

## Referring Agency Agreement

### Legal Access Works (LAW) Legal Assistance Program – Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence

#### General

1. The program will follow program guidelines as explained in the training.
2. The program will use the LAW Release of Information Form for sharing of information between the program, participating attorneys, and OAESV.
3. The program will ensure that staff provide emotional support, *on-going safety planning* and court accompaniment (when possible) of all survivors who are assisted through the project.
4. The program will notify OAESV if the survivor withdraws the case or if the program loses contact with the survivor.
5. The program will notify OAESV if the survivor encounters difficulties or the advocate has concerns with the attorney.
6. The program will ensure that staff members assist survivors and attorneys in gathering all corroborating evidence and other information needed by attorneys to effectively represent survivors.
7. The program will seek technical assistance and support from OAESV as needed to provide effective advocacy.
8. The program agrees that it will use the participating attorney list only for ODVN or OAESV-related activities and will not solicit attorneys from that list, with whom it has no separate relationship, for pro bono or reduced fee cases.
9. The program agrees to refrain from participating in or supporting any of the following activities because they are recognized as potentially dangerous for survivors:
  - a. Mandatory counseling for victims;
  - b. Penalizing victims who refuse to testify or forcing victims to testify against abusers;
  - c. Refusal to refer and assist victims who are also respondents/defendants;
  - d. Promoting procedures that could require victims to seek legal sanctions against their abusers or providing or offering representation on the condition that victims seek protection orders, counseling, or some other course of action;
  - e. Failing to conduct safety planning with clients;
  - f. Using eligibility procedures or policies that exclude victims from receiving safe shelter, advocacy services, counseling, and other assistance based on their actual or perceived sex, age, immigration status, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental health condition, physical health condition, criminal record, work in the sex industry, or the age and/or sex of their children;

10. Mediation. Our agency understands that certain activities may compromise victim safety, especially victims with immigration issues and therefore expressly agrees not to propose, and to discourage, mediation between the victim/survivor and the offender in any case involving representation under this agreement. In the event that mediation is required, the program agrees to ensure that additional safety planning is conducted with the survivor specific to the mediation process.

Confidentiality

11. We will secure a signed, time-limited, purpose-centered LAW Release of Information form from each survivor prior to releasing identifying information to OAESV or attorneys in the project. In true emergencies, oral releases may be obtained and used; however, they must be followed by the execution of a written release as soon as possible.

12. All referrals will be sent by email. Referring programs may email either OAESV prior to emailing referrals.

13. Case-related materials (referral forms, invoices, etc.) that contain any identifying information will be stored in locked file cabinets at the offices of OAESV, participating attorneys, and referring agencies at the end of each business day and/or in secured online case management software.

14. OAESV and referring agencies will enforce a policy of filing a motion to quash any subpoenas related to identifying information that may be contained in case files of survivors assisted through the project.

15. Referring agencies will make every effort to protect databases from internet connections, and when such databases must be on computers connected to the internet, will seek the highest level of encryption and protection possible, and will not share identifying client data in shared databases with outside entities.

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Executive Director

Date Signed

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Referring Agency

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Rosa Beltrè, Executive Director  
Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence

Date signed