

Example Script

The purpose of this document is to provide an example script that a Victim Advocate can use when contacting a Victim. Consider sharing much of this information each time you make contact, as their situation and safety is ever-changing. Consider using this form in tandem with the Victim Advocacy Agreement template.

*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.

Introduction:

Hello, my name is (insert your name) & I'm the Victim Advocate at (Insert name of DV treatment agency), where (insert offender's name) goes for his/her domestic violence treatment. Is this a safe time to talk? I am here to provide you with updates, if you want them, about how (insert offender's name) is or is not complying with the court ordered treatment.

Depending upon how the Victim responds, you may want to use the following example scripts:

- If they reply by saying they aren't interested then be sure to mention you are required to attempt to make contact, but you will respect their desire not to reach out to them again. You may also want to let them know that you are there for them if they change their mind at any time.
- If they are interested in talking with you now then refer to the following Confidentiality Tip and example scripts below.
- If your call goes into voicemail then use the script above to leave a message if you know that it is safe to do so.

Confidentiality TIP for Victim Advocates:

Remember that often many different systems and community based Victim Advocates are contacting the Victim throughout the time you are working with them. Thus, explaining confidentiality and the distinctions between types of Victim Advocates is imperative when you contact Victims, as it can be hard to keep track of who has the ability to have confidential communications with victims.

... My confidentiality is different than if you've had contact with probation or the District Attorney's office or Law Enforcement Advocates. According to Offender Treatment Standards, I can NOT share any information that you share with me with anyone unless you give me permission to do so. A written release would be required if you want information shared. A written release is also something that you can choose to agree to, modify, or withdraw at any time.

... The only exception to this is that I am a Mandated Reporter of known or suspected child abuse/neglect, which means if you were to share any information about a child being abuses or neglected, I am required to report this to the appropriate authority.

... Who has confidentiality with you and the limitations of confidentiality can be confusing. Do you have any questions about confidentiality right now?

**Provide Purpose for Your Contact: TIP for Advocates
(please remember to use your best judgment)**

...I can answer any questions you might have about DV treatment. 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. The things I can share with you are the following:

- (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 the Multi-disciplinary Treatment Team (MTT) is and what the MTT does
- 24-hour notification of offender's absence *(if part of contact agreement with Victim)*
- Notification of any contract violation by **(insert offender's name)**
- Notification prior to discharge from treatment

Discuss frequency of desired contacts/updates with Victim if she/he chooses (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.

Questions to ask:
(For more suggestions, see Victim Advocacy Agreement template)

- How are things going right now?
- Do you currently feel safe?
- Is there any part of the treatment process that I can answer questions about?

Offer Follow-up Assistance:

...Additional things I can offer are connections to services you may want or need today or sometime in the future. Some of these things 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/crisis management.
 - 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.