



njcoalition
against sexual assault

Understanding a
Survivor's
Options

A GUIDE FOR THE LEGAL COMMUNITY IN NEW JERSEY

Dear

legal and community professionals,

You know the system. You've trained for it, worked within it, and maybe even advocated to improve it. You understand how cases move forward, how policies are applied, how rights are protected, and how institutions are held accountable. Depending on your role, you may build a case, explain legal options, accompany someone to court, ensure campus compliance, or help a survivor understand their rights and available steps.

But what many legal and allied professionals are never taught is how to sit across from someone whose nervous system is in survival mode. How to hear a story of deep harm without causing more. How to navigate complex systems while honoring a survivor's autonomy, pace, and choice. How to show up in ways that reduce retraumatization and build trust — especially in spaces that have not always felt safe or responsive. Technical expertise matters. So does trauma-informed presence. Survivors deserve both.

This resource was created for attorneys, legal advocates, social workers, Title IX coordinators, confidential sexual assault advocates (CSVAs), and others who serve survivors of sexual violence, especially those navigating multiple systems of oppression. These survivors are often punished for surviving, silenced when they speak, and retraumatized by institutional power. The New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault's (NJCASA) goal is to help you be more effective by understanding trauma's impact, unpacking inherited myths, and practicing in ways that are rigorous and humane. Trauma-informed practice is not a "soft skill." It's a core competency. When we get it right, survivors are more likely to participate, stay engaged, and leave with their dignity intact. Let this resource sharpen your practice, challenge assumptions, and remind you what's at stake.





Contents

- 1 BEFORE THE LAW
- 2 TRAUMA IS NOT JUST PSYCHOLOGICAL;
IT'S SYSTEMIC
- 4 COMMON MYTHS
- 7 TALKING POINTS
- 9 THE POWER YOU HOLD
- 10 LANGUAGE THAT SHUTS SURVIVORS DOWN
AND WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
- 11 CHECKLIST
- 14 WHEN COMMUNITY IS ALSO COMPLICATED
- 16 HOW TO SHOW UP WITHOUT CAUSING HARM
- 18 CLOSING REMINDER
- 19 SAMPLE TRAUMA-INFORMED INTAKE AND
COURT PREP TEMPLATE
- 23 WORKS CITED





What Survivors Come Carrying

The legal process often begins at the worst moment in a survivor's life. By the time someone walks into your office, calls intake, or appears in court, they've already carried more than you may see in a file. Sexual violence doesn't happen in a vacuum, and neither does a survivor's story. Some are navigating homelessness after disclosing. Some are choosing between safety and deportation. Some fear losing their children if they name what happened. Some are surviving within the same family, faith, or neighborhood where the harm occurred.

This is not "background context." It is the air a survivor is breathing while you ask them to recall, cooperate, stay calm, or testify. You cannot understand a survivor's behavior — or support their legal journey — without recognizing the systems of oppression they may be living within.

Sexual
violence
doesn't happen
in a vacuum,

and
neither does
a survivor's
story.



TRAUMA IS NOT JUST PSYCHOLOGICAL;

It's Systemic

If your approach to trauma doesn't account for who the survivor is, where they live, what identities they carry, and how the world has responded to them, it is incomplete.

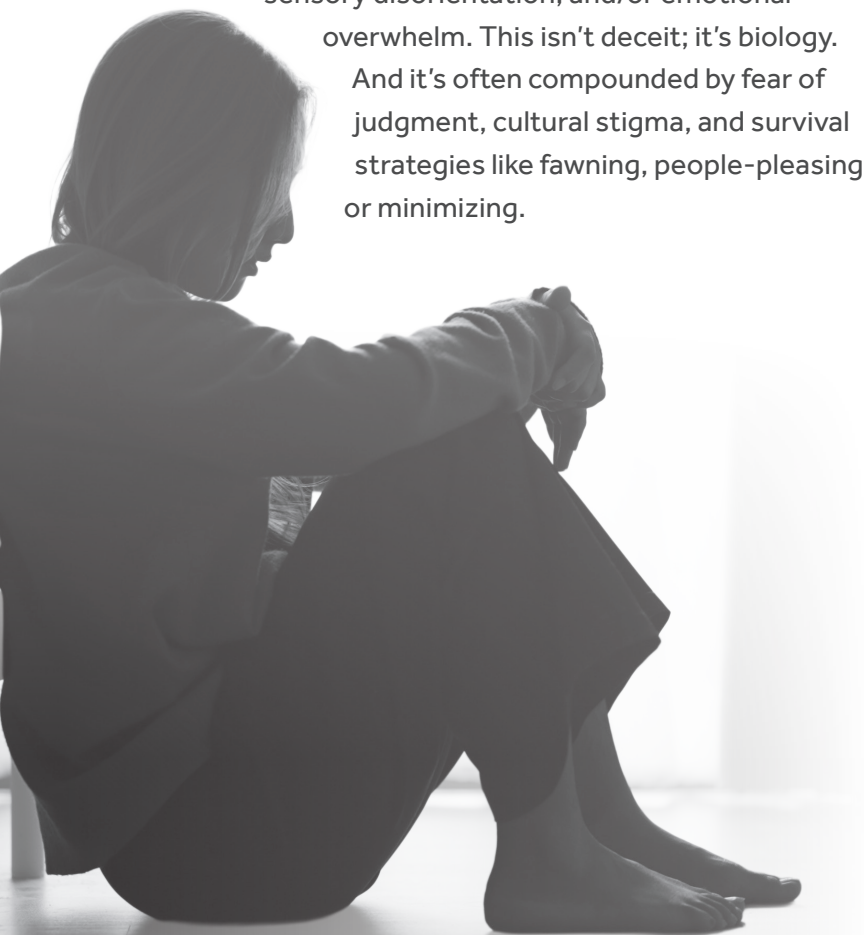
Complex Trauma Impacts Memory, Trust, and Decision-Making

One common reason survivors are disbelieved is because their stories don't come out "in order." But trauma isn't always linear. When someone has survived sexual violence — especially repeatedly or by a trusted person — the brain may encode memories nonlinearly, leading to memory gaps, sensory disorientation, and/or emotional overwhelm. This isn't deceit; it's biology. And it's often compounded by fear of judgment, cultural stigma, and survival strategies like fawning, people-pleasing, or minimizing.

YOU MAY ENCOUNTER:

- Delayed disclosure (days, months, years later).
- Contradictions between early and later statements.
- Lack of visible emotion.
- Dissociation or numbness during interviews.
- Changes in the subject mid-story.
- Refusal to name what happened directly.

These aren't red flags. They're trauma flags — and they require a trauma-informed response, not a dismissal of credibility.





Cultural and Familial Dynamics Shape Disclosure

Survivors don't all use the same language. Some may say things like:

- Something happened, but I don't want to get them in trouble.
- They just took it too far.
- I didn't say "yes," but I didn't fight either.
- I froze.
- He's my husband.
- It's complicated.
- This happens to everyone.
- This is normal.

This happens to everyone.

I froze.

Many survivors have been taught that saying "rape" is dishonorable, shameful, or dangerous. Others have no language for what happened, especially if the violence began when they were young, occurred within their family, or was normalized in their environment. If you expect legal clarity from the start, you will miss the truth survivors are already telling you.

YOU MIGHT THINK THE SURVIVOR IS...	BUT WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING COULD BE...
Too calm or emotionless.	Dissociation, shutdown response.
Rambling or disorganized.	Fragmented recall due to trauma.
Not telling the full story.	Protecting themselves or others; fear of judgment or punishment.
Changing their mind.	Reclaiming control after coercion or pressure.
Uncooperative.	Experiencing fear, powerlessness, or cultural conflict.
Inconsistent.	Normal neurobiological processing of trauma.
Lying about what happened.	Actually remembering new details or reframing the harm with new language.



COMMON MYTHS MANY PROFESSIONALS

May Still Believe and Why They Cause Harm

Legal professionals are trained to look for facts. But when those facts are filtered through bias, cultural assumptions, or incomplete understandings of trauma, survivors' words — or silence — can be misinterpreted. The myths below are not only incorrect; they can shape access to justice. These beliefs may be held not only by the public, but also often by prosecutors, judges, defense attorneys, and even advocates.

The myths listed are not only incorrect;

they can shape access to justice.



MYTH	ROOTED IN	HARM CAUSED
<p>“She didn’t fight back, so it wasn’t rape.”</p> <p>“She was calm and composed, so it couldn’t have been that bad.”</p> <p>“But she didn’t scream.”</p>	Misunderstanding of dissociation and the freeze response.	<p>Invalidates neurobiological trauma.</p> <p>Discredits survivors who freeze. Punishes survivors for not performing distress.</p>
“There were no bruises or injuries.”	Medicalized/legal definitions of “real” rape.	Erases coercion, fear-based compliance, or manipulation.
“What was she wearing?”	Rape culture, modesty policing.	<p>Blames the survivor.</p> <p>Erases person who causes harm’s responsibility.</p>
“Marital rape doesn’t exist.”	Strict religious/patriarchal norms.	Removes the concept of consent from marriage.
“She didn’t report right away, so she must be lying.”	Societal bias; “real victim” tropes.	Ignores common trauma responses and survival strategies.
“They stayed in contact with the abuser.”	Lack of understanding about trauma bonding or dependency.	Misreads manipulation, coercion, and fear as consent.
“It’s their duty to cooperate with the case.”	Prosecutorial mindset (winning the case over supporting the person).	<p>Strips survivor of autonomy.</p> <p>Undermines healing.</p>
“It’s not abuse if there’s no penetration.”	Narrow statutory and cultural definitions of rape.	Excludes groping and other forms of sexual abuse.



MYTH	ROOTED IN	HARM CAUSED
“False accusations ruin lives.”	Media narratives; male-centered fear.	False reports are rare (2%–10%), while underreporting is common. ¹
“Survivors are emotional and irrational.”	Possible gendered and racialized stereotypes often targeted at survivors who identify as female and survivors of color.	Delegitimizes valid emotional expression and range of possible responses to harm.
“Teenagers can offer consent if they say ‘yes.’”	Cultural norms about maturity and sexuality.	Ignores power dynamics.
“They knew what they were doing.” “She’s so fast.”	Often specific to survivors of color—adultification bias, ² racism, misogyny.	Criminalizes Black and Brown girls. Blames survivors for others’ actions.
“He’s a ‘good guy.’ He’d never do something like that.” “He comes from a good family.”	Respectability politics; rape culture.	Protects abusers in powerful or respected roles (coaches, clergy, partners).
“People with disabilities aren’t real targets of sexual violence.” “People with disabilities are asexual or childlike, so they can’t be assaulted.”	Ableism, de-sexualization, infantilization, ignorance of communication differences, lack of disability training.	Disbelief of survivors with intellectual, developmental, or physical disabilities; refusal to accommodate communication needs; cases dropped for credibility concerns.

¹ RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network). “The Criminal Justice System: Statistics.” RAINN, <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system>.

² Adultification bias means Black and Brown youth (especially girls) are perceived as older, more sexually experienced, and less innocent than white peers. This leads to under-protection, over-criminalization, and lack of belief when harm occurs. Rebecca Epstein, Jamilia J. Blake, and Thalia González, *Girlhood Interrupted*, Georgetown Law Center on Poverty & Inequality, 2017.



NAVIGATING CULTURAL BELIEFS

With Compassion and Without Compromise

Many cultures have rites of passage marking entry into adulthood. In some communities, child marriage is viewed as part of that transition.



She's grown up now or at an age that she knew what she was doing.

It is common to hear:

He's a man now; it's normal for him to seek a woman

These beliefs are often intergenerational teachings rooted in cultural identity, gender norms, or religious values. Legal age matters — and so does bodily autonomy. Conversations with families, communities, or professionals require both cultural humility and a firm commitment to survivor protection.



Here's how:

DO

Acknowledge cultural meaning without validating harm.

Focus on power dynamics, not just age.

Explain how, even if a minor said yes, an adult has more power, responsibility, and understanding of the implications.

Emphasize shared values, such as by saying, "I know you care about their future and safety. So do we."

Use clear examples: "If a minor can't vote, sign a lease, or buy a car, they can't consent to sex with an adult."

Listen first, then educate. Understand the belief before reframing.

Clarify the law in plain language. For example, state, "The law says someone under 18 cannot consent to sex with an adult."

Name internal diversity: "Some in your community may agree; others may not. We're here to protect everyone."

Center the survivor's voice and agency, especially if present.

Stay humble about what you don't know, such as by saying, "I'm still learning how this shows up in different communities."

Affirm that safety and dignity transcend culture: "All communities want their children protected. This is one way we do that."

Don't insult or pathologize the culture. Avoid terms like "backwards," "barbaric," or "ignorant."

Erases coercion, fear-based compliance, or manipulation.

Don't rely only on the word "illegal." It can shut down conversation without fostering understanding.

Don't center your own cultural lens or imply your norms are universally correct.

Don't conflate cultural pride with permissiveness around abuse.

Don't immediately correct or fact-check with a superior tone; it shuts people down.

Don't recite statutes as if they're self-explanatory. Families need clarity, not intimidation.

Don't treat cultures as monolithic or assume uniform beliefs.

Don't speak over or for the survivor, even with good intentions.

Don't position yourself as a cultural expert, especially as an outsider.

Don't weaponize "American values" as the only lens; speak in terms of safety and shared humanity.

DON'T



What Legal Professionals Need to Understand

Legal professionals — judges, prosecutors, public defenders, law enforcement, and legal advocates — hold significant power in survivors' lives. That power shows up not only in verdicts or motions, but also in body language, tone, intake forms, and silence.

Survivors may comply because they are afraid, not because they trust you. Many have learned that compliance ensures survival. They may say "yes" out of fear, nod to avoid confrontation, appear in court out of obligation, or avoid asking questions even when confused. If this is interpreted as confidence or consent, it may be a misreading. You don't know what experiences a survivor brings into the room.

If you assume you will be seen as the "good guy," you may already have lost trust. Being trauma-informed is not "soft." Trauma-informed practice is not lenient or emotional. It is effective and informed by neuroscience — not myth.

BEING TRAUMA-INFORMED:

- Reduces survivor withdrawal from proceedings (Office for Victims of Crime [OVC]).
- Improves testimony and recall (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network [RAINN]; OVC).
- Strengthens case outcomes (OVC).
- Prevents retraumatization that can disrupt the legal process (RAINN; National Sexual Violence Resource Center [NSVRC]).
- Supports long-term healing, even if justice is not achieved through the system (NSVRC).

Survivors
may comply
because they
are afraid,

not because
they trust
you.



LANGUAGE THAT

Shuts Survivors Down and What to Say Instead

AVOID SAYING	TRY SAYING INSTEAD	WHY IT MATTERS
“Why didn’t you run or fight back?”	“Many survivors freeze. Can you tell me what you remember feeling in that moment?”	Acknowledges involuntary trauma responses.
“Why didn’t you leave sooner?”	“It’s so brave that you made it through. What helped you survive?”	Centers resilience over judgment.
“Are you sure that’s what happened?”	“Thank you for sharing that. I want to make sure I understand.” “Can you help me understand..”	Keeps focus on clarity without signaling disbelief.
“You have to testify or we can’t help you.”	“There are options. Let’s talk through what feels safe and possible for you.”	Gives the survivor agency and choice.
“He seems like a good guy. Are you sure?”	Don’t say this. Ever.	Reinforces rape culture and character-based dismissal.
“That doesn’t make sense.”	“It’s okay if the details feel jumbled; trauma can affect memory.”	Validates trauma impact on cognition.
“Try not to cry. We need to get through this.”	“Take your time. We’re not in a rush.”	Invites emotional safety.
“It’s not abuse if there’s no penetration.”	Narrow statutory and cultural definitions of rape.	Excludes groping and other forms of sexual abuse.



TRAUMA-INFORMED

Courtroom Behavior

Whenever possible, we suggest following the recommendations provided below.

Before Court Begins:

- Avoid surprise questions or unfamiliar procedures.
- Provide plain-language walkthroughs of what to expect.
- Ask if the survivor wants an advocate or support person present.
- Ensure the space is physically accessible and linguistically inclusive.

During Proceedings:

- Allow breaks if a survivor appears distressed or is dissociating.
- Avoid shouting, interruptions, or rapid questioning.
- Do not require survivors to face the harm-doer unless they request it.
- Be mindful of tone, eye contact, and body language.

After Court:

- Clearly explain next steps and timelines.
- Share information in writing as well as verbally.
- Offer referrals to support services (e.g., therapy, crisis centers).
- Never assume a survivor will return; thank them for their effort and courage.

INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES:

- Train all courtroom staff in trauma-informed practices.
- Inform survivors of plea negotiations before public disclosure.
- Create trauma-informed scripts for bailiffs and clerks when interacting with survivors.
- Designate waiting areas separate from the harm-doer.
- Track who receives protective orders, interpreters, and accommodations — and who does not.

Check out
NJCASA's
Find Help
Page.

Note:

Support may be needed earlier in the process and should be offered at any point.



TRAUMA-INFORMED

Legal Practice

You may be the most experienced person in the courtroom, but not the most impacted. Legal skill alone is not enough. You need awareness and humility. How you engage matters as much as what you know. These principles are essential for professionals working with survivors, especially those navigating multiple systems of harm.



Choice & Control

- Survivors should never feel forced — even when you believe it is “for their own good.” Sexual violence violates autonomy; the legal process must not replicate that harm.
- You may feel pressure to move a case forward or pursue what you believe is the “best” outcome. But when survivors are pushed into decisions they don’t understand or aren’t ready for, the system becomes another site of harm.
- Let survivors lead. Offer real choices. Respect their pace.
- Ask yourself: “Am I centering my goals or the survivor’s needs?”



Transparency

- Explain every step in plain language and repeat when needed. Survivors may be navigating fear, shame, trauma, and distrust. Legal jargon can feel like a barrier.
- Be clear about what is happening, what it means, and what their rights are. Use language that is accessible, age appropriate, and culturally relevant. Trauma impacts memory and comprehension; repetition may be necessary.
- Ask yourself: “Would this explanation make sense to someone without legal training?”



Predictability

- Provide a roadmap. Outline what will happen, who will be present, possible questions, and expected timelines.
- The legal process is full of unknowns, and unpredictability can be destabilizing for trauma survivors. Preparation and structure can be grounding.
- Ask yourself: “Have I done everything I can to reduce surprise?”



Collaboration

- Work with survivors, not around them. Legal professionals are trained to lead and solve — but survivors are experts in their own lives. Trauma-informed practice means building the case together. That includes:
 - Seeking input before drafting documents.
 - Involving survivors in decision-making, including plea discussions.
 - Respecting when they change course.
 - Acknowledging harm when it occurs, even unintentionally.
- Ask yourself: “Am I partnering with them or talking at them?”



Cultural Humility

- Do not assume you know what safety, justice, or healing looks like for someone else. Legal systems often reflect dominant cultural frameworks rooted in white, Western, carceral models.
- For some survivors, healing may not include prison. Safety may not mean calling the police. Justice may not involve a courtroom.
- Cultural humility means:
 - Checking assumptions.



Non-Escalation

- Recognizing safety is not one-size-fits-all.
- Understanding the impact of colonization, racism, ableism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and religious bias.
- Remaining open to restorative or community-led models.
- Ask yourself: “Am I centering my cultural lens — or theirs?”
- Professionalism is not emotional detachment. Compassion strengthens the law.
- Legal culture often rewards flat affect, rapid questioning, and authoritative tone. Survivors need grounded presence. This does not mean therapizing. It means:
 - Regulating your reactions.
 - Not mirroring distress with frustration or dismissal.
 - Offering warmth and dignity without overstepping.
 - Avoiding defensiveness when survivors express anger or mistrust.
- Ask yourself: “Am I calming the room — or shutting it down?”



WHEN COMMUNITY IS

Also Complicated

Systems can fail survivors — and so can community. Many survivors turn to courts after seeking help from family, faith leaders, elders, and/or cultural institutions. Sometimes, those spaces offer support. Other times, they protect abusers, minimize harm, or pressure survivors into silence “for the greater good” or to “keep the peace.”

We cannot romanticize community as inherently safer. Power, silence, and survival operate there too. Unfortunately, not all community spaces are safe. Abuse can hide behind a pulpit or at a family dinner table. Religious institutions have been sites of both deep healing and deep betrayal. Activist and mutual aid spaces have protected harm-doers in the name of unity. Cultural elders have dismissed survivors to preserve tradition. Families have covered up abuse to “avoid shame” or “keep the family together.” When anyone makes the assumption that “community” automatically equals safety, they miss a possible reality: Some survivors are harmed twice, first by a person and then by their people.

...not all
community
spaces

are
safe.





Don't Romanticize Alternative Justice

Community-based models such as restorative circles, peacemaking, or cultural mediation can be powerful — but only if they are:

- Survivor-led.
- Grounded in clear norms of safety and consent.
- Free from coercion.
- Supported by training, resources, and accountability.

Otherwise, they risk retraumatization in the name of “healing.” If a survivor wants a restorative approach, support them — but do not push it. It is not necessarily softer or easier than court; it can be equally demanding.

Work With, Not Against, Cultural Practices

Unfamiliar approaches may create discomfort — but cultural justice practices are not the enemy if they respect survivor autonomy. Given cultural resonance, some survivors may prefer circle processes, reconciliation, or collective accountability. These can offer naming, recognition, and repair beyond punishment. They must center the survivor's definition of safety — not the community's desire for closure. Legal professionals should not override or dominate these practices. Collaboration is possible when legal protections and cultural wisdom are both respected.

WHAT HEALING LOOKS LIKE OUTSIDE A COURTROOM

Healing may include:

- Rituals marking survival or release.
- Storytelling in trusted spaces.
- Cultural reconnection through language, food, or ancestral practices.
- Pod mapping for safety networks.
- Rest as resistance.

These practices do not compete with legal advocacy. They can coexist and strengthen it.





HOW TO SHOW UP

Without Causing Harm

This checklist supports accountability and adaptability in real time.

Before the Interaction:

- Have I grounded myself before entering the space?
- Have I confirmed the survivor's name and pronouns?
- Is the space accessible, private, and culturally appropriate?
- Have I reviewed prior information to avoid repeated disclosures?

During the Interaction:

- Am I explaining all options — including doing nothing — to ensure informed consent?
- Am I avoiding unnecessary legal jargon?
- Am I pausing when they seem overwhelmed?
- Am I asking, "What would make you feel safe right now?"
- Am I avoiding interrupting, crowding, or speaking over them?
- Am I respecting silence?
- Am I asking for consent before discussing sensitive topics?
- Am I offering breaks without waiting for a request or justification?
- Am I avoiding assuming the legal system is the only path to justice?

After the Interaction:

- Did I clearly outline next steps and timelines?
- Did I provide referrals in multiple formats?
- Did I thank them for their trust?





Sample Questions to Build Rapport

- Is there anything that would make this space more comfortable?
- Is there anything I should avoid saying or doing?
- Would you like everything explained upfront, or should I check in as we go?
- Do you want to review all possible outcomes or focus on next steps?
- Please know, you don't have to answer anything you're not ready for. We will go at your pace.

These are
invitations,
not
obligations.

Let the
survivor set
the tempo.

Legal tools can offer life-changing outcomes — protective orders, civil remedies, immigration relief, criminal accountability, and compensation. These systems exist because of survivor advocacy, and they continue to evolve.





YOU ARE PART OF

the Story

Whether you are a prosecutor, clerk, paralegal, legal advocate, or campus advocate, you are now part of a survivor's story. Your presence will be remembered long after the case closes. Survivors may not remember your citations — but they will remember your tone, patience, and posture. You may not have caused the harm, but you can choose whether to compound it or disrupt it.

Your presence will be remembered

long after the case closes.

Let Support Be Your Role

Survivors are not fragile. They are not broken. They are experts in survival. Meet that expertise with humility. You do not need to fix everything. Show up with care, clarity, and accountability. That can shift the story — and, collectively, the system.





TRAUMA-INFORMED

Intake and Court Prep Template

Implementing new forms or procedural changes may require review and approval. Even when formal revisions are not immediately possible, integrating trauma-informed principles into existing practices can strengthen engagement and create a more responsive legal environment.

Whenever possible, provide materials in multiple languages reflecting New Jersey communities, including Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese, Gujarati, Tagalog, Hindu, Korean, Arabic, Polish, and Haitian Creole.

**SECTION 1:**

Basic Info

Legal name: _____

Preferred name and pronouns: _____

Language preference and dialect: _____

Interpretation needs (spoken, ASL, written): _____

Access needs (mobility, sensory, neurodivergence, trauma-informed environment): _____

Cultural background (optional): _____



SECTION 2:

Safety Assessment

What does safety look like to you right now? What would make you feel safe now and going forward? _____

Safe contact information (OK to leave message, text only, etc.):

Risk factors (check all that apply):

- Shared housing
- Shared workplace
- Family loyalty pressure
- Active retaliation threats
- Immigration vulnerability
- Disability-specific dependency

Is the harm-doer someone with power in your community?
(e.g., religious leader, law enforcement officer, employer, school staff)

SECTION 3:

Trauma Considerations

Past trauma or mental health experiences to consider: _____

Triggers to avoid (words, clothing, behaviors, tones, etc.): _____



Sensory needs (lighting, seating, noise levels, etc.): _____

Preferred coping or grounding tools: _____

SECTION 4:

Support Preferences

Advocate present? Yes No

Emotional support person present? Yes No

Preferred break schedule or signals: _____

Request to wait in separate space from accused: Yes No

Gender preference for legal advocate or lawyer (if any): _____

Cultural or spiritual practices to respect (e.g., prayer time, clothing customs, norms around opposite gender interactions such as handshakes): _____

SECTION 5:

Courtroom Prep

Overview of upcoming steps (charges, timeline, appearances): _____

Courtroom map reviewed? Yes No

Explanation of roles (judge, prosecutor, etc.) provided? Yes No

Explanation of legal terms provided? Yes No

Review of survivor's rights during testimony? Yes No

Preferred testimony method (in-person, remote, shielded): _____



SECTION 6:

Wrap-Up and Follow-Up

Timeline of next steps with dates: _____

Contact info for legal/support team: _____

Referrals provided (check all that apply):

- Legal Aid
- Therapy
- Housing
- Immigration Services
- Food/Childcare/Employment
- Other: _____

Notes or requests for future interactions:

Survivor feedback: What helped today / What was hard /

Additional requests: _____



Work Cited

“Camden Diocese Bankruptcy Plan for \$87.5M Abuse Settlement Approved by Judge.” *6abc*, 15 Mar. 2024, <https://6abc.com/post/diocese-of-camden-priest-sex-abuse-lawsuits-bankruptcy/14528426/>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Sexual Violence Prevention: About Sexual Violence*. <https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/about/index.html>.

“Emma Sulkowicz.” *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 19 Feb. 2026, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emma_Sulkowicz.

Epstein, Rebecca, Jamilia J. Blake, and Thalia González. *Girlhood Interrupted: The Erasure of Black Girls’ Childhood*. Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality, 2017, <https://www.law.georgetown.edu/poverty-inequality-center/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2017/08/girlhood-interrupted.pdf>.

Federal Partners Committee on Women and Trauma. *Trauma-Informed Approaches: Federal Activities and Initiatives*. National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2023, <https://www.nsvrc.org/trauma-informed-approaches>.

Know Your IX. Advocates for Youth, 2023, <https://www.advocatesforyouth.org/campaigns/know-your-ix/>.

Legal Services of New Jersey. <https://www.lsnj.org>.

“Lyft Announces Safety Updates to Its Policies Amid Sexual Assault Concerns.” *Feminist NewsWire*, 12 Sept. 2019, <https://feminist.org/news/lyft-announces-safety-updates-to-its-policies-amid-sexual-assault-concerns/>.

National Sexual Violence Resource Center. *Sexual Violence and Harassment*. NSVRC, 2023, <https://www.nsvrc.org>.

Office for Victims of Crime. *Trauma Informed Care*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 2025, <https://ovc.ojp.gov/taxonomy/term/trauma-informed-care>.

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN). <https://rainn.org/>.

Tahirih Justice Center. <https://www.tahirih.org>.

“USA Gymnastics, USOPC Reach \$380 Million Settlement with Survivors of Sexual Abuse.” *PBS NewsHour*, 13 Dec. 2021, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/usa-gymnastics-usopc-reach-380-million-settlement-with-victims-of-sexual-abuse>.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. “Victims of Human Trafficking and Other Crimes.” *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*, <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/victims-of-human-trafficking-and-other-crimes>.

