

Victim Representative

As a member of the multidisciplinary team, the primary responsibility of the victim representative is to offer an avenue for victims and their families to be heard. Involving a victim representative on the MDT has many benefits, including improving supervision of the offender, increasing offender accountability, building empathy for the victim, decreasing offender secrecy, preventing an unbalanced alignment with the offender, and ensuring a safer community. The exchange of information between the victim and MDT is crucial for the healing of the victim and rehabilitation of the juvenile.

Upon convening, the MDT should identify the best person to be the victim representative for each individual case, such as the victim therapist, a victim advocate, or other (refer to the document titled "Resources for Victim Representation"). Due to the importance of victim contribution to the MDT for the reasons stated above, reasonable attempts should be made to include victim involvement. The MDT shall orient the victim representative on the function of the team and their role as a member.

The victim may choose not to provide or receive information. In that circumstance, or if a victim does not exist on the case, the victim representative will contribute general input regarding the perspective of victims to the MDT. Bringing the victim perspective is important in protecting potential victims and the community.

Responsibilities of the Victim Representative:

- A. The primary responsibility of the victim representative is to assure that the MDT is emphasizing victim safety, both physically and psychologically, throughout the supervision and management of the juvenile.
- B. The representative shall share information received from the victim and concerns of the victim to the MDT when available. Such information could include safety concerns, grooming behaviors, specifics of the offense, and offending behaviors.
- C. The representative shall convey information to the victim from the MDT such as, but not limited to, terms and conditions of probation, general treatment contract, treatment and supervision timelines, offender placement, offender progress in treatment, victim clarification and family reunification planning, and any other pertinent information as determined by the MDT. Team members should exercise good professional judgment in determining what information to share with both the victim and the juvenile. (Guidelines on confidentiality are outlined in Section 3.200 of these Standards. See also Section 5.120 regarding MDT function.)

- D. The representative shall provide input on how MDT decisions may affect victims or potential victims.
- E. The representative shall assist the MDT in ensuring that victim needs are heard, considered and responded to by the MDT to the best of their ability.
- F. The representative may provide support, referrals, and resource information with the victim.
- G. The representative should participate in MDT meetings.
- H. As stated in Section of 3.150 of these Standards, the representative shall contribute to the treatment content by providing the following types of information to the treatment team:
 - 1. Awareness of victim impact.
 - 2. Recognition of harm done to the victim(s).
 - 3. Impact of sexual offending on victim(s), families, community and self.
 - 4. Restitution/reparation to victims (including victim clarification) and others impacted by the offense including the community.
- I. The representative may submit questions from the victim to the MDT for review and share the responses to these questions with the victim if appropriate. The representative can also explain to the victim why certain types of information may not be shared.
- J. The representative may function as a liaison between and/or resource for the victim(s), victim therapist, and MDT as needed.
- K. If appropriate to the case, the representative shall assist with planning for victim clarification sessions or family reunification.
- L. When the parents of the juvenile are also the parents of the victim, the representative shall advocate for the parents to support and address the needs of the victim child as well as the offender.
- M. The representative may assist with issues related to newly identified victims.