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Official Position Statement on **Confidential Sexual Violence Advocates Divulging Personal Information**

POSITION

New Jersey statute (section 4 of P.L. 2001, c.81) recognizes designated Sexual Violence Programs and their agents as critical in delivering survivor-centered services to survivors of sexual violence. As confidentiality is a hallmark feature of survivor-centered services, so is confidentiality of sexual violence advocates. Therefore, it is the position of the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NJCASA) that Confidential Sexual Violence Advocates not divulge any personal information about themselves when providing services to survivors of sexual violence. The nature of the Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate's professional role and the necessary boundary required to perform that role predicates an essential right to privacy. Divulging personal information undermines policies set forth by the professional discipline advocates represent. This information has no significance to evidence collection, investigative or counseling procedures or protocols. In accordance with this position, Sexual Violence Advocates shall not divulge their social security numbers, home addresses, home phone numbers, driver's licenses, or any individually identifying characteristics when responding to third parties, including but not limited to law enforcement agent(s) and /or Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner(s).

Additionally, it is the position of NJCASA that not providing personal information to law enforcement agents or medical personnel shall not prevent a Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate from accompanying a survivor of sexual violence throughout any and all medical and or legal procedures. The Attorney General's NJ Standards for Providing Services to Sexual Assault Survivors (1998) supports this position by stating that all survivors of sexual violence have the right to "speak with a Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate prior to beginning any treatment, evidence collection or law enforcement interviews."

STATEWIDE SEXUAL VIOLENCE HOTLINE **1.800.601.7200**