



## LAW ENFORCEMENT-BASED VICTIM SERVICES IN IOWA: PRIVACY, PRIVILEGE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

### INTRODUCTION

Best practice in victim services is about facilitating victims' ability to exercise meaningful choices. This requires understanding and supporting the exercise of victims' rights, which are found in state constitutions, statutes, rules and policies. For victims' rights to be meaningful, both compliance with and enforcement of these rights is necessary. Compliance is the fulfillment of legal responsibilities to victims and making efforts to reduce willful, negligent or inadvertent failures to fulfill those legal responsibilities; enforcement is the pursuit, by a victim or someone on behalf of a victim, of a judicial or administrative order that either mandates compliance with victims' rights or provides remedies for violations of victims' rights laws.

In addition to understanding victims' rights, best practices in victim services require understanding one's legal and ethical obligations as an advocate with regard to victim privacy, confidentiality and privilege, and the scope of one's services. Informing victims—at the first or earliest possible contact with them—of their rights and the advocate's role, including limitations on that role, is critical to victims' ability to make informed decisions about whether and how to exercise their rights, as well as whether, what and how much to share with any particular service provider. In addition, advocates need to build and maintain relationships throughout the community in order to provide meaningful referrals to victim service providers with complementary roles when a victim needs the referral.

### USING THIS RESOURCE

This resource is designed to enhance victim services personnel's knowledge and understanding of the law governing crime victims' rights to privacy, confidentiality and privilege in Iowa. It provides an overview of key concepts and excerpts of key legal citations that can help facilitate victims' meaningful choices regarding these rights. To keep this *Guide* as user-friendly as possible in light of the breadth, complexity and evolving nature of law, the *Guide* does not include all laws. It does not constitute legal advice, nor does it substitute for legal advice. This resource is best used together with its companion resource: *Select Victims' Rights - Iowa*.

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## OVERVIEW

### What are the key similarities and differences between system-based and community-based advocates?

#### Key Takeaways

- System-based advocates are typically employed by a law enforcement agency, prosecutor's office, corrections, or another governmental agency.
- Community-based advocates are typically employed by a nonprofit/non-governmental agency.
- The United States Supreme Court and state laws impose on the prosecutor's office—and by extension on other governmental agencies such as law enforcement—legal obligations to disclose information to the accused and their lawyer. These obligations are sometimes called *Brady* Obligations or Discovery Obligations.
- *Brady*/Discovery Obligations generally attach to system-based advocates, and these obligations can override an advocate's ability to keep something confidential. That means anything shared with a system-based advocate may have to be disclosed to law enforcement, prosecutors, and eventually the accused and their lawyer.
- Community-based advocates are generally not directly linked to a government actor, and therefore not subject to *Brady*/Discovery Obligations; this means that they can hold more things confidential, and depending on local law, may also be bound by privilege (which is an even stronger privacy protection than confidentiality).

#### Discussion

It is imperative that an advocate understands and communicates clearly—at the first encounter or earliest possible contact—whether one is a community-based or system-based advocate, the advocate's legal and ethical obligations with regard to privacy, confidentiality and privilege and the scope of the services that the advocate offers.<sup>1</sup> This information will assist the victim in understanding the role of the advocate and any limitations of that role regarding: (1) the services that the advocate can provide and (2) the privacy protections that exist regarding information shared with the advocate. Further, providing a clear explanation of the advocate's role to the victim will help the victim make informed decisions, build rapport and avoid misunderstandings.

While both system-based and community-based advocates serve victims and operate under a general ethical rule of confidentiality, there are significant differences between them. System-based advocates are typically employed by a law enforcement agency, office of the prosecuting attorney, corrections or another entity within the city, county, state or federal government. Titles for system-based advocates vary; for example, they can be called victim advocates, victim-witness coordinators or victim assistance personnel.<sup>2</sup> Because system-based advocates are typically a component of a government agency or program, a primary

focus of their work is assisting victims in their interactions with the system, and they will typically be able to provide services to the victims during the pendency of the investigation, prosecution and post-conviction legal aspects of a case. In addition, this placement as part of a government agency or program generally means that system-based advocates are subject to the *Brady* disclosure obligations (*see Brady v. Maryland* Section below for additional information) and generally, their communications with victims are not protected by privilege.

By contrast, community-based advocates are generally not directly linked to any government actor or agency. As such, they are not subject to *Brady*; generally, can assist victims even if a crime has not been reported; can assist before, during and after a criminal case; can provide holistic services aimed at victims' broad needs; and, depending on the jurisdiction's laws and funding source, can maintain privileged communications with victims.<sup>3</sup>

Because each type of advocate has different duties and protections that they can offer victims, knowledge of and partnerships between them is an integral part of facilitating meaningful victim choice and helping victims access holistic services.

### **What are privacy, confidentiality and privilege? Why do the differences matter?**

#### **Key Takeaways**

- Privacy is the broad right that allows one to control the sharing of personal information.
- Many jurisdictions have state constitutional and statutory protections for affording victims the right to privacy, including explicit rights to privacy and the broader stated rights to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect. A federal Constitutional right to privacy also exists.
- Confidentiality is a form of privacy protection; it is the legal and ethical duty to keep private the victim-client's information that was learned in confidence. The duty of confidentiality is found in laws and regulations that govern particular professions (e.g., community-based advocates and licensed mental health professionals) as well as certain types of information (e.g., health and educational records). In addition, certain funding sources (such as VOCA and VAWA) contain confidentiality requirements that govern anyone receiving the funds.
- Courts have the authority to require disclosure of a victim's confidential information when certain conditions are met. Circumstances that may compel disclosure of victims' otherwise confidential information include if the information is shared with a mandatory reporter and in the case of system-based advocates, if the information falls within the state's required disclosures to defendant pursuant to *Brady/Discovery Obligations*.
- Privilege is another privacy protection and is stronger than confidentiality. Privileges are defined by statute and rule and protect communications between

victims and certain people, such as doctors, psychotherapists/counselors, attorneys and in some jurisdictions, victim advocates. Key terms in the law may be defined in a way to limit the privilege. For example, among those jurisdictions that recognize an advocate-victim privilege, the term “advocate” is often narrow (e.g., only sexual assault advocates). Disclosure of privileged communications is prohibited unless the victim consents.

- Because privacy is so critical to victims it is important to understand what level of privacy protection can be afforded to a victim with whom one works and to communicate that BEFORE the victim shares any information.

## Discussion

### Privacy

*“Privacy” is a fundamental right, essential to victim agency, autonomy and dignity, which—among other things—permits boundaries that limit who has access to our communications and information.*

Privacy can be understood as the ability to control the sharing of personal information. *See Commonwealth ex rel. Platt v. Platt*, 404 A.2d 410, 429 (Pa. Super. Ct. 1979) (“The essence of privacy is no more, and certainly no less, than the freedom of the individual to pick and choose for [themselves] the time and circumstances under which, and most importantly, the extent to which, his attitudes, beliefs, and behavior and opinions are to be shared with or withheld from others.”). For many crime victims, maintaining privacy in their personal information and communications is vitally important. In fact, maintaining privacy is so important that some victims refrain from accessing critical legal, medical or counseling services without an assurance that treatment professionals will protect their personal information from disclosure. Understanding this and wishing as a matter of public policy to encourage access to services when needed, federal and state legislatures and professional licensing bodies have created frameworks of laws and regulations that help protect the information victims share with professionals from further dissemination. To this end, every jurisdiction has adopted statutory or constitutional victims’ rights; some jurisdictions explicitly protect victims’ rights to privacy, or to be treated with dignity, respect or fairness.<sup>4</sup> Victims also have a federal Constitutional right to privacy.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the broad rights to privacy that exist, privacy protections generally come in two forms: “confidentiality” and “privilege.” Professionals who work with victims should understand each concept.

### Confidentiality

*“Confidentiality” is a legal and ethical duty not to disclose the victim-client’s information learned in confidence.*

As part of accessing services, victims frequently share highly sensitive personal information

with professionals. A victim's willingness to share this information may be premised on the professionals' promise to not disclose it. The promise to hold in confidence the victim's information is governed by the professional's ethical duties, regulatory framework and/or by other various laws. Breaking the promise may carry sanctions. The promise not to disclose information that is shared in confidence—as well as the legal framework that recognizes this promise—are what qualifies this information as “confidential.”

Key aspects of confidential communications are that: (1) they are made with the expectation of privacy; (2) they are not accessible to the general public; (3) there may or may not be legal requirements that the recipient keep the information private; and (4) there may be a professional/ethical obligation to keep the information private.

Professional confidentiality obligations may be imposed by one's profession, e.g., advocate ethics; social worker ethics; attorney ethics; medical provider ethics; and mental health counselor ethics. In addition, certain laws may have confidentiality provisions that are tied to funding. If an entity receives such funds, then it is bound by confidentiality or risks losing funding. Examples of laws that impose confidentiality requirements include the: (1) Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), 28 C.F.R. § 94.115; (2) Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), 34 U.S.C. § 12291(b)(2)(A)–(B); and (3) Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), 42 U.S.C. § 10406 (c)(5)(B). For example, VAWA (Section 3), VOCA and FVPSA regulations prohibit sharing personally identifying information about victims without informed, written and reasonably time-limited consent. VAWA and VOCA also prohibit disclosure of individual information without written consent. In addition, depending on the types of victim information at issue, other statutes may impose additional restrictions, including the Federal Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (protections governing the handling of education records); the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA), 42 U.S.C. § 1320d et seq. (protections governing the handling of health records); and the Stored Communications Act (SCA), 18 U.S.C. § 2701 et seq. (protections governing electronic communications and transactions records).

When providing services, professionals should discuss with victims the consequences of sharing information before information is shared. These consequences may include the: (1) inability to “take back” a disclosure; (2) lack of control over the information once released; and (3) risk of the accused accessing the information. In addition, even when laws appear to prohibit disclosure, there are often exceptions that require disclosure, for instance in response to court orders or valid subpoenas. These limits should be explained to a victim. For example, a court may make a determination that an accused's interests outweigh the confidentiality protection afforded by a law and order the professional to disclose the victim's private information. Although a victim can be assured that a professional may not ethically disclose her confidential information unless legally required to do so, it is important that a victim understand that courts have the authority to require a professional to break the promise of confidentiality when certain conditions are met. Other circumstances that may compel disclosure of victims' otherwise confidential information include if the information is shared with a mandatory reporter of elder or child abuse and if the

information falls within the state's required disclosures to defendant pursuant to the United States Supreme Court case *Brady v. Maryland*.

Thus, although the basic rule of confidentiality is that a victim's information is not shared outside an agency unless the victim gives permission to do so, it is important to inform victims before they share information whether, when and under what circumstances information may be further disclosed.

### Privilege

*"Privilege" is a legal right of the victim not to disclose—or to prevent the disclosure of—certain information in connection with court and other proceedings.*

Legislatures throughout the country have recognized that the effective practice of some professions requires even stronger legal protection of confidential communications between the professional and client. This recognition has resulted in the passage of laws that prevent courts from forcing these professionals to break the promise of confidentiality no matter how relevant the information is to the issues in the legal proceeding. This additional protection is a "privilege"—a legal right not to disclose certain information, even in the face of a valid subpoena.<sup>6</sup> Key aspects of privileged communications are that: (1) they are specially protected, often by statute; (2) disclosure without permission of the privilege holder (*i.e.*, the victim) is prohibited; (3) they are protected from disclosure in court or other proceedings; (4) the protections may be waived only by the holder of the privilege (*i.e.*, the victim); and (5) some exceptions may apply. Examples of communications that may be protected by privilege depending on jurisdiction include: (1) spousal; (2) attorney-client; (3) clergy-penitent; (4) psychotherapist/counselor-patient; (5) doctor-patient; and (6) advocate-victim. Jurisdictions that recognize a given privilege may narrowly define terms, thereby limiting its applications. For example, among the jurisdictions that recognize an advocate-victim privilege, many define the term "advocate" to exclude those who are system-based (*i.e.*, affiliated with a law-enforcement agency or a prosecutor's office).<sup>7</sup>

### Understanding the Differences

Because maintaining a victim's control over whether and how to disclose personal information is so important and because community-based and system-based advocates can offer different levels of protection regarding communications, every professional must know whether their communications with a victim are confidential or privileged, as well as how courts have interpreted the scope of each protection. This information should be shared with victims in advance of information disclosure. To do otherwise may provide victim-clients with a false sense of security regarding their privacy and inflict further harm if their personal information is unexpectedly disclosed.

**What are HIPAA, FERPA, VOCA, VAWA and FOIA, and why are these relevant to my work as an advocate?<sup>8</sup>****Key Takeaways**

- Federal and many state laws protect certain types of information from disclosure. These laws generally cover medical, therapy and other behavioral health records, educational records and certain advocacy records.
- HIPAA—the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act—requires the protection and confidential handling of protected health information (PHI). This is important because although it permits release of PHI in response to a valid court order, no such release may be made in response to a subpoena or other request except under very specific circumstances.
- FERPA—the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act—protects the privacy of student education records, as well as any personally identifiable information in those records. Although the Department of Education provides that law enforcement records are not education records, personally identifiable information collected from education records and shared with law enforcement remain protected from disclosure.
- Victim assistance programs that receive funding under either VOCA (the Victims of Crime Act of 1984) or VAWA (the Violence Against Women Act) are mandated to protect crime victims' confidentiality and privacy subject to limited exceptions, such as mandatory reporting or statutory or court mandates. Even if disclosure of individual client information is required by statute or court order, recipients of VOCA or VAWA funding must provide notice to victims affected by any required disclosure of their information, and take steps to protect the privacy and safety of the victims.
- Open records' laws—also commonly referred to as public records' laws or sunshine laws—permit any person to request government documents and, if the government refuses to turn them over, to file a lawsuit to compel disclosure. Every state and the federal government have such laws (the federal law is known as FOIA, the Freedom of Information Act), which carry a presumption of disclosure. That means that all government records are presumed open for public inspection unless an exemption applies. Many exemptions from disclosure exist, including for some types of law enforcement records. All advocates should understand their jurisdiction's open records' laws, especially as they relate to exemptions that may apply to law enforcement and other victim-related records.

**Discussion**

**HIPAA:** Federal law—as well as state law in many jurisdictions—provides crime victims with different forms of protections from disclosure of their personal and confidential information. This includes protections against the disclosure of medical and/or therapy and other behavioral health records without the victim's consent. HIPAA—codified at 42



U.S.C. § 1320d et seq. and 45 C.F.R. § 164.500 et seq.—is the acronym for the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, a federal law passed in 1996. HIPAA does a variety of things, but most relevantly, it requires the protection and confidential handling of protected health information (PHI). This is important because although it permits release of PHI in response to a valid court order, no such release may be made in response to a subpoena or other request unless one of the following circumstances is met:

1. The entity must receive “satisfactory assurance” from “the party seeking the information that reasonable efforts have been made by such party to ensure that the individual who is the subject of the protected health information that has been requested has been given notice of the request[.]” 45 C.F.R. § 164.512(e)(1)(ii)(A).  
-or-
2. The entity must receive “satisfactory assurance” from the “party seeking the information that reasonable efforts have been made by such party to secure a qualified protective order” that meets certain requirements, detailed in subsection (iv), 45 C.F.R. § 164.512(e)(1)(ii)(B).

Advocates may wish to inform victims that they may proactively contact their medical providers, informing them that the victims are asserting privilege and other legal protections in their records, and requesting that these providers: (1) give them prompt notice of any request for the victims’ medical records; (2) refuse to disclose the records pursuant to any such request without first receiving a valid court order; and (3) ensure that no medical records are released without first permitting the victims to file a challenge to their release. Advocates who work for or with community-based organizations—including organizations that provide general mental health services as well as those that serve domestic violence or sexual assault victims—should advise victims about the possibility of asserting HIPAA protections if facing a request for their records.

FERPA: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)—codified at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g—“is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records, and the [personally identifiable information] contained therein, maintained by educational agencies or institutions or by a party acting for the agencies or institutions.”<sup>9</sup> FERPA applies to those agencies and institutions that receive funding under any U.S. Department of Education program.<sup>10</sup> “Private schools at the elementary and secondary levels generally do not receive funds from the Department [of Education] and are, therefore, not subject to FERPA, but may be subject to other data privacy laws such as HIPAA.”<sup>11</sup>

Protections afforded by FERPA include the right of parents or eligible students to provide a signed and dated, written consent that clearly identifies which education records or personally identifiable information may be disclosed by the educational agency or institution; the person who may receive such records or information; and the purpose for the disclosure prior to disclosure of an education record or personally identifiable information, except in limited circumstances such as health or safety emergencies.<sup>12</sup>

Notably, while the Department of Education provides that law enforcement records are not

education records, “personally identifiable information [collected] from education records, which the school shares with the law enforcement unit, do not lose their protected status as education records just because they are shared with the law enforcement unit.”<sup>13</sup> Thus, law enforcement has a duty to understand and comply with FERPA when drafting police reports, supplemental reports and, generally, sharing or relaying information.

It is important that advocates have an understanding of FERPA as well as other federal laws, state laws and local policies that address student privacy in education records as eligible students or parents may be afforded privacy protections in addition to FERPA. For example, “the education records of students who are children with disabilities are not only protected by FERPA but also by the confidentiality of information provisions in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).”<sup>14</sup>

VOCA and VAWA: The Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA)—codified at 34 U.S.C. §§ 20101 to 20111—established the Crime Victims Fund (the Fund), which is managed by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The Fund is financed by, *inter alia*, fines and penalties from persons convicted of crimes against the United States as opposed to by tax dollars.<sup>15</sup> The Fund supports victim assistance programs that offer direct victim services and crime victim compensation.<sup>16</sup> Examples of direct services are crisis intervention, emergency shelters or transportation, counseling and criminal justice advocacy; and crime victim compensation programs that cover expenses incurred as a result of the crime.<sup>17</sup>

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)—enacted in 1994 and reauthorized in 2000, 2005 and 2013—created an array of federal protections for victims of crimes, including domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. Additionally, VAWA provided funding for services and programs to combat violent crimes against women. VAWA funds are administered by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), U.S. Department of Justice.

Agencies that receive VOCA or VAWA funding are mandated to protect crime victims’ confidentiality and privacy subject to limited exceptions, such as mandatory reporting or statutory or court mandates. Specifically, state administering agencies and subrecipients of VOCA funding, are mandated “to the extent permitted by law, [to] reasonably protect the confidentiality and privacy of [victims] receiving services . . . and shall not disclose, reveal, or release, except . . . [in limited circumstances:] (1) [a]ny personally identifying information or individual information collected in connection with VOCA-funded services requested, utilized, or denied, regardless of whether such information has been encoded, encrypted, hashed, or otherwise protected; or (2) [i]ndividual client information, without the informed, written, reasonably time-limited consent of the person about whom information is sought . . .” 28 C.F.R. § 94.115(a)(1)–(2). Agencies that receive VAWA funding are subject to nearly identical duties to protect crime victims’ confidentiality and privacy subject to limited exceptions. *See* 34 U.S.C. § 12291(b)(2).

Even if disclosure of individual client information is required by statute or court order, state

administering agencies and sub-recipients' privacy and confidentiality obligations owed to crime victims do not disappear. State administering agencies and subrecipients of VOCA funds "shall make reasonable attempts to provide notice to victims affected by the disclosure of the information, and take reasonable steps necessary to protect the privacy and safety of the persons affected by the release of the information." 28 C.F.R. § 94.115(b). VAWA imposes similar requirements on recipients of funding. *See* 34 U.S.C. § 12291(b)(2)(C) ("If release of information . . . is compelled by statutory or court mandate[,] . . . grantees and subgrantees shall make reasonable attempts to provide notice to victims affected by the disclosure of information[] and . . . shall take steps necessary to protect the privacy and safety of the persons affected by the release of the information."). VOCA also mandates that none of the protections afforded to victims be circumvented. For example, a crime victim may neither be required to release personally identifying information in exchange for services nor be required to provide personally identifying information for recording or reporting purposes. 28 C.F.R. § 94.115(d).

It is important that advocates are aware if their positions and/or offices are subject to VOCA's and VAWA's mandates regarding victims' confidentiality and privacy protections and if so, understand how these mandates interact with disclosure obligations.

FOIA: Open records' laws—also commonly referred to as public records' laws or sunshine laws—permit any person to request government documents and, if the government refuses to turn them over, to file a lawsuit to compel disclosure. Every state and the federal government have such laws, which carry a presumption of disclosure, meaning that all government records are presumed open for public inspection unless an exemption applies.

The federal open records' law, known as the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA or the "Act"), 5 U.S.C. §552, was enacted in 1966. Similar to its state counterparts, FOIA provides for the legally enforceable right of any person to obtain access to federal agency records subject to the Act, except to the extent that any portions of such records are protected from public disclosure by one of the nine exemptions. Three such exemptions, Exemptions 6, 7(C) and 7(F) protect different types of personal information in federal records from disclosure. Exemption 6 "protects information about individuals in 'personnel and medical files and similar files' when the disclosure of such information 'would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.'"<sup>18</sup> Exemption 7(C) "is limited to information compiled for law enforcement purposes, and protects personal information when disclosure 'could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.'" Under both exemptions, "the concept of privacy not only encompasses that which is inherently private, but also includes an 'individual's control of information concerning [his/her/their] person.'"<sup>19</sup> Exemption 7(F), which also applies to law enforcement records, exempts records that contain information that "could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual."

Similar to FOIA, state open records' laws contain numerous exemptions, including for some types of law enforcement records (for example, prohibitions on disclosing identifying information of victims' and witnesses' generally or of child-victims and/or victims of

certain crimes). Advocates should have an understanding of their jurisdiction’s open records’ laws, especially as they relate to exemptions from disclosure that may be afforded to law enforcement and other victim-related records within their office’s possession. Jurisdiction-specific victims’ rights laws—including rights to privacy and protection—also provide grounds for challenging public records’ requests for victims’ private information.

### **Are there ethical standards relevant to my work as an advocate?**

#### **Key Takeaways**

- Advocates should know what ethical standards apply to their work with victims.
- Law enforcement agencies should develop a code of ethics specific to victim services personnel or, at a minimum, expand the scope of existing codes of ethics to include them.

#### **Discussion**

Yes, there are ethical standards—or “principles of conduct”—that guide victim advocates in their work.<sup>20</sup> Although there is no formal regulatory board that oversees victim assistance programs, the *Model Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors of Crime (Model Standards)* was created by the National Victim Assistance Standards Consortium with guidance from experts across the nation “to promote the competency and ethical integrity of victim service providers, in order to enhance their capacity to provide high-quality, consistent responses to crime victims and to meet the demands facing the field today.”<sup>21</sup>

The *Model Standards* cover three areas: (1) Program Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors of Crime; (2) Competency Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors of Crime; and (3) Ethical Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors of Crime.

The third area—Ethical Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors of Crime—contains “ethical expectations” of victim service providers that are “based on core values” in the field and are intended to serve as guidelines for providers in the course of their work. The Ethical Standards are comprised of five sections:

- (1) Scope of Services;
- (2) Coordinating within the Community;
- (3) Direct Services;
- (4) Privacy, Confidentiality, Data Security and Assistive Technology; and
- (5) Administration and Evaluation.<sup>22</sup>

Notably, “[p]rofessionals who are trained in another field (*e.g.*, psychology, social work) but are engaging in victim services will [also] abide by their own professional codes of ethics. If th[ose] ethical standards establish a higher standard of conduct than is required by law or another professional ethic, victim assistance providers should meet the higher ethical standard. If ethical standards appear to conflict with the requirements of law or another professional ethic, providers should take steps to resolve the conflict in a

responsible manner.”<sup>23</sup>

Many law enforcement agencies have established their own code of ethics. Often, these codes of ethics are developed to guide the behavior of sworn personnel and may not encompass the role of victim services. Agencies are encouraged to develop a code of ethics specific to victim services personnel or, at a minimum, expand the scope of existing codes of ethics to include them.<sup>24</sup>

**What is the difference between discovery and production and how does this relate to the Supreme Court’s decision in *Brady v. Maryland*?**

**Key Takeaways**

- In a criminal case, the term “discovery” refers to the exchange of information between parties to the case—the prosecutor and defendant. The term “production” refers to the defendant’s more limited right to obtain information from nonparties, such as victims. Sometimes the term “discovery” is used to describe the parties’ requests for information and records from nonparties, but this is an imprecise use of the word as it confuses the two ideas.
- In *Brady v. Maryland* the United States Supreme Court announced a rule, and state laws have adopted it also, that impose on the prosecutor’s office—and by extension on other governmental agencies such as law enforcement—legal obligations to disclose information to the accused and their lawyer even if they do not ask for it. These obligations are sometimes called *Brady* Obligations or Discovery Obligations.
- Pursuant to these obligations, the prosecutor is only constitutionally required to disclose information that is exculpatory and material to the issue of guilt, and which is within the custody or control of the prosecutor.
- Beyond that material to which a defendant is constitutionally entitled under *Brady*, state statute or procedural rule may entitle a criminal defendant to additional discovery materials.
- If records are not properly in the possession or control of the prosecutor, a defendant can only try to obtain them through their more limited right of production by seeking a subpoena pursuant to the jurisdiction’s statutes and rules governing production of documents from a nonparty.
- Federal and state courts have found that prosecution-based victim advocates are part of the “prosecution team” for *Brady* purposes. Therefore, *Brady*/Discovery Obligations generally attach to system-based advocates, and these obligations can override an advocate’s ability to keep something confidential. That means anything shared with a system-based advocate may have to be disclosed to the accused and their lawyer.
- Victims should be informed at the outset that disclosure requirements—imposed by *Brady* as well as a jurisdiction’s statutes and rules governing discovery—may impact victim privacy.

### Discussion

*The Supreme Court case Brady v. Maryland, as well as jurisdiction-specific statutes and court rules, impose discovery and disclosure obligations on the prosecution and defendant—not on the victim.*

In criminal cases, victim privacy is routinely at risk by parties seeking personal records, such as counseling, mental health, medical, employment, educational and child protective services records. The law governing when these records must be disclosed to a defendant is complex, touching on a number of factors, including whether the records are within the government’s control; whether they are protected by a privilege; whether any applicable privilege is absolute or qualified; whether a victim has waived any privilege in full or in part; the scope of the jurisdiction’s constitutional or statutory rights and/or protections for victims; and the jurisdiction’s statutes and rules governing discovery and production. If the records sought are properly in the possession or control of the prosecutor, a defendant may be entitled to them, pursuant to constitutional, statutory or rule-based rights to discovery. If, however, the records are not in the possession (or properly in the possession) of the prosecutor, a defendant must subpoena those records pursuant to the jurisdiction’s statutes and rules governing production of documents from a nonparty. Although courts and practitioners sometimes refer to defendant’s receipt of materials from both the prosecutor and nonparties as “discovery,” this imprecise use of the term confuses a defendant’s right to discovery from the prosecutor with a defendant’s right to production from a nonparty.

In a criminal prosecution, the term “discovery” refers to the exchange of information between parties to the case—the prosecutor and defendant. *See, e.g., Fed R. Crim. P. 16* (entitled “Discovery and Inspection,” the rule explicitly and exclusively governs discovery between the government and defendant). It does not govern defendant’s ability to obtain information directly from a crime victim or other nonparty. With regard to discovery from the prosecutor, a criminal defendant has no general federal constitutional right to discovery.<sup>25</sup> The prosecutor, instead, is only constitutionally required to disclose information that is exculpatory and material to the issue of guilt, *see Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83, 87–88 (1963), and which is within the custody or control of the prosecutor.<sup>26</sup> The *Brady* rule imposes an affirmative “duty to disclose such evidence . . . even [when] there has been no request [for the evidence] by the accused, . . . and . . . the duty encompasses impeachment evidence as well as exculpatory evidence.”<sup>27</sup> The prosecutor’s *Brady* obligation extends to all exculpatory material and impeachment evidence and to “others acting on the government’s behalf in th[e] case.”<sup>28</sup>

Federal and state courts have found that prosecution-based victim advocates are considered part of the “prosecution team” for *Brady* purposes.<sup>29</sup> Beyond that material to which a defendant is constitutionally entitled, a prosecutor’s obligation to disclose information is governed by statute or procedural rule. A criminal defendant is often entitled to additional discovery materials from the prosecutor pursuant to statutes or rules, though discovery statutes and rules vary widely between jurisdictions.

*Victims should be informed that disclosure requirements—imposed by Brady as well as a jurisdiction’s statutes and rules governing discovery—may impact victim privacy.*

Prosecutors are required by law to disclose exculpatory statements to the defense. Because system-based advocates are generally considered agents of the prosecutors, and prosecutors are deemed to know what advocates know, such advocates are generally required to disclose to the prosecutors the exculpatory statements made by victims to advocates.<sup>30</sup> Examples of exculpatory statements might include:

- “I lied to the police.”
- “I hit him first and he was defending himself.”
- “The crime didn’t happen.”
- “The defendant is not really the person who assaulted me.”
- *Any other statement from a victim that directly implicates a victim’s truthfulness regarding the crime.*
- *Any other statement from the victim that provides information that could be helpful to a defendant’s case.*

Important steps that victim advocates may take to help ensure that their office has appropriate policies and procedures in place to protect victims in light of required disclosures to prosecutors’ offices include:

- Ensure that every person clearly understands the prosecutor’s interpretation and expectations regarding discovery and exculpatory evidence with regard to victim advocates.
- Work with the prosecutors’ offices to create a policy/practice that addresses the limits of system-based advocate confidentiality.
- Inform victims prior to sharing of information if the victim advocate is bound by the rules that govern prosecutors.
- Develop a short, simple explanation to use with victims to communicate your responsibilities (*e.g.*, don’t use the word “exculpatory”).
- Consider including a simple statement in the initial contact letter or notice explaining limitations.
- Determine how and when advocates will remind victims of the limits of confidentiality throughout the process.
- Identify what documentation an advocate might come into contact with and whether the prosecutors’ office considers it discoverable. For example: (1) victim compensation forms; (2) victim impact statements; (3) restitution documentation; and (4) U-Visa application documentation.
- Create policies regarding the types of documentation that an advocate may not need from the victim in order to provide effective victim advocacy (*e.g.*, victim statements, treatment plans, safety plans, opinions, conclusions, criticisms). Determine a process for clearly marking documents that are not discoverable to ensure they are not inadvertently disclosed. For example, use a red stamp that says, “Not Discoverable.”

- Inform the victim at the time they make a disclosure that constitutes exculpatory evidence—or soon as a statement is deemed exculpatory—that it is going to be disclosed.
- When possible, avoid receiving a victim impact statement in writing prior to sentencing.
- Develop relationships with complementary victim advocates and communicate about your obligations and boundaries regarding exculpatory evidence. This will allow everyone to help set realistic expectations with victims regarding privacy.
- Establish how exculpatory information will be communicated to the prosecutor’s office.

### **What is *Giglio*, and why is it relevant to my work as an advocate?**

#### **Key Takeaways**

- The United States Supreme Court (in *Giglio v. United States*) clarified the affirmative responsibility of the prosecutor’s office to disclose to the defendant any information in its possession that is material to their guilt or innocence. This means that the prosecution does not wait for a defendant to ask for material but must disclose it even without them asking.

#### **Discussion**

*Giglio v. United States*, 405 U.S. 150 (1972), is a case that was heard before the United States Supreme Court.<sup>31</sup> The impact of the Court’s decision in *Giglio* intersects with advocates’ work as it makes it imperative that advocates understand: (1) what “material evidence” is (see *Brady v. Maryland* section for additional information); (2) how the advocate’s role is or is not related to the prosecutor’s office along with any corresponding professional, ethical obligations; (3) ways to avoid re-victimization by preventing violations that would cause a victim to undergo a second trial for the same crime; (4) the types of procedures and regulations that need to be implemented for advocates to ensure—in the face of prosecutor or advocate turnover—that all relevant and appropriate information is provided to the prosecutor handling the case; and (5) whether state or other local laws impose additional obligations that build on those prescribed by *Giglio*.

### **What are key considerations for system-based advocates who receive a subpoena?<sup>32</sup>**

#### **Key Takeaways**

- Advocates may receive subpoenas to appear before the court or elsewhere to provide a sworn statement and/or to appear with specified documents.
- Victims should be informed immediately if advocates receive a subpoena for the information or documents related to a victim’s case.



- There may be grounds to challenge a subpoena issued to a system-based or community-based advocate. These challenges can be made by the prosecutor, the community agency and/or the victims (either with or without the help of an attorney).

### Discussion

In addition to providing prompt notice of receipt of a subpoena to the victim—whose rights and interests are implicated—a key consideration for system-based advocates, their superiors and the attorneys with whom they work is determining the type of subpoena received.<sup>33</sup> Subpoenas that system-based advocates often encounter are subpoenas demanding either: (a) a person’s presence before a court or to a location other than a court for a sworn statement; or (b) a person’s presence along with specified documentation, records or other tangible items.<sup>34</sup>

When system-based advocates receive the latter (which is called a subpoena duces tecum) there are a number of factors that should be considered, such as whether the documentation, record or item sought (a) is discoverable; or (b) constitutes *Brady* material, as defined by federal, state and local law. If an item, for example, is neither discoverable nor *Brady* material, an advocate, by law, may not be required to disclose the item. The same may be true if the item falls within an exception to discovery and does not constitute *Brady* material.<sup>35</sup> For additional information on *Brady* material, see the *Brady v. Maryland* section pertaining to disclosure obligations. Notably, this analysis is relevant to other types of subpoenas as well. For example, if a person is subpoenaed to testify and it is anticipated that defense counsel will attempt to elicit testimony that he/she/they are not legally entitled to, a prosecutor may file a motion in advance—such as a motion in limine or a motion for a protective order—requesting that the scope of the testimony be narrowly tailored or otherwise limited in accordance with the jurisdiction’s laws. For advocates employed by prosecutor’s offices, this analysis must be completed in cooperation with the prosecuting attorney.

Other key considerations for system-based advocates, their superiors and the attorneys they work with include determining: whether the requester has a right to issue a subpoena, and, more specifically, a right to issue a subpoena for the person’s attendance and/or items sought; whether the subpoena is unspecified, vague or overbroad to warrant an objection that the subpoena is facially invalid or procedurally flawed; whether court mechanisms are available to oppose the subpoena; whether such mechanisms are time sensitive and require immediate action; whether the victim received ample notice and adequate information; what the victim’s position is; and whether the law affords the victim privacy, confidentiality or privilege rights or protections that must be protected and enforced.

## SELECT LAWS

## SELECT PRIVACY LAWS

**What are key privacy rights and/or protections in Iowa?**

Iowa offers crime victims a number of narrow privacy protections. For example, Iowa protects victim privacy in the discovery process and in court proceedings. *See, e.g.*, Iowa Code Ann. § 9E.8(2) (outlining process for when a party requests disclosure of the actual address of a victim participating in Iowa’s Address Confidentiality Program, including an opportunity for the victim-participant to present evidence regarding the potential harm of disclosure); *id.* at § 236.10(3) (providing that the entire file or a portion of a file in a domestic abuse case must be sealed by the clerk, as ordered by the court, to protect the victim’s privacy interests); *id.* at § 236A.11 (same, with respect to files in a sexual abuse case); *id.* at § 915.20A(7)–(8) (outlining process when a party requests disclosure of information and/or materials that fall within the victim counselor-victim privilege); *id.* at § 916.2(6)–(7) (same, with respect to the military victim advocate-victim privilege).

Iowa extends heightened privacy protections to certain categories of victims. For instance, in Iowa, the names and other identifying information of child-victims of sex offenses may not be released before an information or indictment is filed. Iowa Code Ann. § 915.36(1). Additionally, the name and identifying biographical information of child-victims may not appear in an information or indictment or any other public record. *Id.* at § 915.36(2). The use or release of such information to the defendant or defense counsel may only be done for the purposes of the preparation of the defense, *id.*; use or release for other reasons constitutes contempt. *Id.* These protections apply to individuals who were victimized as children, but have since attained the age of eighteen. *Id.* at § 915.36(5). Child-victims also have the right to be interviewed or deposed outside of a defendant’s physical presence. *Id.* at § 915.36A.

The state also protects the privacy interests of child-victims and victims with mental illness, intellectual disability or other developmental disabilities by providing courts with the authority to provide such victims with alternative means of testifying, outside a defendant’s physical presence, where these measures are necessary to protect victims from trauma. Iowa Code Ann. § 915.38(1)(a), (c).

The state protects the privacy of sexual abuse victims through its rape shield law, Iowa Rule of Evidence 5.412, pursuant to which evidence of a sexual abuse victim’s sexual history is inadmissible, subject to certain limitations. The state also protects the privacy of sexual assault victims by providing that such victims are not required to submit to a polygraph examination as a condition of an investigation into their assault moving forward. Iowa Code Ann. § 915.44(1). Additionally, the state’s sexual abuse collection kit automated tracking system may not contain any personally identifying information about a victim of reported sexual abuse. *Id.* at § 915.53(6).

Iowa further protects the privacy rights and interests of victims of domestic abuse, domestic abuse assault, sexual abuse, assault, stalking and human trafficking through its Address Confidentiality Program, Iowa Code Ann. §§ 9E.1 through 9E.8, which is discussed more fully in the section “Select Confidentiality Laws.”

The section “Select Confidentiality Laws” also contains information about victims’ privacy protections in the context of public records requests.

## SELECT CONFIDENTIALITY LAWS

### **What are key confidentiality rights and/or protections in Iowa?**

Iowa offers a number of confidentiality protections to crime victims. For instance, when victims register with the state’s automated notification system, their information is confidential and only available to those offices, agencies or departments involved in providing notice to victims. Iowa Code Ann. § 915.12(3). Additionally, victim impact statements that are included within a presentence report are confidential and not subject to public disclosure. *Id.* at § 901.4. Information related to a claim for crime victim compensation is also confidential and may only be used in the administration and enforcement of the crime victim compensation program. *Id.* at § 915.90(1).

Iowa also protects victim confidentiality in the context of public records requests. In general, records in Iowa are open to the public, subject to certain exceptions and exemptions. Iowa Code Ann. § 22.2(1), (4); *id.* at § 22.7. For instance, confidential communications between crime victims and counselors are not subject to disclosure under Iowa’s public record laws, except as provided for under Iowa Code Ann. § 915.20A, which governs the victim-counselor privilege. *Id.* at § 22.7(2). The disclosure procedures related to this privilege are discussed below in the section “Select Privilege Laws.” Additionally, certain law enforcement records involving an ongoing investigation are not subject to disclosure in response to a public records request. *Id.* at § 22.7(5). Although the date, time, location and immediate facts and circumstances of a crime are not typically protected from disclosure under this exception, this information is protected from disclosure “in those unusual circumstances where disclosure would . . . pose a clear and present danger to the safety of an individual.” *Id.*

Similarly, while certain information in the department of corrections’ records is open to the public, Iowa Code Ann. § 904.602(1), correspondence that the department has received from a victim is confidential and not available to the public, *id.* at § 904.602(2)(o). Indeed, a victim may institute a civil action for damages or other action to respond to or otherwise restrain the release of such confidential records. *Id.* at § 904.603.

Iowa extends additional confidentiality protections to certain categories of victims. For instance, victims of domestic abuse, domestic abuse assault, sexual abuse, assault, stalking and human trafficking may participate in the state’s Address Confidentiality Program, Iowa Code Ann. §§ 9E.1 through 9E.8. This program is designed to protect these victims from being physically located through a public records request by providing them with a substitute mailing address. *Id.* at § 9E.1. The program information collected, created or maintained by the secretary of state is confidential and may only be released in limited circumstances. *Id.* at § 9E.7. For instance, such confidential information may be released to law enforcement, “upon verification that the release will aid the law enforcement agency in responding to an emergency situation, a criminal complaint, or an ongoing investigation.” *Id.* at § 9E.7(2). Additionally, as noted above, disclosure of a program participant’s actual address cannot be compelled during discovery or during a court proceeding absent findings that: “a. A reasonable belief exists that the address is needed to obtain information or evidence without which the investigation, prosecution, or litigation cannot proceed[; and] b. No other practicable means is available of obtaining the information or evidence from any other source.” *Id.* at § 9E.8(1). When such disclosure is sought, the victim-participant must receive notice and “an opportunity to present evidence at a hearing regarding the potential harm to the safety of the program participant if the program participant’s address is disclosed.” *Id.* at § 9E.8(2).

Iowa also protects the confidentiality of the locating information of victims of domestic and/or sexual abuse by allowing these victims to use alternative addresses when filing a petition for a protective order. *See, e.g.*, Iowa Code Ann. § 236.10(1), (4) (confidentiality of victim-plaintiff’s address in petition for domestic abuse protective order); *id.* at § 236A.11(1), (4) (same, with respect to a petition for a sexual abuse protective order).

Iowa protects the confidentiality of the communications and related records between victims and certain service providers. *See, e.g.*, Iowa Code Ann. § 622.10(1) (attorney-, counselor-, physician-, surgeon-, physician assistant-, advanced registered nurse practitioner-, mental health professional-client confidentiality); *id.* at § 622.10(8) (qualified school guidance counselor-student confidentiality); *id.* at § 622.10(9) (peer support group counselor-, intervention participant-officer/employee confidentiality); *id.* at § 915.20A (victim counselor-victim confidentiality); *id.* at § 916.2 (military victim advocate-victim confidentiality). As detailed in the following section, “Select Privilege Laws,” Iowa relies upon evidentiary privileges to protect the confidentiality of such communications and related records.

## SELECT PRIVILEGE LAWS

### What are key privileges in Iowa?

Victims in Iowa have a number of privileges that they can assert to prevent disclosure of their private communications with certain professionals. *See, e.g.*, Iowa Code Ann.

§ 622.10(1) (attorney-, counselor-, physician-, surgeon-, physician assistant-, advanced registered nurse practitioner-, mental health professional-client privileges); *id.* at § 622.10(8) (qualified school guidance counselor-student privilege); *id.* at § 622.10(9) (peer support group counselor-, intervention participant-officer/employee privilege); *id.* at § 915.20A (victim counselor-victim privilege); *id.* at § 916.2 (military victim advocate-victim privilege).

These privileges are subject to certain limitations. For instance, information and materials that fall under the victim counselor-victim and military victim advocate-victim privileges may be disclosed pursuant to a court order, when, upon the motion of a party, the court concludes that: “a. The information sought is relevant and material evidence of the facts and circumstances involved in an alleged criminal act which is the subject of a criminal proceeding[;] b. [t]he probative value of the information outweighs the harmful effect, if any, of disclosure on the victim, the advocacy relationship, and the treatment services[; and] c. [t]he information cannot be obtained by reasonable means from any other source.” Iowa Code Ann. § 915.20A(7); *id.* at § 916.2(6). In ruling on such a motion, the court may require the counselor or advocate “from whom disclosure is sought or the victim claiming the privilege, or both, to disclose the information in chambers out of the presence and hearing of all persons except the victim and any other persons the victim is willing to have present.” *Id.* at § 915.20A(8)(a); *id.* at § 916.2(7)(a). Should the court find that the sought information “is privileged and not subject to compelled disclosure, the information shall not be disclosed by any person without the consent of the victim.” *Id.* at § 915.20A(8)(b); *id.* at § 916.2(7)(b). If, on the other hand, the court determines that certain information may be subject to disclosure, “the court shall so inform the party seeking the information and shall order a subsequent hearing out of the presence of the jury, if applicable, at which time the parties shall be allowed to examine the advocate regarding the information that the court has determined may be subject to disclosure. The court may accept other evidence at the hearing.” *Id.* at § 915.20A(8)(c); § 916.2(7)(c). At the conclusion of such a hearing, “the court shall determine which information, if any, shall be disclosed and may enter an order describing the evidence which may be introduced by the moving party and prescribing the line of questioning which may be permitted. The moving party may then offer evidence pursuant to the court order.” *Id.* at § 915.20A(8)(d); *id.* at § 916.2(7)(d). There are similar procedures governing disclosure of information and materials protected by the privileges established in Iowa Code Ann. § 622.10. *See id.* at § 622.10(4) (circumstances under which privileged records may be disclosed to a criminal defendant).

Additionally, the victim counselor-victim and military victim advocate-victim privileges do not apply “in matters of proof concerning the chain of custody of evidence, in matters of proof concerning the physical appearance of the victim at the time of the injury or the [counselor or advocate’s] first contact with the victim after the injury, or [where the counselor or advocate have] reason to believe that the victim has given perjured testimony and the defendant or the state has made an offer of proof that perjury may have been committed.” Iowa Code Ann. § 915.20A(5); *id.* at § 916.2(4).

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| <p>The location of a crime victim center and the identities of victim counselors or military victim advocates may not be disclosed under any circumstances, pursuant to the privileges protecting victim-counselor/advocate communications. Iowa Code Ann. § 915.20A(2); <i>id.</i> at § 916.2(1).</p> <p>For reference, the text of the privileges discussed in this section appears below.</p> |  |
| <p>Attorney-,<br/>Counselor-,<br/>Physician-, Surgeon-,<br/>Physician Assistant-,<br/>Advanced Registered<br/>Nurse Practitioner-,<br/>Mental Health<br/>Professional-Client<br/>Privileges</p>  | <p>Iowa Code Ann. § 622.10(1)–(2), (4)–(7).</p> <p>&lt;[Text subject to final changes by the Iowa Code Editor for Code 2022.]&gt;</p> <p>1. A practicing attorney, counselor, physician, surgeon, physician assistant, advanced registered nurse practitioner, mental health professional, or the stenographer or confidential clerk of any such person, who obtains information by reason of the person’s employment, or a member of the clergy shall not be allowed, in giving testimony, to disclose any confidential communication properly entrusted to the person in the person’s professional capacity, and necessary and proper to enable the person to discharge the functions of the person’s office according to the usual course of practice or discipline.</p> <p>2. The prohibition does not apply to cases where the person in whose favor the prohibition is made waives the rights conferred; nor does the prohibition apply to physicians or surgeons, physician assistants, advanced registered nurse practitioners, mental health professionals, or to the stenographer or confidential clerk of any physicians or surgeons, physician assistants, advanced registered nurse practitioners, or mental health professionals, in a civil action in which the condition of the person in whose favor the prohibition is made is an element or factor of the claim or defense of the person or of any party claiming through or under the person. The evidence is admissible upon trial of the action only as it relates to the condition alleged.</p> <p>...</p> <p>4. a. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the confidentiality privilege under this section shall be absolute with regard to a criminal action and this section shall not be construed to authorize or require the disclosure of any privileged records to a defendant in a criminal action unless either of the following occur:</p> |

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|  | <p>(1) The privilege holder voluntarily waives the confidentiality privilege.</p> <p>(2)(a) The defendant seeking access to privileged records under this section files a motion demonstrating in good faith a reasonable probability that the information sought is likely to contain exculpatory information that is not available from any other source and for which there is a compelling need for the defendant to present a defense in the case. Such a motion shall be filed not later than forty days after arraignment under seal of the court. Failure of the defendant to timely file such a motion constitutes a waiver of the right to seek access to privileged records under this section, but the court, for good cause shown, may grant relief from such waiver.</p> <p>(b) Upon a showing of a reasonable probability that the privileged records sought may likely contain exculpatory information that is not available from any other source, the court shall conduct an in camera review of such records to determine whether exculpatory information is contained in such records.</p> <p>(c) If exculpatory information is contained in such records, the court shall balance the need to disclose such information against the privacy interest of the privilege holder.</p> <p>(d) Upon the court’s determination, in writing, that the privileged information sought is exculpatory and that there is a compelling need for such information that outweighs the privacy interests of the privilege holder, the court shall issue an order allowing the disclosure of only those portions of the records that contain the exculpatory information. The court’s order shall also prohibit any further dissemination of the information to any person, other than the defendant, the defendant’s attorney, and the prosecutor, unless otherwise authorized by the court.</p> <p>b. Privileged information obtained by any means other than as provided in paragraph “a” shall not be admissible in any criminal action.</p> <p>5. If an adverse party desires the oral deposition, either discovery or evidentiary, of a physician or surgeon, physician assistant, advanced registered nurse practitioner, or mental health professional to which the prohibition would otherwise apply or the stenographer or confidential clerk of a physician or surgeon, physician assistant, advanced registered nurse practitioner, or mental health professional or desires to call a physician or surgeon, physician assistant, advanced registered nurse practitioner, or mental health professional to which the prohibition would otherwise apply or the stenographer or confidential clerk of a physician or surgeon, physician assistant, advanced registered nurse practitioner, or mental health professional as a witness at the</p> |
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trial of the action, the adverse party shall file an application with the court for permission to do so. The court upon hearing, which shall not be ex parte, shall grant permission unless the court finds that the evidence sought does not relate to the condition alleged. At the request of any party or at the request of the deponent, the court shall fix a reasonable fee to be paid to a physician or surgeon, physician assistant, advanced registered nurse practitioner, or mental health professional by the party taking the deposition or calling the witness.

6. At any time, upon a written request from a patient, a patient's legal representative or attorney, or an adverse party pursuant to subsection 3, any provider shall provide copies of the requested records or images to the requester within thirty days of receipt of the written request. The written request shall be accompanied by a legally sufficient patient's waiver unless the request is made by the patient or the patient's legal representative or attorney.

a. The fee charged for the cost of producing the requested records or images shall be based upon the actual cost of production. If the written request and accompanying patient's waiver, if required, authorizes the release of all of the patient's records for the requested time period, including records relating to the patient's mental health, substance abuse, and acquired immune deficiency syndrome-related conditions, the amount charged shall not exceed the rates established by the workers' compensation commissioner for copies of records in workers' compensation cases. If requested, the provider shall include an affidavit certifying that the records or images produced are true and accurate copies of the originals for an additional fee not to exceed ten dollars.


b. A patient or a patient's legal representative or a patient's attorney is entitled to one copy free of charge of the patient's complete billing statement, subject only to a charge for the actual costs of postage or delivery charges incurred in providing the statement. If requested, the provider or custodian of the record shall include an affidavit certifying the billing statements produced to be true and accurate copies of the originals for an additional fee not to exceed ten dollars.

c. Fees charged pursuant to this subsection are exempt from the sales tax pursuant to section 423.3, subsection 96. A provider providing the records or images may require payment in advance if an itemized statement demanding such is provided to the requesting party within fifteen days of the request. Upon a timely request for payment in advance, the time for providing the records or images shall be extended until the greater of thirty days from the date of the original request or ten days from the receipt of payment.



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|  | <p>d. If a provider does not provide to the requester all records or images encompassed by the request or does not allow a patient access to all of the patient’s medical records encompassed by the patient’s request to examine the patient’s records, the provider shall give written notice to the requester or the patient that providing the requested records or images would be a violation of the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-191.</p> <p>...</p>   |
| <p>School Guidance Counselor-Student Privilege</p>   | <p>Iowa Code Ann. § 622.10(8)(a)–(b).</p> <p>A qualified school guidance counselor, who is licensed by the board of educational examiners under chapter 272 and who obtains information by reason of the counselor’s employment as a qualified school guidance counselor, shall not be allowed, in giving testimony, to disclose any confidential communications properly entrusted to the counselor by a pupil or the pupil’s parent or guardian in the counselor’s capacity as a qualified school guidance counselor and necessary and proper to enable the counselor to perform the counselor’s duties as a qualified school guidance counselor.</p>   |
| <p>Peer Support Group Counselor-, Intervention Participant-Officer/Employee Privileges</p> | <p>a. A peer support group counselor or individual present for a group crisis intervention who obtains information from an officer or a civilian employee of a law enforcement agency or fire department by reason of the counselor’s capacity as a peer support group counselor or an individual’s presence for a group crisis intervention shall not be allowed, in giving testimony, to disclose any confidential communication properly entrusted to the counselor or individual present for a group crisis intervention by the officer or civilian employee while receiving counseling or group crisis intervention.</p> <p>b. The prohibition in this subsection does not apply where the officer or civilian employee has consented to the disclosure of the information specified in paragraph “a” or where the peer support group counselor or individual present for a group crisis intervention was an initial responding officer, a witness, or a party to the incident which prompted the delivery of peer support group counseling services or the group crisis intervention to the officer or civilian employee.</p> |

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| <p>Victim Counselor-<br/>Victim Privilege</p> | <p>Iowa Code Ann. § 915.20A(2)–(9).</p> <p>2. A victim counselor shall not be examined or required to give evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding as to any confidential communication made by a victim to the counselor, nor shall a clerk, secretary, stenographer, or any other employee who types or otherwise prepares or manages the confidential reports or working papers of a victim counselor be required to produce evidence of any such confidential communication, unless the victim waives this privilege in writing or disclosure of the information is compelled by a court pursuant to subsection 7. Under no circumstances shall the location of a crime victim center or the identity of the victim counselor be disclosed in any civil or criminal proceeding.</p> <p>3. If a victim is deceased or has been declared to be incompetent, this privilege specified in subsection 2 may be waived by the guardian of the victim or by the personal representative of the victim’s estate.</p> <p>4. A minor may waive the privilege under this section unless, in the opinion of the court, the minor is incapable of knowingly and intelligently waiving the privilege, in which case the parent or guardian of the minor may waive the privilege on the minor’s behalf if the parent or guardian is not the defendant and does not have such a relationship with the defendant that the parent or guardian has an interest in the outcome of the proceeding being favorable to the defendant.</p> <p>5. The privilege under this section does not apply in matters of proof concerning the chain of custody of evidence, in matters of proof concerning the physical appearance of the victim at the time of the injury or the counselor’s first contact with the victim after the injury, or where the counselor has reason to believe that the victim has given perjured testimony and the defendant or the state has made an offer of proof that perjury may have been committed.</p> <p>6. The failure of a counselor to testify due to this section shall not give rise to an inference unfavorable to the cause of the state or the cause of the defendant.</p> <p>7. Upon the motion of a party, accompanied by a written offer of proof, a court may compel disclosure of certain information if the court determines that all of the following conditions are met:</p> |
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|  | <p>a. The information sought is relevant and material evidence of the facts and circumstances involved in an alleged criminal act which is the subject of a criminal proceeding.</p> <p>b. The probative value of the information outweighs the harmful effect, if any, of disclosure on the victim, the counseling relationship, and the treatment services.</p> <p>c. The information cannot be obtained by reasonable means from any other source.</p> <p>8. In ruling on a motion under subsection 7, the court, or a different judge, if the motion was filed in a criminal proceeding to be tried to the court, shall adhere to the following procedure:</p> <p>a. The court may require the counselor from whom disclosure is sought or the victim claiming the privilege, or both, to disclose the information in chambers out of the presence and hearing of all persons except the victim and any other persons the victim is willing to have present.</p> <p>b. If the court determines that the information is privileged and not subject to compelled disclosure, the information shall not be disclosed by any person without the consent of the victim.</p> <p>c. If the court determines that certain information may be subject to disclosure, as provided in subsection 7, the court shall so inform the party seeking the information and shall order a subsequent hearing out of the presence of the jury, if any, at which the parties shall be allowed to examine the counselor regarding the information which the court has determined may be subject to disclosure. The court may accept other evidence at that time.</p> <p>d. At the conclusion of a hearing under paragraph “c”, the court shall determine which information, if any, shall be disclosed and may enter an order describing the evidence which may be introduced by the moving party and prescribing the line of questioning which may be permitted. The moving party may then offer evidence pursuant to the court order. However, no victim counselor is subject to exclusion under rule of evidence 5.615.</p> <p>9. This section does not relate to the admission of evidence of the victim’s past sexual behavior which is strictly subject to rule of evidence 5.412.</p> <p> Iowa Code Ann. § 915.10 defines the terms used in this statutory provision. These definitions are included above in the section “Select Definitions.”</p> |
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| <p>Military Victim Advocate-Victim Privilege</p> | <p>Iowa Code Ann. § 916.2.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A military victim advocate shall not be examined or required to give evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding as to any confidential communication made by a victim to the advocate, nor shall a clerk, secretary, stenographer, or any other employee who types or otherwise prepares or manages the confidential reports or working papers of an advocate be required to produce evidence of any such confidential communication, unless the victim waives this privilege in writing or disclosure of the information is compelled by a court pursuant to subsection 6. However, under no circumstances shall the identity of the advocate be disclosed in any civil or criminal proceeding.</li> <li>2. If a victim is deceased or has been declared to be incompetent, the privilege specified in subsection 1 may be waived by the guardian of the victim or by the personal representative of the victim's estate.</li> <li>3. A minor who is a member of the national guard or a branch of the armed forces of the United States may waive the privilege under subsection 1.</li> <li>4. A privilege under this section does not apply in matters of proof concerning the chain of custody of evidence, in matters of proof concerning the physical appearance of the victim at the time of the injury or the advocate's first contact with the victim after the injury, or if the advocate has reason to believe that the victim has given perjured testimony and the defendant or the state has made an offer of proof that perjury may have been committed.</li> <li>5. The failure of an advocate to testify due to this section shall not give rise to an inference unfavorable to the cause of the state or the cause of a defendant.</li> <li>6. Upon the motion of a party, accompanied by a written offer of proof, a court may compel disclosure of certain information if the court determines that all of the following conditions are met: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The information sought is relevant and material evidence of the facts and circumstances involved in an alleged criminal act which is the subject of a criminal proceeding.</li> <li>b. The probative value of the information outweighs the harmful effect, if any, of disclosure on the victim, the advocacy relationship, and the treatment services.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |
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|  | <p>c. The information cannot be obtained by reasonable means from any other source.</p> <p>7. In ruling on a motion under subsection 6, the court, if the motion was filed in a criminal proceeding to be tried to the court, or a different judge, shall adhere to the following procedure:</p> <p>a. The court may require the advocate from whom disclosure is sought or the victim claiming the privilege, or both, to disclose the information in chambers out of the presence and hearing of all persons except the victim and any other persons the victim is willing to have present.</p> <p>b. If the court determines that the information is privileged and not subject to compelled disclosure, the information shall not be disclosed by any person without the consent of the victim.</p> <p>c. If the court determines that certain information may be subject to disclosure, as provided in subsection 6, the court shall so inform the party seeking the information and shall order a subsequent hearing out of the presence of the jury, if applicable, at which time the parties shall be allowed to examine the advocate regarding the information that the court has determined may be subject to disclosure. The court may accept other evidence at the hearing.</p> <p>d. At the conclusion of a hearing under paragraph “c”, the court shall determine which information, if any, shall be disclosed and may enter an order describing the evidence which may be introduced by the moving party and prescribing the line of questioning which may be permitted. The moving party may then offer evidence pursuant to the court order. A victim advocate is not subject to exclusion under rule of evidence 5.615.</p> <p>8. This section does not relate to the admission of evidence of the victim’s past sexual behavior which is strictly subject to rule of evidence 5.412.</p> |
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**DEFINITIONS**

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| Key definitions appear below.                    |   |
| Victims’ Rights Act<br>Definition of<br>“Victim” | <p>Iowa Code Ann. § 915.10(3).</p> <p>“Victim” means a person who has suffered physical, emotional, or financial harm as the result of a public offense or a delinquent act, other than a simple misdemeanor, committed in this state. “Victim”</p> |

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|   | <p>also includes the immediate family members of a victim who died or was rendered incompetent as a result of the offense or who was under eighteen years of age at the time of the offense.</p>  |
| <p>Attorney-,<br/>Counselor-,<br/>Physician-, Surgeon-,<br/>Physician Assistant-,<br/>Advanced Registered<br/>Nurse Practitioner-,<br/>Mental Health<br/>Professional-Client<br/>Privileges Definitions</p> | <p>Iowa Code Ann. § 622.10.</p> <p>6(e) As used in this subsection:</p> <p>(1) “Records” and “images” include electronic media and data containing a patient’s health or billing information and “copies” includes patient records or images provided in electronic form, regardless of the form of the originals. If consented to by the requesting party, records and images produced pursuant to this subsection may be produced on electronic media.</p> <p>(2) “Provider” means any physician or surgeon, physician assistant, advanced registered nurse practitioner, mental health professional, hospital, nursing home, or other person, entity, facility, or organization that furnishes, bills, or is paid for health care in the normal course of business.</p> <p>7. For the purposes of this section, “mental health professional” means a psychologist licensed under chapter 154B, a registered nurse licensed under chapter 152, a social worker licensed under chapter 154C, a marital and family therapist licensed under chapter 154D, a mental health counselor licensed under chapter 154D, or an individual holding at least a master’s degree in a related field as deemed appropriate by the board of behavioral science.</p> |
| <p>Peer Support Group<br/>Counselor-,<br/>Intervention<br/>Participant-<br/>Officer/Employee<br/>Privileges Definitions</p>   | <p>Iowa Code Ann. § 622.10(9)(c).</p> <p>For purposes of this subsection:</p> <p>(1) “Officer” means a certified law enforcement officer, fire fighter, emergency medical technician, paramedic, corrections officer, detention officer, jailer, probation or parole officer, communications officer, dispatcher, emergency management coordinator under chapter 29C, or any other law enforcement officer certified by the Iowa law enforcement academy and employed by a city, county, or state agency.</p> <p>(2) “Peer support group counselor” means a law enforcement officer, fire fighter, civilian employee of a law enforcement agency or fire department, or a nonemployee counselor who has been designated as a peer support group counselor by a sheriff, police</p>  |

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|   | <p>chief, fire chief, or department head of a law enforcement agency, fire department, or emergency medical services agency and who has received training to provide emotional and moral support and counseling to an officer who needs those services as a result of an incident in which the officer was involved while acting in the officer’s official capacity.</p>  |
| <p>Victim Counselor-<br/>Victim Privilege<br/>Definitions</p> | <p>Iowa Code Ann. § 915.20A(1).</p> <p>As used in this section:</p> <p>a. “Confidential communication” means information shared between a crime victim and a victim counselor within the counseling relationship, and includes all information received by the counselor and any advice, report, or working paper given to or prepared by the counselor in the course of the counseling relationship with the victim. “Confidential information” is confidential information which, so far as the victim is aware, is not disclosed to a third party with the exception of a person present in the consultation for the purpose of furthering the interest of the victim, a person to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for the transmission of the information, or a person with whom disclosure is necessary for accomplishment of the purpose for which the counselor is consulted by the victim.</p> <p>b. “Crime victim center” means any office, institution, agency, or crisis center offering assistance to victims of crime and their families through crisis intervention, accompaniment during medical and legal proceedings, and follow-up counseling.</p> <p>c. “Victim” means a person who consults a victim counselor for the purpose of securing advice, counseling, or assistance concerning a mental, physical, or emotional condition caused by a violent crime committed against the person.</p> <p>d. “Victim counselor” means a person who is engaged in a crime victim center, is certified as a counselor by the crime victim center, and is under the control of a direct services supervisor of a crime victim center, whose primary purpose is the rendering of advice, counseling, and assistance to the victims of crime. To qualify as a “victim counselor” under this section, the person must also have completed at least twenty hours of training provided by the center in which the person is engaged, by the Iowa organization of victim assistance, by the Iowa coalition against sexual assault, or by the</p> |

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|  | <p>Iowa coalition against domestic violence, which shall include but not be limited to, the dynamics of victimization, substantive laws relating to violent crime, sexual assault, and domestic violence, crisis intervention techniques, communication skills, working with diverse populations, an overview of the state criminal justice system, information regarding pertinent hospital procedures, and information regarding state and community resources for victims of crime.</p>   |
| <p>Military Victim Advocate-Victim Privilege Definitions</p> | <p>Iowa Code Ann. § 916.1.</p> <p>As used in this chapter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “Confidential communication” means confidential information shared between a victim and a military victim advocate within the advocacy relationship, and includes all information received by the advocate and any advice, report, or working paper given to or prepared by the advocate in the course of the advocacy relationship with the victim. “Confidential information” is information which, so far as the victim is aware, is not disclosed to a third party with the exception of a person present in the consultation for the purpose of furthering the interest of the victim, a person to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for the transmission of the information, or a person with whom disclosure is necessary for accomplishment of the purpose for which the advocate is consulted by the victim.</li> <li>2. “Military victim advocate” or “advocate” means a person who is a member of the national guard or a branch of the armed forces of the United States and who has completed a military victim advocate course provided by a branch of the armed forces of the United States or by the United States department of defense.</li> <li>3. “Special victims’ counsel” means military personnel who are members of the judge advocate general’s corps of the national guard or a branch of the armed forces of the United States, who have completed special victims’ counsel training, and who are serving as a special victims’ counsel to a victim. For the purposes of this chapter, special victims’ counsel shall also be considered military victim advocates.</li> <li>4. “Victim” means a person who consults a military victim advocate for the purpose of securing advice, advocacy, counseling, or assistance concerning a mental, physical, or emotional condition caused by a sexual crime committed against the person.</li> </ol> |



<sup>1</sup> See *Office for Victims of Crime, Ethical Standards, Section I: Scope of Services*, [https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical\\_standards\\_1.html](https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical_standards_1.html).

<sup>2</sup> Additional examples of system-based advocate titles include: district attorney’s office/state attorney’s office advocates or victim-witness coordinators; law enforcement advocates; FBI victim specialists; U.S. attorney’s office victim-witness coordinators; board of parole and post-prison supervision advocates; and post-conviction advocates.

<sup>3</sup> Examples of community-based advocates include: crisis hotline or helpline staff; rape crisis center staff; domestic violence shelter staff; campus advocates; and homicide support program staff.

<sup>4</sup> See Nat’l Crime Victim Law Inst., *Refusing Discovery Requests of Privileged Materials Pretrial in Criminal Cases*, NCVLI Violence Against Women Bulletin (Nat’l Crime Victim Law Inst., Portland, Or.), June 2011, at 3 n.30 (listing victims’ constitutional and statutory rights to privacy and to dignity, respect or fairness).

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., *Whalen v. Roe*, 429 U.S. 589, 599–600 (1977) (recognizing that the United States Constitution provides a right of personal privacy, which includes an “individual interest in avoiding disclosure of personal matters”); *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113, 152–53 (1973) (“[A] right to personal privacy . . . does exist under the Constitution.”).

<sup>6</sup> There are different levels of privileges: absolute, absolute diluted and qualified. When an absolute privilege attaches, only a victim has the right to authorize disclosure of that information and the court can never order the information to be disclosed without the victim’s consent. Absolute privileges are rare, however, because privileges are seen to run contrary to the truth finding function of courts.

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., Ala. R. Evid. 503A(a)(7) (“‘Victim counselor’ means any employee or supervised volunteer of a victim counseling center or other agency, business, or organization that provides counseling to victims, who is not affiliated with a law enforcement agency or prosecutor’s office and whose duties include treating victims for any emotional or psychological condition resulting from a sexual assault or family violence.”); Alaska Stat. Ann. § 18.66.250(5)(B) (“‘[V]ictim counseling center’ means a private organization, an organization operated by or contracted by a branch of the armed forces of the United States, or a local government agency that . . . is not affiliated with a law enforcement agency or a prosecutor’s office[.]”); Haw. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 626-1, Rule 505.5(a)(6) (“A ‘victim counseling program’ is any activity of a domestic violence victims’ program or a sexual assault crisis center that has, as its primary function, the counseling and treatment of sexual assault, domestic violence, or child abuse victims and their families, and that operates independently of any law enforcement agency, prosecutor’s office, or the department of human services.”); Ind. Code Ann. § 35-37-6-5(2) (“‘[V]ictim service provider’ means a person . . . that is not affiliated with a law enforcement agency[.]”); Neb. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 29-4302(1) (“Advocate means any employee or supervised volunteer of a domestic violence and sexual assault victim assistance program or of any other agency, business, or organization that is not affiliated with a law enforcement or prosecutor’s office whose primary purpose is assisting domestic violence and sexual assault victims[.]”); N.M. Stat. Ann. § 31-25-2(E) (“‘[V]ictim counselor’ means any employee or supervised volunteer of a victim counseling center or other agency, business or organization that provides counseling to victims who is not affiliated with a law enforcement agency or the office of a district attorney[.]”).

<sup>8</sup> Terms that inform the intersection of victim services and HIPAA, FERPA, FOIA or VOCA are “informed consent” and “waiver.” “Informed consent” is defined as “1. [a] person’s agreement to allow something to happen, made with full knowledge of the risks involved and the alternatives. For the legal profession, informed consent is defined in Model Rule of Professional Conduct 1.0(e)[;] [or] 2. [a] patient’s knowing choice about a medical treatment or procedure, made after a physician or other healthcare provider discloses whatever information a reasonably prudent provider in the medical field community would give to a patient regarding the risks involved in the proposed treatment or procedure.” *Informed consent*, Black’s Law Dictionary (8th ed. 2004). “Waiver” is defined as “[t]he voluntary relinquishment or abandonment—express or implied—of a legal right or advantage . . . .” *Waiver*, Black’s Law Dictionary (8th ed. 2004).

<sup>9</sup> *School Resource Officers, School Law Enforcement Units, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*, [https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource\\_document/file/SRO\\_FAQs\\_2-5-19\\_0.pdf](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/SRO_FAQs_2-5-19_0.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> *Are law enforcement records considered education records?*, <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/faq/are-law-enforcement-records-considered-education-records>.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

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<sup>15</sup> *Office for Victims of Crime, Crime Victims Fund*, <https://www.ovc.gov/pubs/crimevictimsfundfs/intro.html#VictimAssist>.

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> Department of Justice Guide to the Freedom of Information Act, at 1, <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/oip/legacy/2014/07/23/exemption6.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ethic*, Merriam-webster.com, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ethics> (last visited July 31, 2019).

<sup>21</sup> *Office for Victims of Crime, Purpose & Scope of The Standards*, [https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/purpose\\_and\\_scope.html](https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/purpose_and_scope.html).

<sup>22</sup> *Id.* Each of the five sections contain ethical standards and corresponding commentaries, explaining each standard in detail. For “Scope of Services,” the ethical standards and their corresponding commentaries can be located at [https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical\\_standards\\_1.html](https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical_standards_1.html). For “Coordinating within the Community,” the ethical standards and their corresponding commentaries can be located at [https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical\\_standards\\_2.html](https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical_standards_2.html). For “Direct Services,” the ethical standards and their corresponding commentaries can be located at [https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical\\_standards\\_3.html](https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical_standards_3.html). For “Privacy, Confidentiality, Data Security and Assistive Technology,” the ethical standards and their corresponding commentaries can be located at [https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical\\_standards\\_4.html](https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical_standards_4.html). For “Administration and Evaluation,” the ethical standard and the corresponding commentary can be located at [https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical\\_standards\\_5.html](https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical_standards_5.html).

<sup>23</sup> *Office for Victims of Crime, Ethical Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors of Crime*, [https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical\\_standards.html](https://www.ovc.gov/model-standards/ethical_standards.html).

<sup>24</sup> For a sample law enforcement-based victim services code of ethics drafted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, see *Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services – Template Package I: Getting Started*, [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/LEV/Publications/Template%20Package%20I\\_04.2021.pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/LEV/Publications/Template%20Package%20I_04.2021.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> See *Weatherford v. Bursey*, 429 U.S. 545, 559 (1977).

<sup>26</sup> See *United States v. Agurs*, 427 U.S. 97, 106–07 (1976).

<sup>27</sup> *Strickler v. Greene*, 527 U.S. 263, 280 (1999).

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

<sup>29</sup> See, e.g., *Eakes v. Sexton*, 592 F. App’x 422, 429 (6th Cir. 2014) (finding that “contrary to the district court’s conclusion that the [state] prosecutor was not responsible for failing to disclose the Victim-Advocate report because the Advocate was located ‘in a separate part of the District Attorney’s office,’ the prosecutor is in fact responsible for disclosing all *Brady* information in the possession of that office, such as the Victim-Advocate report, even if the prosecutor was unaware of the evidence prior to trial”); *Commonwealth v. Liang*, 747 N.E.2d 112, 114 (Mass. 2001) (concluding that “the notes of [prosecution-based] advocates are subject to the same discovery rules as the notes of prosecutors[,]” and “[t]o the extent that the notes contain material, exculpatory information . . . or relevant ‘statements’ of a victim or witness . . . the Commonwealth must disclose such information or statements to the defendant, in accordance with due process and the rules of criminal procedure”).

<sup>30</sup> Notably, for advocates/entities that receive VOCA funding, because this disclosure is “compelled by statutory or court mandate,” it does not pursuant to statute, require a signed, written release from the victim. Nevertheless, if disclosure is required, VOCA requires that advocates make reasonable attempts to notify the victim affected by the disclosure and take whatever steps are necessary to protect their privacy and safety.

<sup>31</sup> Defendant John Giglio was tried, convicted and sentenced for forgery related crimes. While Giglio’s case was pending appeal, his attorney filed a motion for a new trial, claiming that there was newly discovered evidence that the key Government witness—“the only witness linking [Giglio] with the crime”—had been promised that he would not be prosecuted in exchange for his testimony. The defense attorney’s motion was initially denied, but certiorari review was granted “to determine whether the evidence [that was] not disclosed . . . require[d] a new trial under the due process criteria of” cases, including *Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83, 87 (1963), which “held that suppression of material evidence justifies a new trial” whether the prosecutor intended to withhold information or not. “An affidavit filed by the Government as part of its opposition to a new trial confirm[ed] [Giglio’s] claim that a promise was made to [the key Government witness]” by the former Assistant United States Attorney “that [the witness] would not be prosecuted if he cooperated with the Government.” This promise of leniency was made by the formerly assigned Assistant United States Attorney who did not handle the trial; and the Assistant United States Attorney who handled the trial was unaware of the promise. The Supreme Court held that nondisclosure of material evidence “is the responsibility of the prosecutor”—whether nondisclosure was intentional or not—and that such

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action is directly attributable to the Government. Addressing the topic of “turnover,” principally, the Court explained that “[t]o the extent this places a burden on the large prosecution offices, procedures and regulations can be established to carry that burden and to [e]nsure communication of all relevant information on each case to every lawyer who deals with it.” Giglio’s conviction was reversed, and the case was remanded to the lower court.

<sup>32</sup> This section addresses subpoenas directed to system-based advocates. For information concerning community-based advocates and subpoenas, please contact NCVLI for technical assistance.

<sup>33</sup> Terminology for subpoenas varies from jurisdiction-to-jurisdiction. Common examples of subpoenas include: “subpoenas”; “subpoenas duces tecum”; “deposition subpoenas”; and “subpoenas ad testificandum.” See *Subpoena*, Black’s Law Dictionary (8th ed. 2004).

<sup>34</sup> See *Subpoena*, Black’s Law Dictionary (8th ed. 2004) (defining “subpoena” as “[a] writ commanding a person to appear before a court or other tribunal, subject to a penalty for failing to comply”); *subpoena duces tecum*, Black’s Law Dictionary (8th ed. 2004) (defining “subpoena duces tecum” as “[a] subpoena ordering the witness to appear and to bring specified documents, records, or things”); *deposition subpoena*, Black’s Law Dictionary (8th ed. 2004) (defining “deposition subpoena” as “1. [a] subpoena issued to summon a person to make a sworn statement in a time and place other than a trial[;] [and] 2. [i]n some jurisdictions, [this is referred to as] a subpoena duces tecum”).

<sup>35</sup> Attorney work product “is generally exempt from discovery or other compelled disclosure.” *Work product*, Black’s Law Dictionary (8th ed. 2004).

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