



**Adult Advocacy
Centers**

How Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) Can Help When You're a Victim of Crime with Disabilities

What are Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs)?

A multi-disciplinary team is a group of different agencies that work together to help you, if you are a victim or survivor of a crime. A MDT will support you by talking about your cases, making sure that you have ongoing help, and advocating that the perpetrators are held accountable. A perpetrator is someone who commits a crime.

What do Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) do?

When adults with disabilities are victims of crimes, MDTs at the Adult Advocacy Centers (AACs) work together to help them through their criminal justice journey. Each member of the MDT has certain skills to help with your case. The MDT uses the skills of all of its members to come up with the goals for your case, and they all work together toward that outcome. MDTs can tell you where to get the supports that you need after a crime happens to you.

Why do we use Multi-Disciplinary teams (MDT)?

The MDT advocates for victims and survivors and works to make sure victims and survivors have services and supports that are right for them. Working as a team is the best way to help you if you are a victim or survivor of crime. It allows you to understand your options for support services.

Who is on the MDT?

MDTs are individualized, depending on the needs of the victim or survivor. If you are a victim or survivor of crime, these are some of the possible MDT members who might work on your case:

- **Law Enforcement (Police):** The local police department, county sheriff office, State Highway Patrol, the Bureau of Criminal Investigation, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) or Homeland Security Investigation (HSI) may be involved. Law enforcement will be in charge of the criminal investigation and will work with the MDT. Law enforcement will talk to you about what you are reporting. It is important to let law enforcement know as soon as possible if you need an accommodation because of your disability.
- **Forensic Interviewers:** Forensic interviewers are people who are specifically trained to talk to victims and survivors about their experiences. The forensic interview will be a trauma-informed conversation between you and a forensic interviewer. The purpose of a forensic interview is to gather information about the crime.

- **Prosecutors:** Prosecutors are lawyers who work for a city, county, state or the federal government. They work closely with you, law enforcement and victim advocates in the criminal court process.
- **Other AACs Staff:** Adult Advocacy Centers (AACs) staff will be people at the centers who help victims and survivors. AAC staff will include the AACs' Director, Security and Intake staff.
- **Victim Advocate:** The victim advocate can support you through the criminal justice process and assist with asking for accommodations, if you need them. Victim advocates will also help you with getting your basic needs met. This could be making sure you have a safe place to live or have food to eat.
- **Disability Specific Investigative Agencies:** These agencies will help you by making sure you are safe and have supports in place. The agencies that may be a part of the MDT include: the County Boards of Developmental Disabilities; the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD); Disability Rights Ohio (DRO); Adult Protective Services (APS); Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Boards (ADMH); the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS); the Ohio Department of Health (ODH); and the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA).
- **Nurses and Doctors:** Nurses and doctors will work to make sure your medical needs are taken care of. They will collect evidence and testify on that evidence in court.
- **Local Hospitals:** Hospitals and emergency rooms will help you get medical services that you need. Hospitals will work with people on your MDT.
- **Counselor:** A counselor may be a social worker or therapist. They will help you at the AACs. This person will also help with support groups that will be offered at the AACs.
- **Victim or Survivor:** A victim or survivor is a person who has been directly harmed by a crime that another person committed. This could be a crime that caused physical (bodily) harm, emotional harm, property damage or stolen money. We use the words victim and survivor because some people like to be called one or the other. They mean the same thing. We want to respect the wishes of everyone we work with.
- **Non-Offending Support Advocate or Guardian (when appropriate):** This is a person you select to support you through the process. It could be a family member, a friend, a guardian, a caregiver or someone else you trust.
- **Non-Profit Partners (when applicable):** These agencies assist other agencies working with you. They would only be part of the MDT if you requested it and if it was needed and appropriate. Some of these agencies could be support service agencies, educational agencies or respite care agencies.

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