

**Law Enforcement-Based
Victim Services:
*Template Package V –
Training***

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This publication was developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) under 2018-V3-GX-K049 and 2020-G3-VX-K001, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this draft publication are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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.¹ The U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) launched the Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services & Technical Assistance Program (LEV Program) in 2018. The goal was to support law enforcement-based victim services program development in the United States, strengthen their capacity, and support partnerships with community-based programs. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) serves as the training and technical assistance provider for the LEV Program. In this role, the IACP aims to enhance the capacity of law enforcement-based victim services by providing guidance on promising practices and policies to support victims' access to their legal rights and the services and responses they need.

IACP works collaboratively with a team of project partners, including Unified Solutions Tribal Community Development Group, Inc. (Unified), the National Crime Victim Law Institute (NCVLI), and the Justice Information Resource Network (JIRN) to provide training and technical assistance. The IACP and project partners provide guidance for agencies and tribal nations to assist them in providing high-quality services (coordinated, collaborative, multidisciplinary, culturally responsive, and trauma informed) that address the broader needs and rights of all crime victims.

Explanation of Templates

All victim services personnel—supervisors, direct services staff, student interns, and volunteers—benefit from comprehensive, specialized training. Whether victim services staff are hired with significant advocacy experience or no relevant experience, agencies are encouraged to establish consistent training for all victim services personnel. Robust training establishes a strong foundation for the role of victim services and promotes consistency of practice.

Developing training requires a significant amount of time and specialty. The purpose of this publication is to provide core content for victim services training. These templates were developed through a review of documents from existing law enforcement-based victim services programs and are intended to provide sample language and content to assess, develop, and refine victim services training. They should be customized to fit standard procedure in format, language, and intent. All templates should be carefully reviewed to ensure information is consistent with agency, tribal, statutory, and constitutional requirements within your jurisdiction and reviewed by internal human resources and legal departments.

While all material has been vetted by subject matter experts, they do not provide state-, tribe-, or agency-specific information. Most of the training material includes customization recommendations. These recommendations appear in brackets and are italicized (e.g., [*Insert Agency logo*]). Please follow these recommendations and remove the bracketed information before disseminating.

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

Accessibility should be considered when preparing and conducting training. Providing printed PowerPoint slides for the training modules to victim services staff is recommended. Relevant resources and information should be provided, as appropriate.

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:

- **Advocacy** – actions to support a cause, idea, policy, or position
 - Individual advocacy – actions aimed at direct services for victims
 - Systemic advocacy – actions to improve overall system responses and outcomes for all victims
 - Community-based advocacy – actions by those who work for private, autonomous, often nonprofit organizations within the community
 - System-based advocacy – actions by those employed by public agencies such as law enforcement, prosecutor’s office, or some other entity within the city, county, state, or federal government
- **Agency**– refers to the police department, sheriff’s office, tribal police or public safety department, campus police department, district attorney’s office, state attorney’s office, or other governmental criminal justice entity that is employing victim services personnel.
- **Crime Victim Compensation** – a state-based² 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
- **Mandated Reporting** – obligations per state law about concerns of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of minors or older or vulnerable adults
- **Trauma-Informed** – approaches delivered with an understanding of the vulnerabilities and experiences of trauma survivors, including the prevalence and physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma. A trauma-informed approach recognizes signs of trauma in staff, victims, and others and responds by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and settings. Trauma-informed approaches place priority on restoring the survivor’s feelings of safety, choice, and control. Programs, services, agencies, and communities can be trauma-informed.³
- **Victim-Centered** – placing the crime victim’s priorities, needs, and interests at the center of the work with the victim; providing nonjudgmental assistance, with an emphasis on victim self-

² There are currently two states, [Arizona](#) and [Colorado](#), that administer victim compensation funds using a decentralized system.

³ OVC, “[Glossary](#)” in *Achieving Excellence: Model Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors of Crime (Model Standards)*.

determination, where appropriate, and assisting victims in making informed choices; ensuring that restoring victims' feelings of safety and security are a priority and safeguarding against policies and practices that may inadvertently re-traumatize victims; ensuring that victims' rights, voices, and perspectives are incorporated when developing and implementing system- and community-based efforts that impact crime victims.⁴

- **Victims' Rights** – language included in constitutions, statutes, rules, and policies that vary by state and define legal responsibilities related to victims of crime, affording them independent, participatory status in the criminal justice system⁵
- **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.

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.

⁴ OVC, "[Glossary](#)" in *Achieving Excellence: Model Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors of Crime (Model Standards)*.

⁵ Office of Justice Programs, "[About Victims' Rights](#)," Victim Law, U.S. Department of Justice; National Crime Victim Law Institute, "[Victims' Rights Jurisdiction Profiles](#)" (2020); Paul G. Cassell and Margaret Garvin, "[Protecting Crime Victims in State Constitutions: The Example of the New Marsy's Law for Florida](#)," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 100, no. 2 (2020): 99–139.

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- [*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 fifth document of the Template Package series. Additional template packages published include:

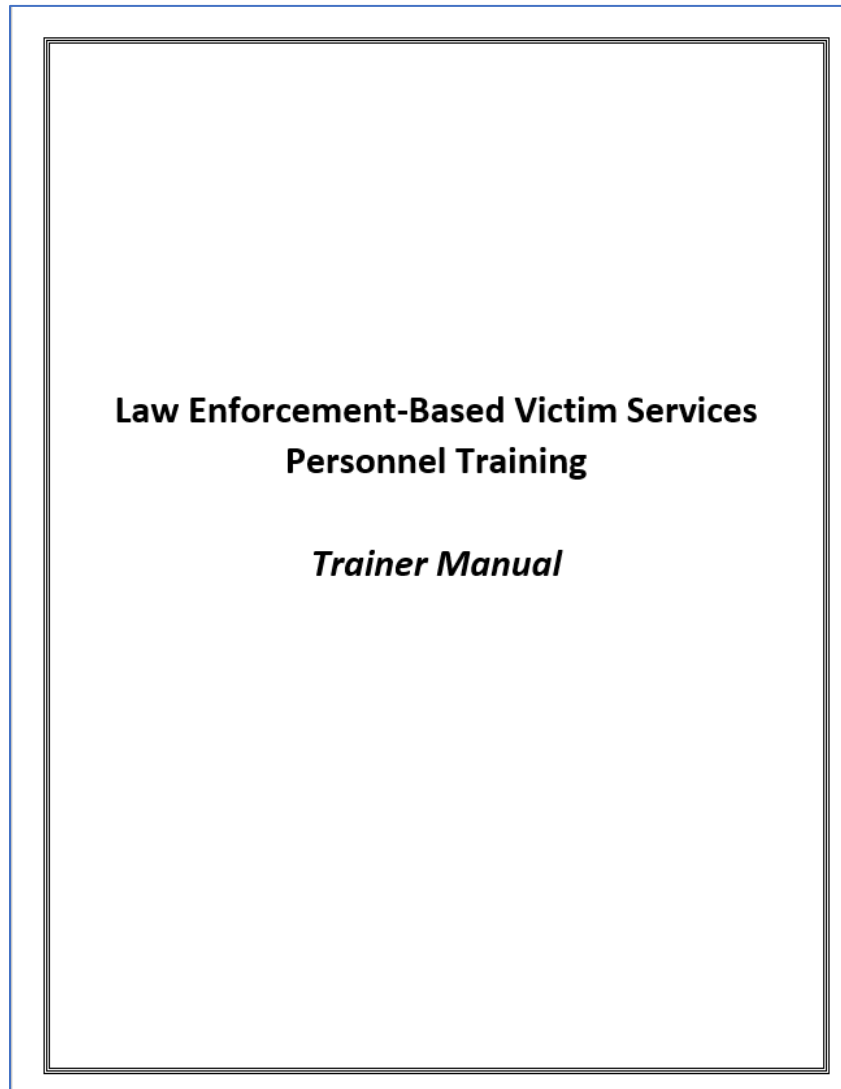
- [*Template Package I - Getting Started*](#) provides victim services personnel job descriptions, interview questions, code of ethics, and personnel standards and responsibilities.
- [*Template Package II - Next Steps*](#) provides case response protocol templates.
- [*Template Package III - Student 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 VI - Program Evaluation*](#) includes a high-level overview of how to integrate program evaluation into victim services programs, sample surveys, and survey development tips.

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.

Templates

TEMPLATE – Trainer Manual

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this Trainer Manual template 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.



Agencies can use this link ([Trainer Manual](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Personnel Training Plan

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this Victim Services Personnel Training Plan template 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.

| Victim Services Personnel Training Plan |
|--|
| <p>Each training module is designed to be accompanied with additional training components. The trainer is encouraged to identify agency policies and protocols that correspond with the module content before the training (recommendations for each module are provided below). OVC's Victim Assistance Training (VAT) Online provides free foundational web-based training that can further supplement learning on these topics. After in-class training (module) and self-paced online learning (OVC VAT Online), in-person shadowing with colleagues is highly recommended to demonstrate these concepts in practice. A list of recommended peer and partner learning opportunities can be found on LEV's Victim Services Personnel Onboarding Checklist.</p> |
| Module 1: Victim Services Role |
| <p>Module 1: Victim Services Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This presentation includes role parameters, statutes, terminology, and agency practices. Recommended time: 120 minutes <p>Agency Policies & Protocols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Agency] history, mission, values Victim Services history, mission, values Victim Services Personnel Policy Crisis Response Plans (victim services role) <p>Supplemental Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OVC VAT Online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy Types of Victim Services Peer & Partner Learning Opportunities |
| Module 2: Critical Needs of Victims |
| <p>Module 2: Critical Needs of Victims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This presentation includes critical needs of victims following victimization. Recommended time: 45 minutes <p>Agency Policies & Protocols</p> <p>Supplemental Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OVC VAT Online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing Victims' Needs Trauma-Informed Care Peer & Partner Learning Opportunities |
| Module 3: Criminal Justice Systems |
| <p>Module 3: Criminal Justice Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This presentation includes overviews the criminal justice systems, classification structure of crimes, investigation and court processes, and victim services personnel role. Recommended time: 120 minutes |
| <p>Victim Services Personnel Training Plan, [revision date]</p> |

Agencies can use this link ([Victim Services Personnel Training Plan](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Personnel Peer/Partner Learning Opportunity Feedback

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this Victim Services Personnel Peer/Partner Learning Opportunity Feedback template 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.

Instructions: Please complete this form after the new victim services specialist shadows you in your role to provide feedback to the specialist's supervisor. Provide completed form to [name and email address].

| Victim Services Personnel Peer/Partner Learning Opportunity Feedback | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>New Staff Information</i> | | | |
| First & Last Name: | | | |
| Position: | | | |
| <i>Evaluator Information</i> | | | |
| First & Last Name: | | | |
| Agency: | | Title: | |
| Activities/Processes Observed: | | | |
| <i>Victim Services Personnel Conduct</i> | | | |
| Arrived on time: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Dressed appropriately: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If no, explain: | | If no, explain: | |
| Followed instructions: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| If no, explain: | | | |
| Communicated professionally and appropriately with you and others: | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If no, explain: | | | |
| Reacted appropriately to crisis circumstances (if applicable): | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If no, explain: | | | |
| Actively engaged with you and others (as appropriate): | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If no, explain: | | | |
| Demonstrated active listening skills (as appropriate): | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If no, explain: | | | |
| Comments | | Return completed form to: | |
| | | [insert name/address/email address] | |

Victim Services Personnel Peer/Partner Learning Opportunity Feedback, [revision date]

Agencies can use this link ([Victim Services Personnel Peer/Partner Learning Opportunity Feedback](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Victim Services Personnel Training Evaluation

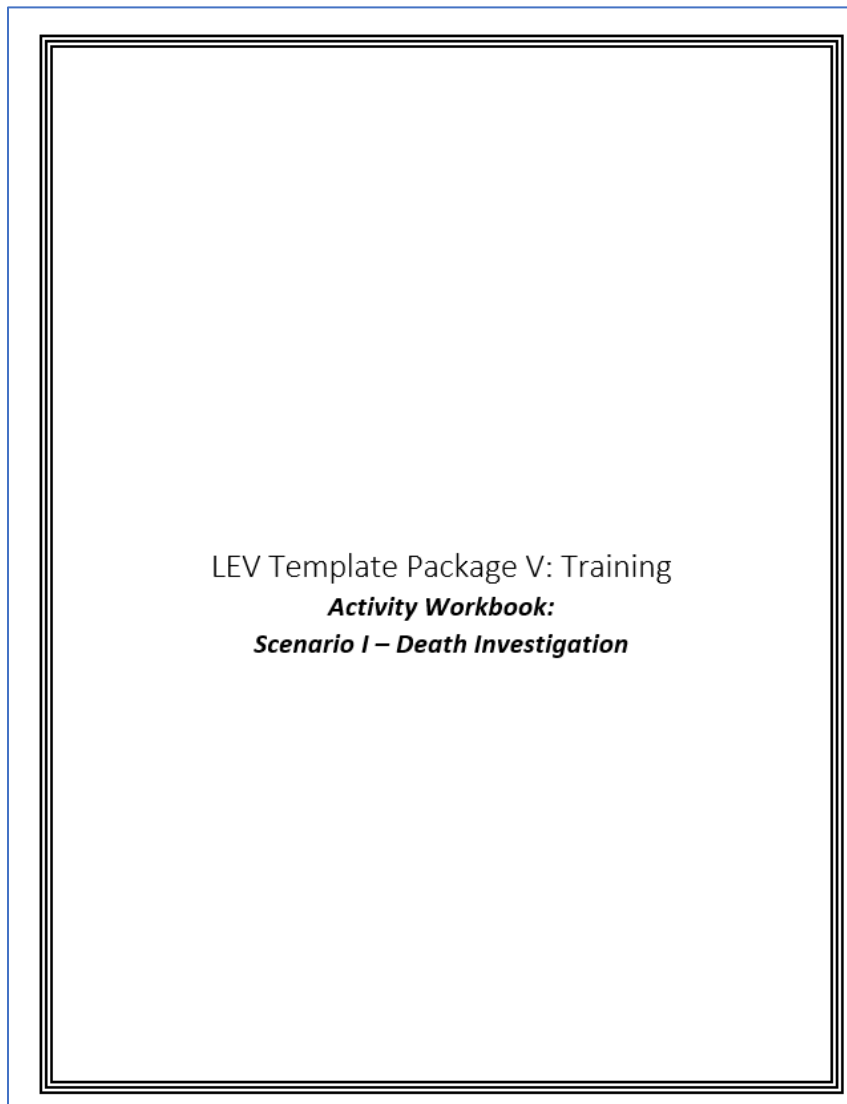
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this Victim Services Personnel Training Evaluation template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including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

| Victim Services Personnel Training Evaluation | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Complete this evaluation at the conclusion of the training. | | | | | |
| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| Overall, I was satisfied with the training. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The information presented at the training is relevant to my job. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My knowledge on the training subject has increased. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I feel comfortable using the information presented at the training. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I plan to implement what I have learned in my job. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments: | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Agencies can use this link ([Victim Services Personnel Training Evaluation](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Activity Workbook: Scenario I – Death Investigation

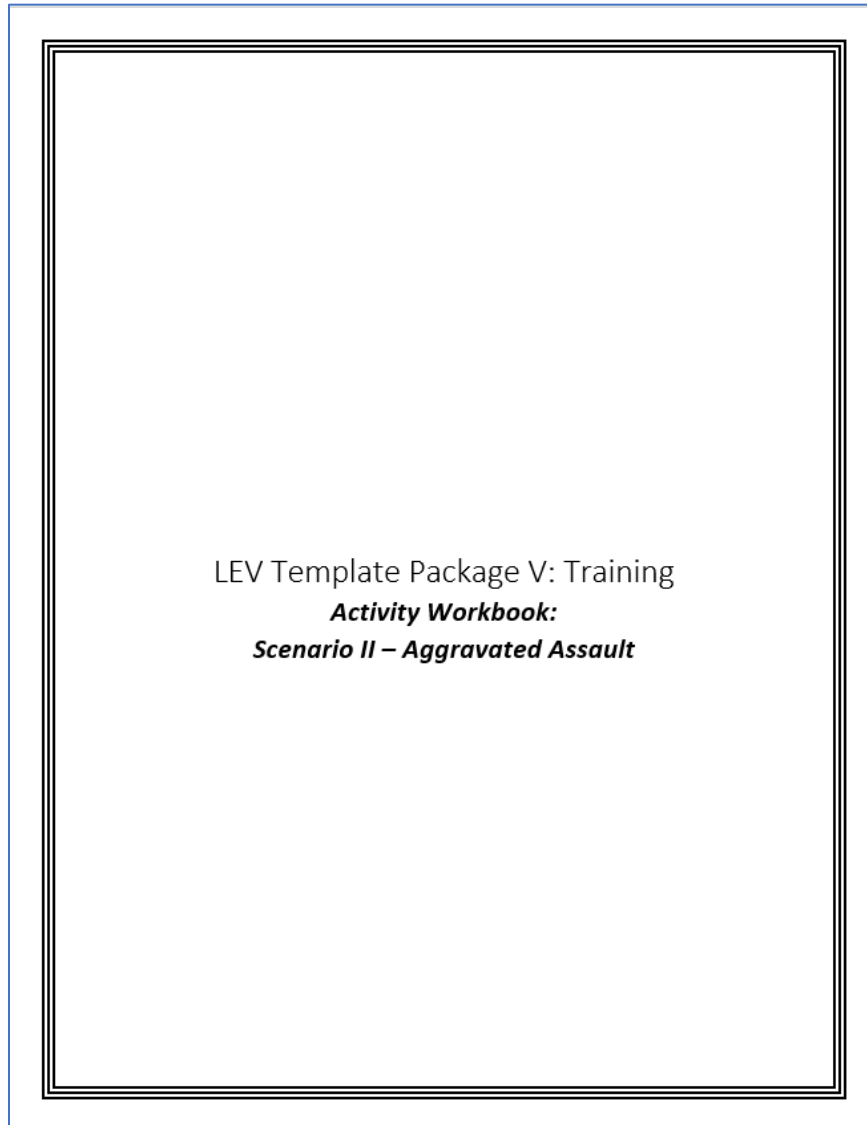
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this Activity Workbook template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human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



Agencies can use this link ([Activity Workbook: Scenario I – Death Investigation](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Activity Workbook: Scenario II – 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 Activity Workbook template 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.



Agencies can use this link ([Activity Workbook: Scenario II – Aggravated Assault](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Activity Workbook: Scenario III – Intimate Partner Violence

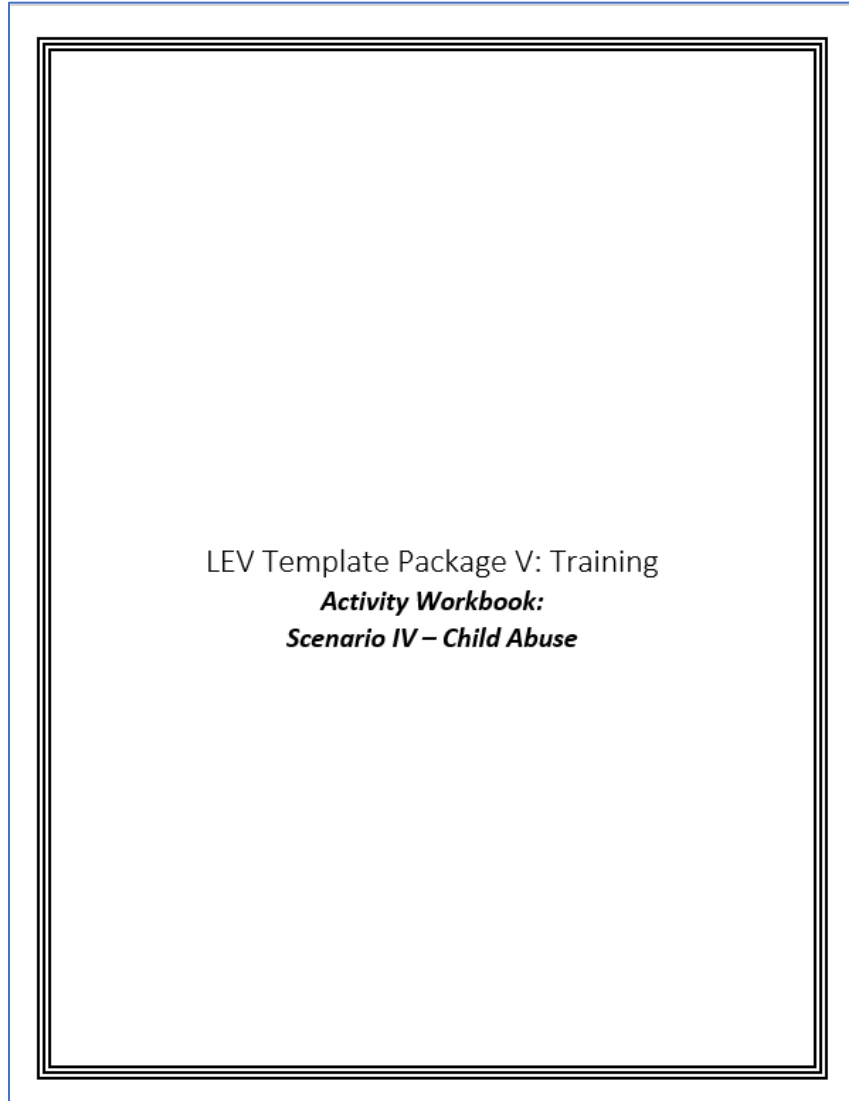
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Agencies can use this link ([Activity Workbook: Scenario III – Intimate Partner Violence](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Activity Workbook: Scenario IV – Child Abuse

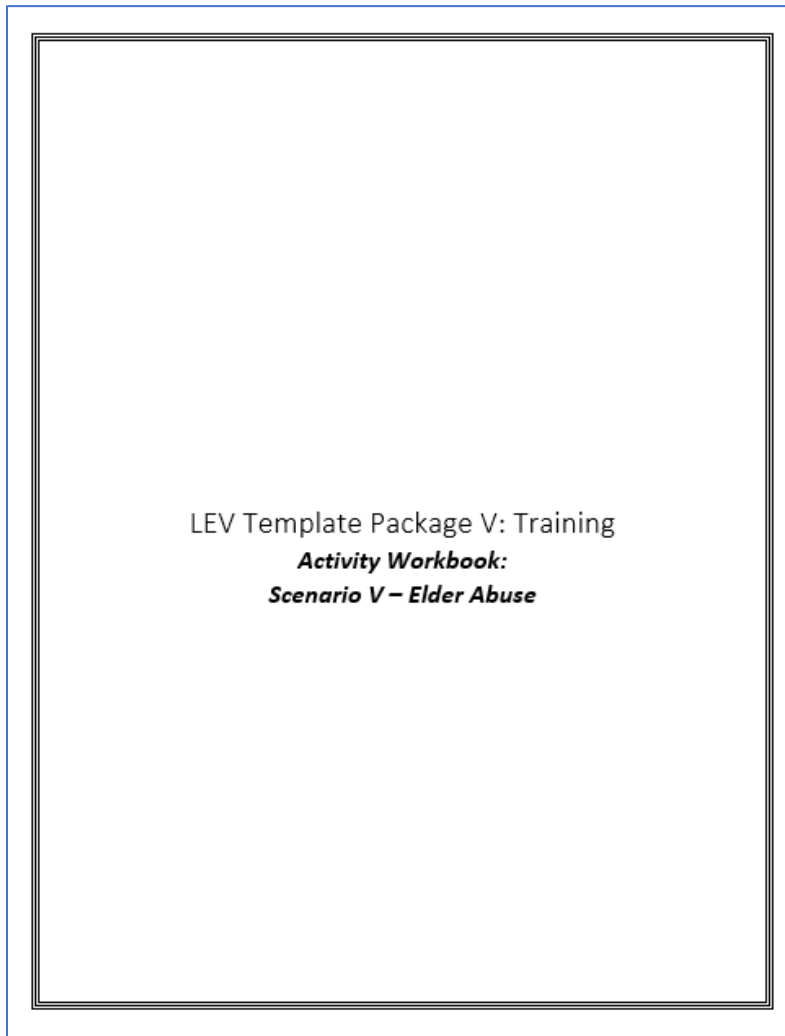
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Agencies can use this link ([Activity Workbook: Scenario IV – Child Abuse](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Activity Workbook: Scenario V – Elder Abuse

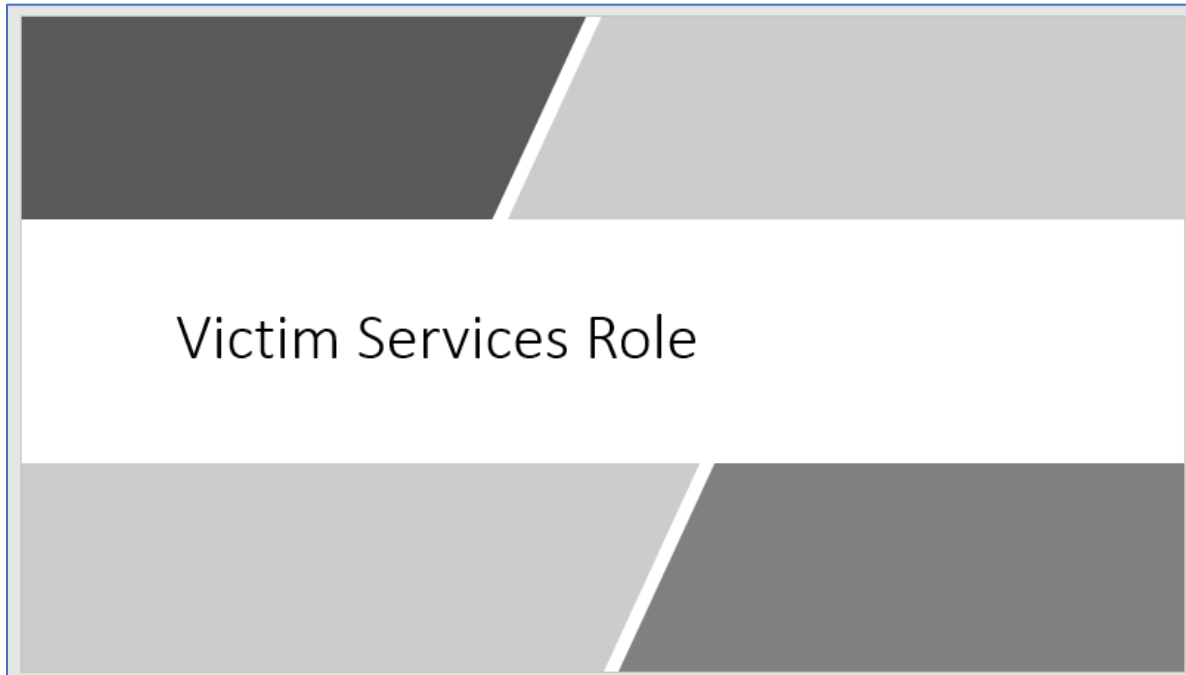
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this Activity Workbook template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human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



Agencies can use this link ([Activity Workbook: Scenario V – Elder Abuse](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 1: Victim Services Role

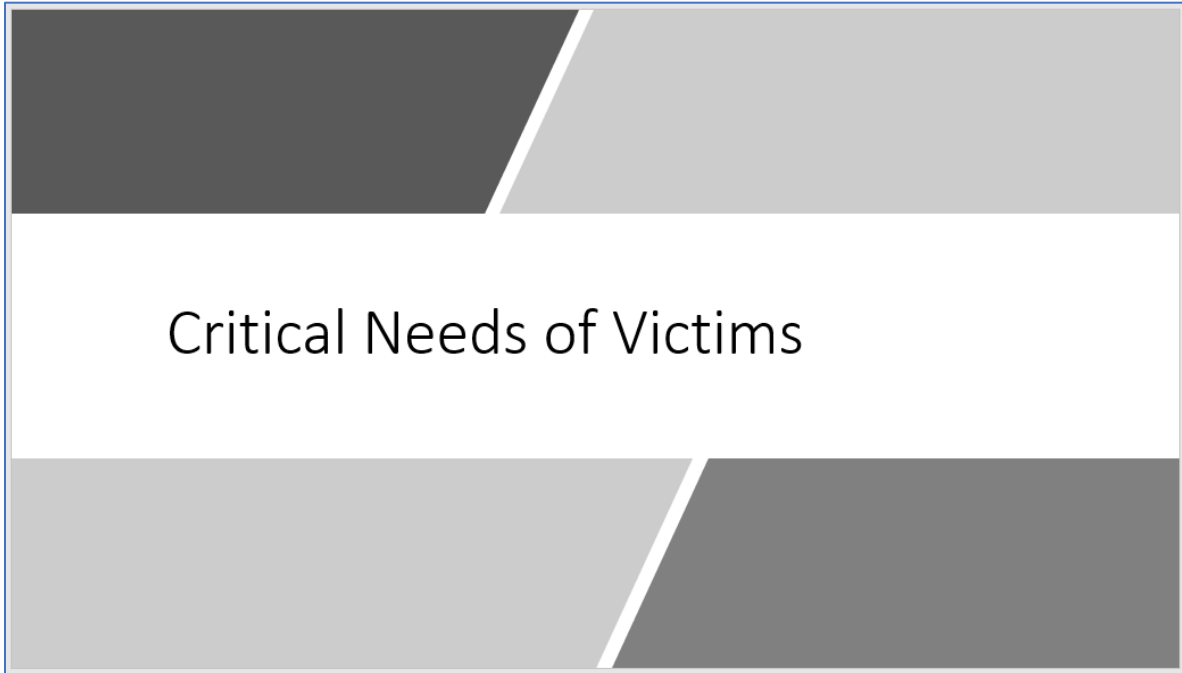
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources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



Agencies can use this link ([Module 1: Victim Services Role](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 2: Critical Needs of Victims

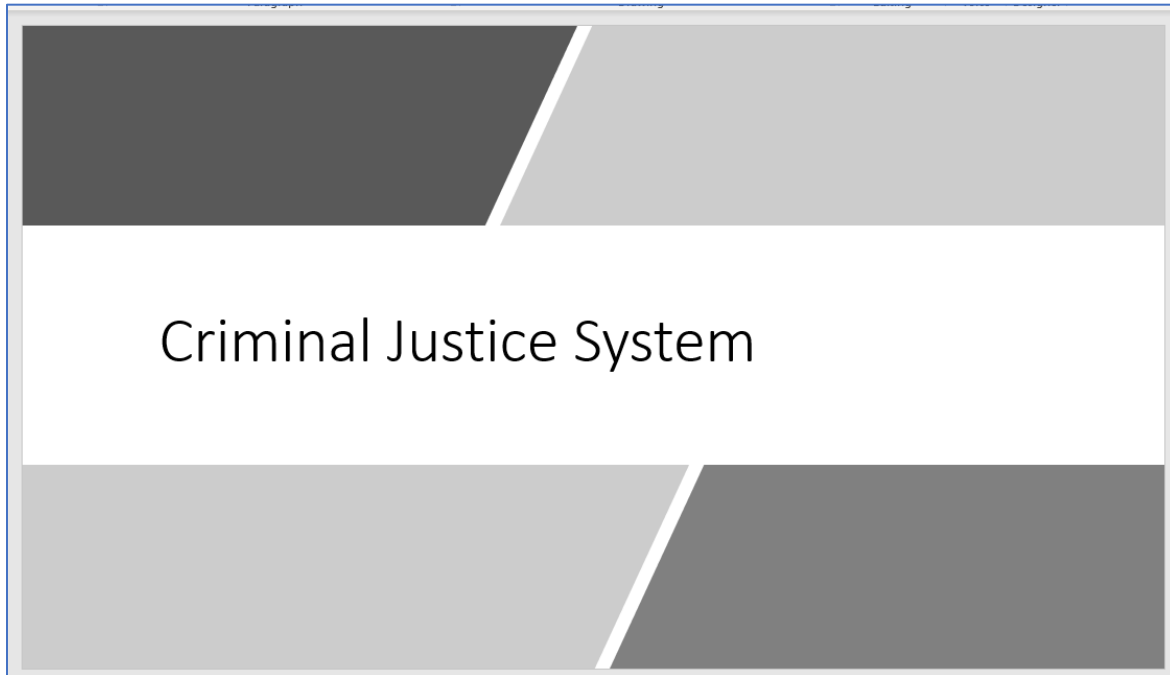
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Agencies can use this link ([Module 2: Critical Needs of Victims](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 3: Criminal Justice System

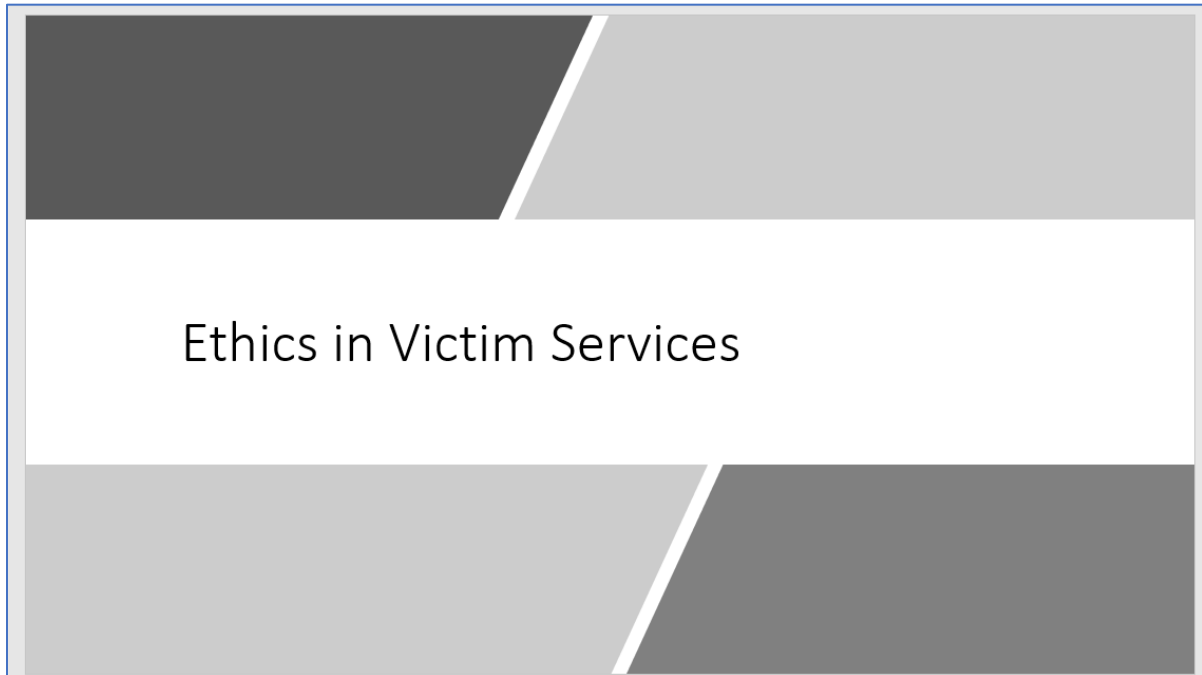
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources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



Agencies can use this link ([Module 3: Criminal Justice System](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 4: Ethics in Victim Services

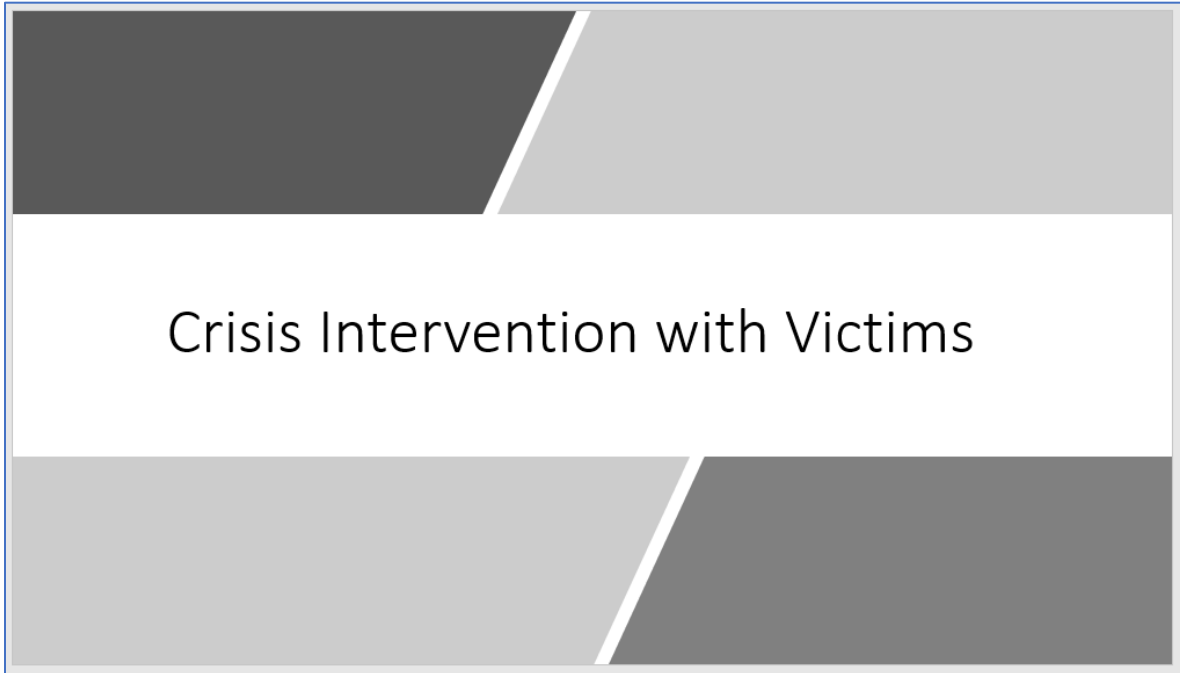
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources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



Agencies can use this link ([Module 4: Ethics in Victim Services](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 5: Crisis Intervention with Victims

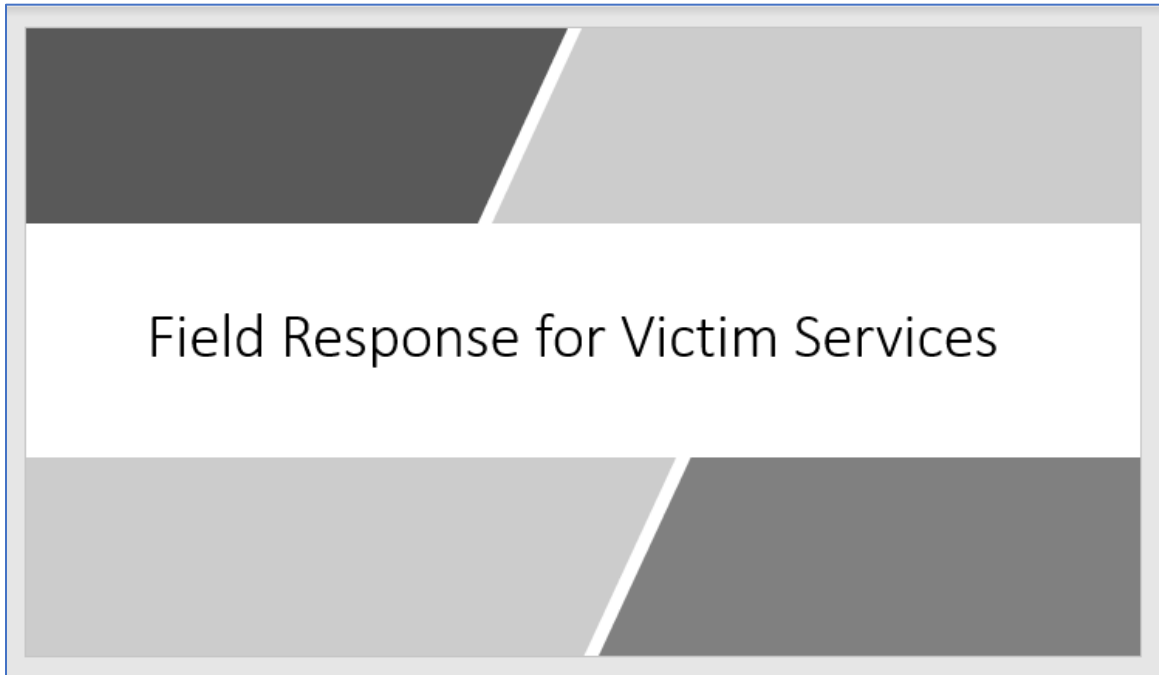
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources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



Agencies can use this link ([Module 5: Crisis Intervention with Victims](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 6: Field Response for Victim Services

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template 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.



Agencies can use this link ([Module 6: Field Response for Victim Services](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Sworn Personnel Guide: Roles & Responsibilities of [Agency] Victim Services in Field Response

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this Sworn Personnel Guide: Roles & Responsibilities of [Agency] Victim Services in Field Response template 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.

| Sworn Personnel Guide: Roles & Responsibilities of [Agency] Victim Services in Field Response |
|--|
| Personnel Responsibilities |
| [Agency] victim services personnel: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide trauma-informed, victim-centered, culturally appropriate services (e.g., crisis intervention, criminal justice support, referrals to community services, and advocacy) to those impacted by criminal circumstances• Ensure availability of information regarding rights of crime victims per state constitution and statutes• Are prohibited from providing services to suspects• Promote mutual respect and public confidence with community members, colleagues, and other professionals |
| Personnel Standards |
| Role Parameters |
| Per [State professional licensing and certification board] regulations, victim services personnel in their capacity with the [Agency]: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are not licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors, Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, Clinical Social Workers, or health professionals• Cannot diagnose, engage in clinical treatment, or provide professional recommendations pertaining to medical and/or mental health of persons served• Who hold licensure are prohibited from utilizing that licensure in a clinical or medical capacity during contact with crime victims, witnesses, survivors, or co-victims |
| Confidentiality and Privilege |
| Crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and co-victims shall be informed of the parameters surrounding confidentiality and privilege prior to service provision. Information provided or accessible to victim services personnel shall be released only with consent of the persons served in accordance with [State] statute and [Agency] policy. |
| Ethics |
| Victim services personnel shall abide by the most current [Agency] Victim Services Code of Ethics in the performance of all duties. [Agency] Victim Services Code of Ethics is intended to complement the [Agency] Code of Ethics. |
| Mandated Reporting |
| Victim services personnel who hold a reasonable belief that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A minor or vulnerable adult is or has been the victim of abuse (sexual and/or physical), neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation shall immediately report this concern to [State Child/Adult Welfare Agency] |

Revised June 2022

Agencies can use this link ([Sworn Personnel Guide: Roles & Responsibilities of \[Agency\] Victim Services in Field Response](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 7: Safety Planning with Victims

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template 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.



Agencies can use this link ([Module 7: Safety Planning with Victims](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 8: Crime Victim Compensation

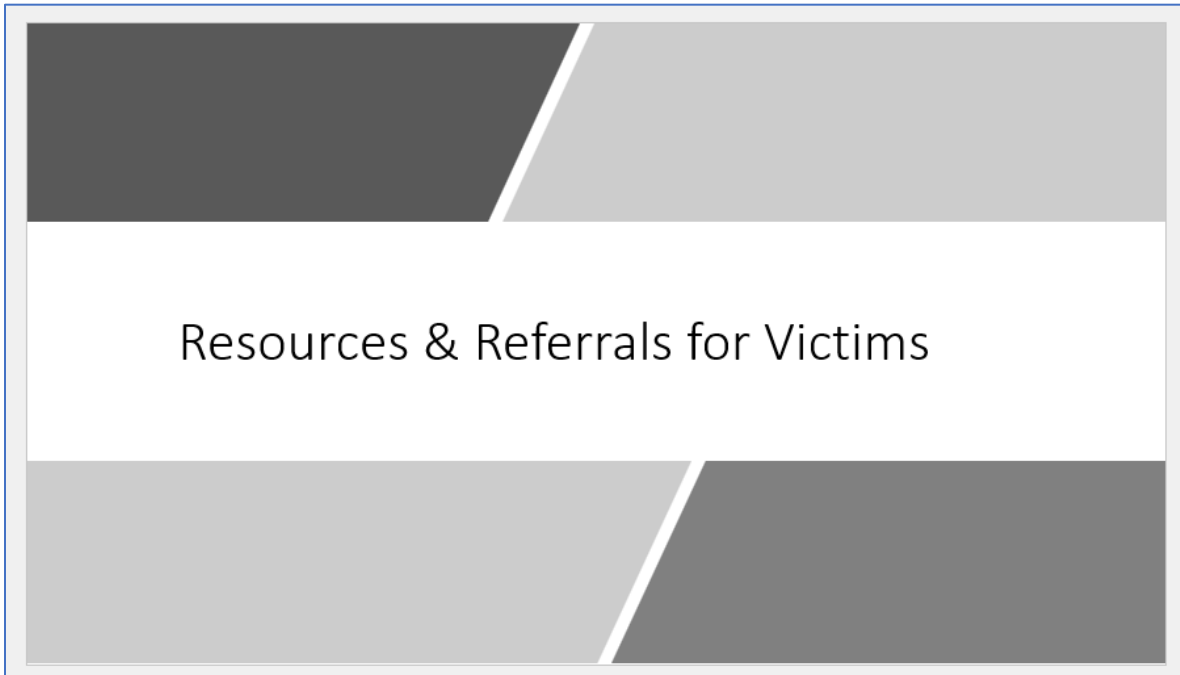
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources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



Agencies can use this link ([Module 8: Crime Victim Compensation](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 9: Resources & Referrals for Victims

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template 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.



Agencies can use this link ([Module 9: Resources & Referrals for Victims](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Supportive Handoff Guidelines

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this Supportive Handoff Guidelines template 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.

| Supportive Handoff Guidelines | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| | Definition |
| | A supportive handoff is the transfer of information and responsibility during transitions in service provision. |
| | Accountable Service Provision |
| | Supportive handoffs support victims' needs that extend beyond individual professional roles. Consistent completion of supportive handoffs can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce breakdowns in communication• Decrease victims' burden to independently seek information and services from multiple professionals• Increase victims' understanding of next steps and professionals responsible for actions and assistance• Support victim-centered, trauma-informed work by providing personal connections that can address access barriers (e.g., physical, language, cultural)• Support ethical and equitable services to victims |
| + | Process |
| | Referrals |
| | Supportive handoffs can occur when: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Victims are referred to your agency or services by another professional• You are referring victims to agencies or services of other professionals |
| | Communication Methods |
| | Supportive handoffs occur in the presence of the victim and can occur through in-person meetings, conference calls, or virtual platforms. Including the victim and all providers ensures that everyone participating can hear what is being said and engage in communication to understand the next steps in service provision |
| | Release of Information |
| | Supportive handoffs require exchange of information to support ongoing service provision. This may include specific information related to criminal cases, past services received by victims, and victims' current circumstances (e.g., financial status, health history). Ensure use of signed release of information documents when required by statute and policy. |
| | Information Exchange Format |
| | Use of a consistent communication structure can bridge gaps in communication styles between agencies and victims. When conducting a supportive handoff, it is suggested the following format is used to transfer information. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Situation – describe current circumstances prompting the transition in services• Background – provide relevant information for full understanding of victims' needs• Plan – describe actions and who is responsible Provide multiple opportunities for all parties to ask questions, clarify information, and confirm |
| | Revised January 2022 |

Agencies can use this link ([Supportive Handoff Guidelines](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 10: Victim Services Actions

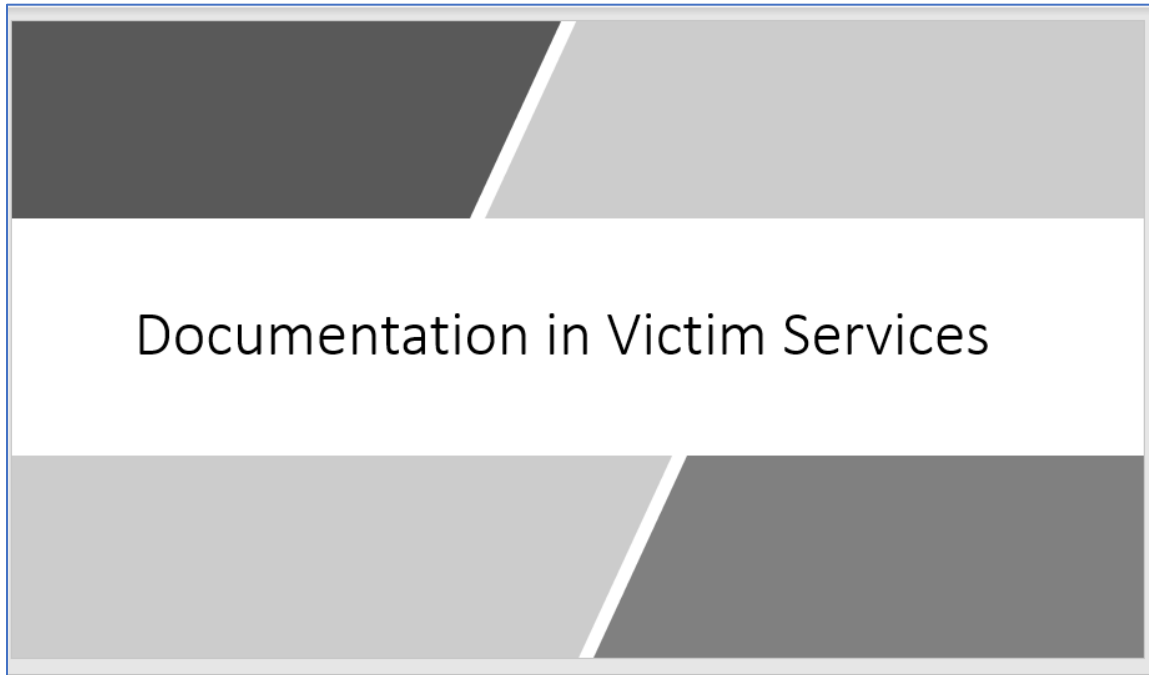
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources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



Agencies can use this link ([Module 10: Victim Services Actions](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 11: Documentation in Victim Services

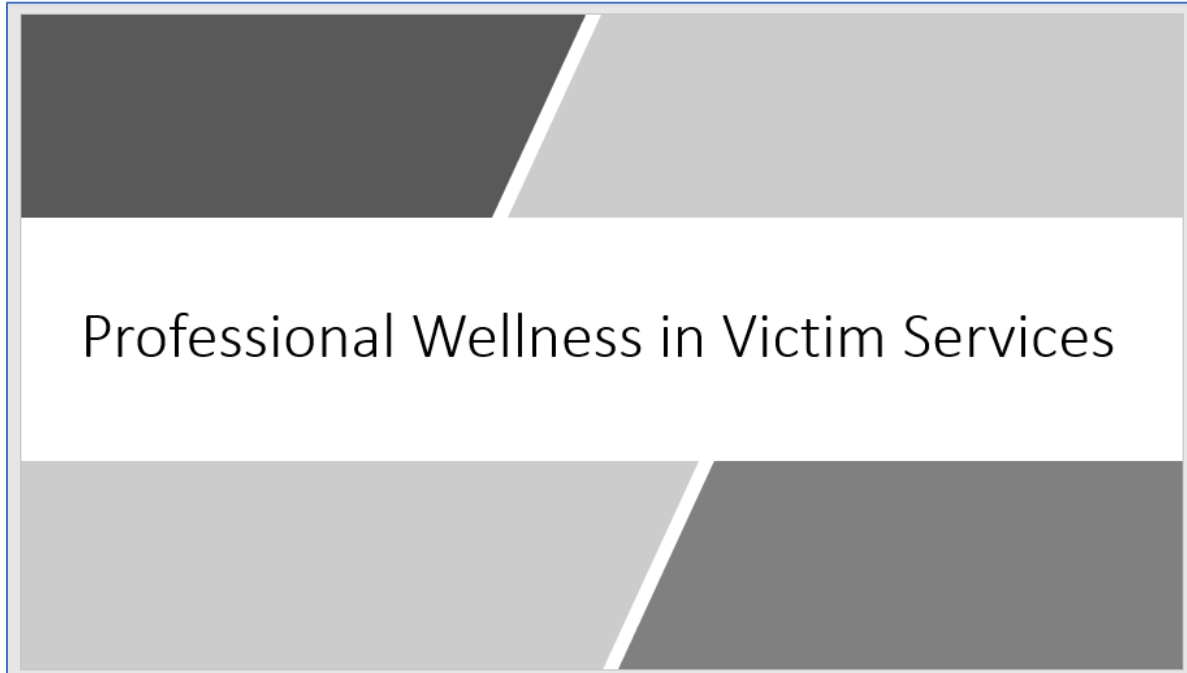
Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template to fit your agency in terms of format, language, and intent. Agency personnel, including legal counsel and human resources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



Agencies can use this link ([Module 11: Documentation in Victim Services](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Module 12: Professional Wellness in Victim Services

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this training module template 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.



Agencies can use this link ([Module 12: Professional Wellness in Victim Services](#)) to download this document.

TEMPLATE – Boundaries in Victim Services

Templates in this series provide sample language and content to help assess, develop, and refine professional victim service standards. You should customize this Boundaries in Victim Services template 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.

Boundaries in Victim Services

Professional Boundaries are limits that reinforce assigned responsibilities and protect those served from exploitation. They help us maintain professional objectivity, protect privacy (ours and others'), and help reduce ethical dilemmas.

When performing your assigned responsibilities, you represent yourself, fellow victim services personnel, your employing agency, and the field of victim services. Follow the policies and practices of the agency and those identified as best practices in the field.

Most people express a desire to help others as one of the reasons for entering the victim services field. However, there is more to being a helper than simply wanting to help. We must be able to separate ourselves from the pain and trauma of those we serve yet remain compassionate and engaged. If we fail to set boundaries, we run the risk of causing the victim further harm. Effective training and professionalism can help prevent unintentional harm.

Victims, Witnesses, Survivors, and Co-victims

- Properly identify yourself and explain your role—this includes mandated reporting and parameters of confidentiality and privilege.
- Maintain a professional relationship with those you serve:
 - No social, business, friendship, dating, or sexual relationship with any persons involved in reported incidents (victims, witnesses, survivors, co-victims, family members, friends, offenders)
 - Don't provide your personal information (address, phone numbers, social media)
- To support empowerment and sense of control, act on behalf of those you serve only with their permission and when they are unable to act independently. Failure to do so can—
 - Create dependence and helplessness
 - Reinforce a message that they are not capable

Family, Friends, and Acquaintances

- Limit the information you share about your work and those you serve:
 - If it's not your story to tell, don't tell it.
 - Share your feelings and reactions as a way to process events and self-reflect.
 - Never discuss names, addresses, locations, or descriptions of the circumstances that might identify those you serve or specific incidents.
- Consistently manage exposure to vicarious trauma. Failure to do so can—
 - Impact our relationships with family, friends, and acquaintances
 - Lead to compassion fatigue and burnout

Revised June 2022

Agencies can use this link ([Boundaries in Victim Services](#)) to download this document.



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