] indicated she has not had any contact from her boyfriend since yesterday and believes he is staying with his family. She relates her children are doing fine and feels comfortable staying in the house as her boyfriend typically stays gone for several days after they argue. [Name] denied the need for any assistance currently. I provided her with victim services contact information and encouraged her to call if that changes.

May 21, 2019

[Name] called today and expressed interest in applying for a [Protection Order]. I explained the application process and offered to transport her today. She declined and stated her mother could take her later this afternoon. I asked [Name] if something happened to cause her concern for her safety. She stated her boyfriend has started sending text messages that she feels are threatening in nature. She relayed that he said he will take the kids and she will never see them again. She stated she thought he would change, but she is scared of him and what he might do.

She stated the children were present at the time of the strangulation, but she had her mother come pick them up before the police arrived. I clarified this with [Name] (due to this information being different than what was in the officer's initial report), and she stated she did not tell the officer the children were there because she was afraid [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] would take her children away from her. I validated her expressed concern and provided her with information about the role of [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency].

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

I reminded her of my role as a mandated reporter and told her I am required to report this information to [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency]. [Name] became upset and started to cry. I explained that [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] involvement does not necessarily mean her children will be removed from her care. I informed her that [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] will want to see that she is taking steps to protect her children and prioritize their safety. I also explained that [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] can be a source for resources to assist her and her children. I provided the option to call [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] together or separately; [Name] confirmed I should call alone.

[Name] also disclosed that she had been pregnant (approximately 6 weeks) and miscarried two days after the strangulation. She stated she believes the miscarriage was a result of the strangulation. I asked if she sought medical care, and she stated she was evaluated by medical personnel on the scene but has not gone to the doctor since the miscarriage. I encouraged her to consider being checked out by a medical professional. She expressed concern about the cost of medical care. I reviewed information about the Crime Victim Compensation program and provided information on low-cost medical clinics as possible options for financial support to cover medical expenses. I reiterated the dangers of strangulation and emphasized that symptoms might not appear for days or more.

[Name] and I discussed the importance of the investigator working the case having all relevant information. She stated she understood and said she would call [Investigator Name] later today. I informed her that I would also be informing [Investigator Name] of this information. Prior to ending the call, I reviewed the safety plans and told [Name] I would follow up with her later in the week. [Name] thanked me and ended the call.

After the call, I made a report to [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency]:

[Reference no.]

[Call taker name & ID no.]

I then staffed the case with [Investigator Name] and provided him with the information [Name] disclosed during our call. I also followed up with him later in the day, and he confirmed that [Name] called him. He advised he arranged to meet [Name] at 3:00 p.m. at the Prosecuting Attorney's office to talk with her further and asked if I was available to accompany him. I confirmed that I was and arranged to meet him there.

## TEMPLATE – Traffic Incidents & Vehicular Crimes

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this case protocol and documentation sample to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources staff, should review this template to ensure information is consistent with local jurisdiction requirements.

### **VEHICULAR CRIME CASE PROTOCOL:**

Review the case thoroughly to determine the nature of the criminal event, any injuries that may have resulted, if the victim is currently hospitalized, and any relationship between the individuals involved.

Prior to contacting the victim, assess for the following:

- **Communication issues** – If the victim has an identified language access need, utilize [*Language Access Service*] or another translation services provider to communicate with the victim).<sup>1</sup>
- **Age of victim (adult or minor)** – In cases where the victim is a minor, contact will be made with a parent/guardian. Contact with minor victims is permissible with parent/guardian authorization.
- **Medical needs** – In cases where the victim is hospitalized, assess for the need to make a field visit. If visiting a victim in the hospital coordinate with the hospital social worker or charge nurse to ensure that the victim can have visitors and to determine visitation hours/parameters. Discuss with the Victim Services Supervisor prior to a hospital visit.

Make two contact attempts by telephone. If unsuccessful, attempt to contact the victim in person when safe and appropriate. If all attempts are unsuccessful, send a letter. Sometimes phone numbers for victims are not obtained, so a contact letter may be utilized for the initial contact. If additional concerns about safety or appropriateness of victim contact exist, consult with the Victim Services Supervisor regarding how to proceed.

If contact with the victim is established, do the following:

1. Explain victim services' role and offer support and resources. Discuss confidentiality limitations.
2. Listen to the victim regarding their experience and how they are feeling. Take notes of the details provided for the purposes of documentation and follow-up (use checklist below).
3. Provide emotional support as needed and review common reactions to trauma and support services. Some victims will be very upset, and some will not. Validate their feelings and concerns and remember to respect their right to self-determination.
4. If a child or children were present during the incident, speak with the parent/guardian about common age-specific reactions and feelings that the children might be feeling but have a difficult time expressing. *For example, fear, anxiety, anger, possible changes in behavior and school performance, or regression in toileting behavior.*
5. Ask the victim if they have any injuries as a result of the incident. If the victim was injured, encourage them to seek medical treatment if they have not already done so.
6. Remind the victim that they will need to contact their auto insurance company if it has not already been done.

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<sup>1</sup> See Language Access Protocol in [Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services: Template Package I – Getting Started](#).



7. If the vehicle was towed and the victim is unaware of where it was towed to, contact the assigned investigator to obtain that information.
8. Talk to the victim about reactions they might be having. *For example, trouble sleeping, replaying the accident in their mind, or trouble concentrating.*
9. Explain available resources: mental health counseling, medical services, legal services, and Crime Victim Compensation.
10. Provide information on criminal investigations conducted by [Agency] investigators (if applicable).
  - a. If an arrest was made and the suspect is in custody, explain how to complete an inmate search online and register with Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE). Explain the role of pre-trial services and conditions of bond if known. If an arrest involves a juvenile, provide information on [Juvenile Detention Center].
  - b. If no arrest was made on the scene, explain that an investigator will be assigned to further investigate the incident. Prepare the victim for possible case outcomes, including the issuance of a warrant and no charges filed.
11. If the case has been referred to a different investigating entity, provide the victim with the phone number for that agency.
12. If the victim requests a copy of the report, refer them to the established records request process. If the cost of the report is prohibitive for the victim, advocate for reduced/waived fees.
13. Inquire if the victim has any further questions or concerns—address those appropriately. If answers are not readily available, explain research will be done and answers will be provided in a future contact.
14. If they have a question about the investigation, refer them to the assigned investigator. If needed, assist with communication between the investigator and the victim.
15. Initiate periodic follow-up communication with the victim through the victim’s preferred method of contact. This may take place due to new or ongoing investigation activity and/or to check on the victim’s well-being.

## Traffic Incidents & Vehicular Crimes Checklist & Notes Page

<b>Event-Specific Information:</b>			
Did a physical assault occur?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child(ren) present during event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was medical attention (EMS, hospital) needed?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
Did the victim incur medical (EMS, hospital) expenses?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the victim incur loss of or damage to property?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the suspect known to the victim?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe relationship:			
<b>Victim-Specific Considerations:</b>			
Translator Needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Differently Abled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Physical
Language:		Accommodations:	
Housing instability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Unemployment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	65+ years of age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chronic health issue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Other concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Explain:		Explain:	
<b>Follow-up and Safety Considerations:</b>			
Does a [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] report need to be made?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, report number:			
Is an additional law enforcement report warranted?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, does the adult victim want to make a report?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, new report number and agency:			
Does the victim need a safety plan?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, describe:			
<b>Resources and Information Provided:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigator information	<input type="checkbox"/> Victim services information	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Victim Compensation	
<input type="checkbox"/> VINE	<input type="checkbox"/> [Domestic Violence Agency]	<input type="checkbox"/> [Rape Crisis Agency]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic needs referrals	
<input type="checkbox"/> 211/United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> U-Visa information	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal resources	

**NOTES:**

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**TRAFFIC INCIDENTS & VEHICULAR CRIMES SCENARIO:**

[Name] is the parent of three minor children who were in a vehicle being driven by [Driver Name]. [Name] is deaf and requires an interpreter fluent in American Sign Language. [Driver Name] was driving after consuming multiple mixed drinks at a neighborhood gathering and drove through a red light at an intersection, resulting in his vehicle being hit by a garbage truck. [Driver Name] and all three children were transported to the hospital from the scene due to the extent of their injuries.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION:

February 16, 2019

On this date at approximately 3:25 p.m., I responded to [Hospital Name] in reference to a [Report Title] incident. I met with [Officer Name] who briefed me on the situation and introduced me to the American Sign Language interpreter

[Name]  
[Agency]  
[phone number]

who had already responded to the hospital. [Officer Name] advised that the mother of the three minor children was contacted by phone and had just arrived. He introduced me to

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]

who is the mother of

[Name]	[Name]	[Name]
[race/gender]	[race/gender]	[race/gender]
[DOB]	[DOB]	[DOB]

Upon arrival [Name] was upset and inquired about the well-being of her children. Quick introductions were provided by me, the officer, and interpreter to [Name]. After speaking with the charge nurse and being directed to the family waiting area, [Name] was advised that all her children were stable and currently receiving assessments to determine the extent of their injuries and that she would be reunited with them as soon as possible.

[Name] was provided with information on the role of victim services, limits of confidentiality, mandated reporting obligations, and documentation practices. We reviewed the role of the responding officers and the investigative process. I told [Name] I would be with her as long as necessary. I offered to contact family and friends for support. [Name] said it would be helpful if her sister could be with her and asked me to call her. [Name]'s sister said she would arrive within the hour.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

[Name] expressed anger and frustration as to how this could happen. She indicated she had to work today due to unexpected staff shortages at her job. She asked her ex-husband to watch the kids, and she does not know how they ended up in the car with [Driver Name]. She stated [Driver Name] is an alcoholic. [Name] asked if [Driver Name] was going to be arrested. Her feelings were validated, and she was advised that an update would be obtained from [Officer Name] before he left the hospital.

[Name] expressed concern about the medical bills as she has just started a new job and medical insurance coverage has not begun for her or her children. We reviewed the Crime Victim Compensation program as a means of possible assistance if the incident is determined to be criminal in nature. We reviewed that Crime Victim Compensation is a payor of last resort and the intersection with vehicle insurance and determination of fault for the crash. I reinforced this was a lot of information to absorb and let her know that I would be available to help her process information as she received it.

The charge nurse arrived and let [Name] know that two of her children were now in a room and she could go see them. [Name] requested me to come with her as she was not sure how she was going to react to seeing them. Upon entering the room, both kids had obvious physical injuries but were excited to see [Name]. After receiving an update from the nurse, I let [Name] know that I would be stepping out to find [Officer Name] for an update.

[Officer Name] advised a determination was made to place [Driver Name] under arrest, but, due to his medical condition, he would be remaining at the hospital until he is stable to be discharged. During this conversation, [Name]'s sister arrived, and I introduced myself. We reviewed the role of victim services and confidentiality limitations, and I offered to take her to see her family.

Upon reentering the room, [Name] advised her two children would be ready for discharge today, but her other child would have to remain due to a need for surgery. [Name] asked me to share all the information with her sister, so we reviewed the Crime Victim Compensation program and the update provided by [Officer Name]. I assisted [Name] with completing the application and let her know how to submit the application and required documents.

We reviewed common responses to trauma for both adults and children, and [Name] was encouraged to seek out and utilize available support. [Name] conveyed a strong connection to her faith community, and we reviewed counseling options as well. [Name] and her sister were able to agree to a temporary schedule to watch the kids and make sure someone is at the hospital. [Name] indicated she feels like her employer will be supportive and flexible with her.

[Name] requested that future follow-up from me to be by text or through her sister, since it is easier to communicate through one of those means as opposed to a TTD phone call. I confirmed I can text [Name], but as a backup I will contact [Name]'s sister. [Name] agreed and said she felt comfortable with any case-related information being provided to her sister.

VICTIM SERVICES DOCUMENTATION (continued):

[Name]'s sister's contact information is as follows:

[Name]  
[race/gender]  
[DOB]  
[phone number]

[Name] signed a Release of Information that outlined the information I am allowed to share with her sister. I let [Name] know I would verify with her before sharing any information I was unsure about. After ensuring she had no further questions, [Name] and her sister were provided with victim services contact information. I let her know I would check in on her in a few days.

February 20, 2019

A text was sent to [Name] to check on the well-being of her and her children. She relayed [Child 1 Name] and [Child 2 Name] are doing well, and that [Child 3 Name] had recently returned home and is still quite sore from the surgery and the crash.

She let me know that someone contacted her to let her know that [Driver Name] was released from the hospital and taken to jail. After searching the system, I confirmed this information, and we reviewed the next steps in the process to include Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) and how to register for notification. [Name] was advised she would be contacted by a victim/witness counselor at the Prosecuting Attorney's Office to update her on the status of the case and the next court date. [Name] expressed appreciation for the assistance and stated she would call if she needed anything else.



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