



T-VSTTA

OVC TRIBAL VICTIM SERVICES TRAINING
AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Developing Policies and Procedures on Safeguarding Client Data

Overview

Policies and procedures provide a roadmap for day-to-day operations. These documents guide decision-making, clarify roles, and ensure compliance with laws and organizational practices. This guide focuses on three areas: (1) the purpose for policies and procedures about safeguarding client data; (2) questions to consider when drafting policies and procedures; and (3) a callout box highlighting an Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Model Standard to consider in developing policies and procedures. The content is not exhaustive. Victim service providers may adapt this content address specific community and client needs.

Policy Purpose

Protect a client's safety in seeking services and building trust with victim services providers. Safeguarding client data, including their personally identifiable information (PII), details of their victimization, and the services they access while in your victim services program protects their confidentiality and reduces the possibility of re-traumatization.

Procedure Purpose

Safeguard client data in their program and share resources to protect clients' safety and minimize re-traumatization as they may engage with multiple distinct partners through a referral.

Questions to Consider

When developing a policy for safeguarding client data, ask—

- What client data is collected?
- Who has access to client data?
- Where is the data stored?
- What exceptions does your program have to maintaining a client's confidentiality?

OVC Model Standard – Program Standard 4.4

A written guideline describes procedures for maintaining confidentiality of records, including—

- Clearly defined terms/limits of confidentiality.
- Disclosure of these terms to those served and to paid and unpaid staff.
- Confidentiality agreements between those served and providers.
- Confidentiality agreements between staff and the program.
- As applicable, policies/forms on confidentiality of interagency communications.

When developing the procedures associated with the policy, ask—

- How is client data maintained and protected?
- Does your program have an information sharing agreement in place with other programs?

Additional Resources

[Program Standards for Confidentiality and Data Privacy \(OVC Model Standards\)](#)

[Maintaining Confidentiality \(OVC TTAC\)](#)

[Sample Confidentiality Policy \(National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center\)](#)

[Sample Policy and Procedure \(Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence\)](#)



Tribal Victim Services Training and Technical Assistance (T-VSTTA) is a capacity-building program providing tailored, hands-on training and technical assistance to victim service providers in American Indian and Alaska Native communities. With over 100 years of combined experience in victim services, the T-VSTTA team meets you where you are, working together to build on the resilience within your community.

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) funds the T-VSTTA program, which is available at no cost for grantees and potential grantees.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Email or call to request training and technical assistance. A member of the T-VSTTA team will respond promptly.

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