Victim-Centered Release Form Considerations

Release of Information Forms:
Questions to Inform a Victim-Centered Form

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Form Selection

- Have you considered whether it best serves your clients to use a single form that both explains the contours of confidentiality and serves as the release of information (ROI) form or separate forms?

Network Identification

- Do you clearly identify the partners in the Network on the form?
- Do you clearly identify the purpose of the form?
- If there is a single Network release of information form, do you train partners on its use?
- If Network partners retain their own forms, do you train on the importance and use of ROIs?

Network Partners

- Do you offer the option to consent to information release to select Network partners, rather than to all?
- If so, have you thought through the ROI method best suited for your clients (e.g., identifying all Network partners in a single document while allowing for customized release selections using initials, check marks, etc. vs. generating separate ROIs for each network partner)?

Information Subject to Release

- Is the specific information covered by the release clearly identified?
- If so, have you thought through the identification method best suited for your clients (e.g., using categories of information vs. write-in boxes)?
- Do you avoid catch-all wording, such as "my confidential information", "relevant information", and "including but not limited to"?

Changing Release Authorization

- Does the form explain how to revoke the authorization to release information?
- Does the form explain how to extend or expand the authorization of release?
- Is specific contact information included?

Clarity of the Form

- Do you expressly address the difference between confidentiality and privilege?
- Do you clearly explain all key terms, including any potential use of the term "client"?
- Are the limits of confidentiality detailed?
- Is the Network's obligation or promise regarding maintaining privacy clearly explained?
- Do you clearly address any exceptions to confidentiality (e.g., mandatory reporting obligations, disclosures "required by law")?
- Do you expressly identify the personnel (by profession or role) that are bound by the articulated confidentiality policies and release authorization?
- Do you explain how information is shared?

Time Period

- Is the release form time-limited?
- Do you explicitly identify a specific time period in the form?
- Do you allow victims to select the time period for the authorization?

Accessibility

- Is the form accessible (e.g., in multiple languages, appropriate reading level, available in large-font or braille)?

Special Legal Circumstances

- Does your form specifically address instances where the signer is a minor?

Legal Compliance

- Do your policies and procedures comply with all applicable laws and regulations?