



Office of Victim Services

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Governor

Director

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL TOWN HALL MEETINGS

The New York State Office of Victim Services (OVS) has been designated as the agency responsible for the storage of untested sexual offense evidence kits (SEOKs), drug-facilitated sexual assault (DFSA) kits, and associated items for a 20-year period from the date of collection.

OVS will host three Virtual Town Hall Meetings using the Zoom virtual meeting platform to obtain information, feedback and best practices from stakeholders across the state. Information gathered at these meetings will inform the agency’s policies and procedures related to this important initiative.

Virtual Town Hall Meeting Topic	Date	Time
Meeting 1: <i>Victim Notifications</i>	Tuesday, May 24, 2022	1 p.m. – 3 p.m. EDT
Meeting 2: <i>Transfer and Receipt of Forensic Evidence</i>	Tuesday, June 7, 2022	1 p.m. – 3 p.m. EDT
Meeting 3: <i>SOEC Kit Release and Disposal</i>	Tuesday, June 14, 2022	1 p.m. – 3 p.m. EDT

Meeting Format:

Each Virtual Town Hall meeting will focus on specific topics and questions related to those topics. Registered participants may request 5 minutes of speaking time per question, per topic area. OVS reserves the right to prioritize speaking requests to ensure that a diverse set of experts provide input and feedback.

OVS, in accordance with its policy of equal opportunity and non-discrimination, will provide reasonable accommodations, upon request, to afford individuals access to participate. Accommodations should be requested at least 10 days prior to the event. OVS’ accommodation request policy can be found [here](#).

To Register:

Use the links that follow to register for your desired session(s) before the registration deadline. Registrations are subject to approval as space may be limited. If you wish to attend more than one session, **you must register for each session separately.**

To Request an Allotted Speaking Time:

If you’d like to request an allotted speaking time, you must select the question(s) you’d like to answer when you register. Please note, your request to speak must be approved; if approved, you will be notified at least one week in advance of the meeting(s).

Additional Information:

- OVS is not responsible for incorrectly submitted requests. In the event of incorrect or untimely submissions, participants *may* have the opportunity to respond during the session’s open discussion period for each question.
- Open discussion periods may be limited. Participants who request a speaking time will be prioritized.
- Virtual Town Hall meeting facilitators will follow a predetermined schedule to ensure there is an appropriate amount of time for each topic to be discussed.
- For any questions, please reach out to soeck@ovs.ny.gov.



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER for Meeting 1: Victim Notifications](#)

Time/Date: 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. (EDT) Tuesday, May 24, 2022

Registration Deadline: Tuesday, May 10, 2022

Session 1 will allow OVS to hear feedback from a variety of stakeholders on victim notifications related to kits. OVS seeks participation in response to the following questions:

1. What are the best practices in informing and notifying victims of kit status updates in a way that is trauma-informed?
2. What are the best practices in informing and notifying victims of kit status updates in a way that is culturally competent?
3. What language and/or practices, should be avoided in victim notifications to lessen retraumatization to the extent possible?
4. What are the recommended best practices to notify victims of kit status updates in a way that maintains the confidentiality and safety of victims, such as victims of domestic or intimate partner violence?
5. What are the recommended best practices to notify to minor victims or points of contacts for minor cases of kit status updates?

Who should attend and participate? Stakeholders who have experience or expertise in notification best practices, particularly those who have experience with confidentiality concerns relating to status as a minor, safety concerns, etc. Participants may include hospital-based providers who have experience working with victims during and after a forensic exam. Any additional experts in this session topic area are encouraged to attend and participate.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER for Meeting 2: Transfer and Receipt of Forensic Evidence](#)

Time/Date: 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. (EDT) Tuesday June 7, 2022

Registration Deadline: Tuesday, May 24, 2022

Session 2 will allow OVS to hear feedback from a variety of stakeholders on transferring and receiving new and existing kits. OVS seeks participation in response to the following questions:

1. Do hospitals prefer delivering existing kits themselves or shipping via common carrier (UPS, USPS, Fedex), and why?
2. Do hospitals prefer delivering new kits themselves or shipping via common carrier (UPS, USPS, Fedex), and why?
3. How do hospitals prefer to receive tracking information for legacy kits?
4. How do hospitals prefer to report to OVS how kits were stored prior to receipt?
5. What are the storage recommendations for improperly stored kits prior to receipt?

Who should attend and participate? Stakeholders who have experience or expertise in evidence collection, storage, and transport. Participants may include hospital-based providers, medical professionals, SANE coordinators or SANE nurses or other professionals who have experience with such evidence. Any additional experts in this session topic area are encouraged to attend and participate.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER for Meeting 3: Sexual Offense Evidence Kit Release and Disposal](#)

Time/Date: 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. (EDT) Tuesday, June 14, 2022

Registration Deadline: Tuesday, May 31, 2022

Meeting 3 will allow OVS to hear feedback from a variety of stakeholders on best practices for notifying and coordinating the release of kits to law enforcement and the return of personal items to victims.

1. What best practices currently exist for hospitals to notify law enforcement that a kit is being released to law enforcement?
2. What are the recommended best practices in coordinating law enforcement pickup for released kits?
3. What best practices exist for hospitals to use to verify the identity of a victim in the event of kit release and/or kit disposal?
4. What are the recommended best practices in receiving and processing personal items return requests from victims?
5. What are the recommended best practices in returning personal items to victims in a way that maintains confidentiality and safety of the victim?

Who should attend and participate? Stakeholders who have experience or expertise in evidence release, return, and disposal. Participants may include hospital-based providers, medical professionals, SANE coordinators or SANE nurses, or other professionals who have experience with these practices. Any additional experts in this session topic area are encouraged to attend and participate.