

WRITING AN IMPACT STATEMENT

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF AN IMPACT STATEMENT AND HOW IS IT USED?

Impact statements provide an opportunity for panel members or decision makers to understand how the incident has affected you, your family, and those close to you. Many complainants have found it helpful to voice how their lives have been impacted by the incident committed against them physically, financially, emotionally and even spiritually. In the Title IX process, impact statements are read after a finding of responsibility but before sanctions are issued.

WHAT SHOULD I INCLUDE IN MY STATEMENT?

Only you know how to best describe the effects this incident has had on you and those close to you. We realize it may be difficult to describe in words how this incident has affected you. To assist you with your thoughts and feelings, it is recommended you write an impact statement on paper.

If you would like to share the emotional and mental impact, you may consider:

- o How life has changed for you and those close to you.
- o How your ability to relate to others has changed.
- o Any counseling or other support you have obtained.
- o Fees incurred for counseling or therapy for you and your family.
- o Certain details of the incident and the offender's actions you want the panel/decision maker to know.

If you or your family members were injured, you may wish to describe:

- o The specific physical injuries you or members of your family have suffered.
- o How long your injuries lasted or how long you expect them to last.
- o Any medical treatment you have received or expect to receive in the future and the medical expenses you have incurred.
- o Your inability to work and lost wages.

DO I HAVE TO MAKE AN IMPACT STATEMENT?

It's your choice whether you make an impact statement. However, no one knows better than you how this incident has affected you. It is very important for you to help the panel members/decision maker understand all the ways this incident has affected you and those close to you. Whether or not you choose to submit an impact statement is a decision made by you. It is a voluntary right that you have.

WHAT NOT TO INCLUDE IN THE STATEMENT

As much as it will feel good to write vindictive words or speak to what your heart feels, a calm, determined, practical and direct impact statement will have a more significant effect on all who read and listen. Do not include derogatory or foul language in your statement or hopes for harm to come to the respondent or their family, in life or prison. Keep the focus on the impact to you and your family, not theirs.

WRITE IT TO THE DECISION MAKER/PANEL

Remember, you are reading this statement to the decision maker/panel. Therefore, it must be respectful, understandable, and relatable to them. Do not write the statements as if you are speaking to the offender.

For example:

Incorrect: You took away my belief that people are good.

Correct: The offender took away my belief that people are good.