

Treatment Victim Advocate Victim Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide an example conversation that a Treatment Victim Advocate can use when contacting victims. Consider sharing much of this information each time you make contact, as victims' situations and safety is ever-changing.

Note: For victim safety you may want to use *67 to block your phone number before placing a call. *67 blocks on a per call basis. Remember to inform the victim that you will be contacting them from a blocked number.

Introduction

Hello, my name is (insert your name) & I am the Treatment Victim Advocate at (Insert name of DV treatment agency), where (insert offender's name) attends his/her/their domestic violence treatment. Is this a safe number for me to call and a good time for us to talk? Part of my role is to provide you with updates about how (insert offender's name) is or is not complying with the court ordered treatment. It is your choice whether or not to receive these updates.

- If they reply they are not interested, let them know you are required to attempt contact, and that you will respect their decision and will not reach out to them again. Also let them know that they may contact you at any time if they change their mind, and let them know how to do this.
- If they are interested, refer to the Confidentiality Tip section below.
- If call goes to voicemail then use the script above to leave a message **if** you know it is a safe number.

Confidentiality Tips for Treatment Victim Advocates

At this point in the criminal justice process victims may have been contacted by many different systems and community-based victim advocates. It's important to explain your role as a treatment victim advocate and explain limits of confidentiality.

Before I begin I would like to explain confidentiality as it applies to my role and our communication which is different than the contact you may have had with Probation, the District Attorney's Office or Law Enforcement Advocates. According to the offender treatment Standards, I can NOT share any information that you share with me with anyone unless you give me permission to. A written release would be required if would want information shared. This release is something that you can choose to agree to, modify, or withdraw at any time.

As a Treatment Victim Advocate, the only exception to confidentiality is that I have a responsibility to report suspected abuse or neglect of children and at-risk adults. This means any information shared about possible abuse or neglect of a child or at-risk adult, I am required to report to the appropriate authority, which also includes notifying (insert offender's name) DV treatment Provider, if a report is made. Do you have any questions about confidentiality?

Purpose for Your Contact: Tip for Advocates (Use your best judgment)

I can help to answer any questions you might have about the DV treatment process. You have the right to know certain things about (insert offender's name) status in treatment. This information is provided to me by (insert offender's name) DV treatment Provider. Things I can share with you are:

- (Insert offender's name) Attendance
- Date and time of group

- Degree of compliance with treatment
- Information about risk/threats and/or possible escalation of dangerous behavior
- (Insert offender's name) treatment evaluation recommendations
- Explanation of offender's treatment & how the process works
 - Such as variations with 3 levels, treatment plan reviews, timing overall, group/individual treatment
- Explanation of what a Multi-disciplinary Treatment Team (MTT) is and what the MTT does
- 24-hour notification of offender's absence (if a victim chooses to be notified)
- Notification of any contract violation by (insert offender's name)
- Notification prior to discharge from treatment

Discuss desired frequency of contact/updates that a victim would like and explain that they can change their minds at any time (i.e. monthly, at treatment plan reviews, at discharge, not at all, etc.). Offer options for victims to contact you with questions or safety concerns.

Status Checkpoint: Tip for Treatment Victim Advocates

- How are things going right now?
- Do you currently feel safe?

Offer Follow-up Assistance:

Additional things I can offer are connections to services you may want or need now or sometime in the future. Some of these are:

- Provide referrals for other types of assistance, as needed, for you and/or your children.
- Information about how to access victim compensation
- Safety planning
 - Which can include
 - Protection Order information
 - Emergency/shelter #s
 - Safe places to stay
 - Warning signs
 - Safety for kids
 - Leaving strategies
 - Safety planning if choosing to leave
 - Safety planning if choosing not to or are unable to leave.