

# Supporting Incarcerated Survivors: Understanding Reporting Options in Detention

There are several ways to report sexual abuse inside a detention facility. While many incarcerated survivors choose to not report, advocates should be aware of the options for doing so and be able to explain them to their clients. Once a report is made, specially-trained investigators should begin looking into the case.

## A Survivor Can Make a Report:



### **In writing**

Survivors must be able to make a report through a formal grievance. They also must be able to submit a note of any kind (even by slipping paper under a door). They should be able to report anonymously.

### **Verbally**

Survivors can tell facility staff, volunteers, or contractors about what happened to them, and that person is required to initiate a report. You can help survivors figure out if there is a staff member they trust enough to talk to.

## **Through a third party**

Third parties — such as a family member, lawyer, or another incarcerated person — can report sexual abuse and sexual harassment on behalf of an incarcerated survivor by contacting the facility.

## **Through an outside entity**

Incarcerated survivors must be able to report sexual abuse to an outside entity that is NOT part of the corrections agency. The outside entity then must forward the report to the facility. Many survivors feel more comfortable with this reporting option. Survivors typically can reach the outside entity through a letter or by phone, using contact information that should be posted throughout a facility.

## **A Note About Your Role**



Your agency provides confidential support services and should not act as a reporting agency to the facility. A survivor should have access to write to you and call your hotline for emotional support, whether or not they wish to make a report. You should not disclose information about a survivor without their permission unless you are required to do so under your agency's confidentiality guidelines.