

## Victim/Survivor Rights and the Media

### Your Rights:

- You have the right to **appoint a spokesperson** for you (e.g., family member, friend, attorney, religious leader, victim service provider).
- You have the right **not to speak** to the media, but keep in mind that the story could still be published, with or without your comment.
- You have the right to **set conditions** for the interview beforehand. They may not agree to all of the conditions, but if they want your interview, they will likely respond to reasonable requests.
- You have the right to **refuse a question**. You can do so by saying something such as “I’m sorry, but I would rather not talk about that” or use it as an opportunity to change the topic to something you would prefer to talk about.
- You have the right to **request a correction** if the article that is published is inaccurate or you are quoted out of context.
- You have the right to **refuse future interviews**. Accepting one interview does not mean you have to agree to follow-up interviews or to interviews with other reporters.
- You have the right to **file a complaint** if you are feeling harassed by reporters. You can file it through their employers, victim service providers, or the police.

### Interviews:

- Keep your answers short and to the point, and know that the final story will be edited.
- Practice what you want to say beforehand and/or rehearse with someone you trust.
- Decide ahead of time who you would like to have present with you for the interview.
- Do not assume that anything you say is off the record.
- Make sure you are comfortable with the location of your interview.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, respond as such instead of speculating.

#### **Keep these questions in mind:**

- What are your goals for this interview?
- Is an interview too invasive?

#### **If there is a camera:**

- Make sure the interview room is visually appealing.
- If you want to use visual aids, make sure you have them ready before the interview.
- Keep in mind that clothing with large patterns, bright colors, and white do not always reflect well on screen.

### Social Media:

- News outlets may post your quotes and the articles and/or news clips of you to their social media accounts.
- It is possible that news outlets could find your personal social media accounts, so make sure you are comfortable with your privacy settings or adjust accordingly.