

VICTIM'S INITIAL CONTACT

A GUIDE FOR ADVOCATES

SAFETY

- Does the victim have immediate or pending safety concerns?
- Does the victim have or need an HRO or OFP?
- Does the victim understand the role of an advocate and that the advocate can accompany her/him through the process?
- Is the assailant someone who is on probation or parole or has an HRO or OFP against him/her? Is there a no contact order?
- Does the victim know about preserving evidence including the initial urine collection?
- Does the victim know that she/he can stop the exam at any time or refuse parts of the exam? Does the victim know the implications of that decision?
- Does the victim know that the county will pay for some or all of the exam and how payment will be arranged?

OTHER

- Does the victim know she/he can choose to not report the assault to law enforcement – either right now or ever?
- Does the victim understand the implications of making a delayed report?
- Does the victim understand that she/he doesn't "press charges" but that the state presses charges against the assailant?
- Does the victim have special needs or are there special circumstances that the advocate needs to be aware of?
- Does the victim need transportation to the hospital?

MEDICAL EXAM

- Does the victim understand the medical exam process, the collection of evidence, and the limited timeline?
- Does the victim know that she/he can still have a medical exam conducted for health issues if the timeline for evidence collection has passed?
- Does the victim know where to go for an exam?
- Does the victim understand that she/he retains the power to report or not report the case to law enforcement - that the hospital will not contact the police without her/his consent?

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