004 - VICTIM AND INVESTIGATOR RELATIONSHIP

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

DETECTIVE DIVISION

SPECIAL VICTIMS BUREAU

Bureau Order No:	**0004**
Subject:	**VICTIM AND INVESTIGATOR RELATIONSHIP**

Effective Date	Jan. 2023	**Last Date Reviewed**	Jan. 2023	**Last Date Revised**	Jan. 2023

PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for personnel concerning the victim/investigator relationship.

POLICY:

Victims and their families are not only traumatized by the act itself, they often feel abandoned within the Criminal Justice System. The detective and the relationship he/she establishes with the victim can significantly impact the victim's emotional survival. From the beginning of the investigation to its conclusion, the Special Victims Bureau detective is tasked with the responsibility for providing the necessary support and understanding to the victim. This will be accomplished by the following:

- The assigned detective shall attempt to contact the victim/family **no later than 24-hours** after receiving the case. The detective shall advise them when the investigation will begin and supply their contact number(s) and e-mail address should they need to contact the detective. If a Team Sergeant assigns a case to a detective when the detective is unavailable for a period of time due to his being on vacation, out of the area on extended training, etc., the Team Sergeant will assume the responsibility to make the above notification. All contacts and attempts will be documented in the Case Journal.

- It is the Team Sergeant's responsibility to ensure their detectives comply with the **24 hour notification** to the victim or family by reviewing the case journal.

- During the first interview, briefly explain the process to the family. Let them know what to expect.

- Interview the victim in person. Any telephone interviews must be previously approved by the team sergeant. This directive will not apply after a rapport has been established and detectives will periodically need to make contact with their victim to get additional information or update them as to the status of their case.

- Advise the victim and family regarding victim's rights and inform them that counseling and entitlements are offered through the Victim-Witness Unit of the District Attorney's Office. Let them know that a criminal filing is not contingent on them receiving survivor benefits. Provide the family with a telephone number to their nearest Victim-Witness office.

- At least once a month, advise the victim/family of the status of all active cases and document your notification in the Case Journal.

- Advise the family of the final disposition of the case and document this in the Case Journal. Your explanation of the results of your investigation is the case closure for many victims and could be critical to the victim's emotional healing process.

- Victims who are contacted at their school will be advised prior to the commencement of the interview that they have the right to have a support person present. Such notification, and of the child's response, will be documented within a detective's first or supplemental report. All additional provisions of 11174.3 PC will be taken into consideration and complied with.

- As per the mandates of 679.04 PC, victims of a sex crime will be advised prior to the commencement of an investigative interview, of their right to have two support persons present. Should the victim indicate any desire to invoke this right, the interview will not commence until those mandates have been met. Such notification and of the child's response will be documented within a detective's first or supplemental report.

Reviewed and approved by:

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Richard Ruiz, Captain

Special Victims Bureau