

STALKING RESPONSE STRATEGIES FOR VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDERS



**7.5 million
PEOPLE are
STALKED
each year**

DID YOU KNOW...

Stalking is a dangerous crime that affects an estimated 7.5 million women and men each year. Stalking — generally defined as a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear — is a crime under the laws of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. territories, and the federal government. Stalking can have devastating and long-lasting physical, emotional, and psychological effects on victims. The prevalence of anxiety, insomnia, social dysfunction, and severe depression is much higher among stalking victims than in the general population. Victim advocates can help victims devise a safety plan, navigate the criminal justice system, assert their rights as crime victims, and obtain the services and support they need and to which they are entitled.



**WHAT IS
STALKING?**

While legal definitions of stalking vary from one jurisdiction to another, a good working definition of stalking is:
a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.

HOW VICTIM ADVOCATES CAN HELP

1. Recognize that stalking is a pattern of conduct, and a stalking victim's level of fear and need may vary and change based on the stalker's behaviors.
2. Realize that stalking victims may maintain contact with their offenders to keep themselves (or loved ones) safe. Work with victims to establish safety plans.
3. Collaborate with others in your community, such as law enforcement, prosecutors, and community corrections, to help protect victims of stalking. Health care providers and members of faith communities also can be vital resources.
4. Work with law enforcement, prosecutors, and others to educate victims about the ongoing dynamics of stalking cases and what evidence and documentation may be required if they choose to report to the police.