



## **Questions for Videotaped Interview of Victim Where Capacity May be an Issue**

\*Try to interview victim alone. If they wish to have someone with them, make sure that person is not a potential witness on the case.

\*\*This is a guide only. While you don't need to ask each of these questions, be sure to explore each of these general topics.

### **Part 1: Review General Rules:**

- State the day and time you are starting the recording (if required by your state law)
- Explain that you are there with your video camera to speak with her/him and record her/his answers.
- Ask if you have their permission to conduct the recording.
- Explain that if they do not understand a question, just to say so.
- Explain that if they don't remember something, that's it's okay—just say so.
- Explain that some of the questions are easy and some are difficult. It's okay if you don't know the answer.
- Explain that it is important for them not to guess at an answer, so if they don't remember something, just to say so.
- Explain that if at any point they to stop, just to tell you that and you will stop the interview.
- Ask if she/he has any questions right now.

### **Part 2: General Questions to Assess Capacity:**

#### ***Orientation to Place***

- Do you live here?
- How long have you lived here?
- What's the address of where we are right now?  
What city are we in?

- What state are we in?

### ***Orientation to Time***

- What day of the week is it today?
- What is today's date (including year)?
- Tell me what time you think it is right now?
- What did you do earlier today?
- What did you have for breakfast?
- Describe what you did yesterday.

### ***Orientation to Events***

- Who is the president?
- Who is the governor?
- Who is the mayor?
- Do you watch TV?
- What shows do you like to watch?
- What was the last show you watched?
- When did you watch it?
- What was it about?

### ***Orientation to People***

- Who lives with you?
- Are you married/do you have a partner?
- Do you have any children?
- If so, where do they live?
- Who visits you here?
- Who (if applicable) helps out in caring for you?
- Names? Shifts?
- If you were in trouble and needed help, who would you call?

### ***Finance-Related Questions***

- Does anyone help you with your finances? Who?
- What kind of help do you need?
- How long have they been helping you?
- Why did they start helping you?
- How frequently do you go to the bank?
- Do you use a computer to manage your finances?

- Do you use an ATM machine?
- Do you have a credit card?
- Do you own your home or rent?
- Do you have a mortgage?
- About how much money do you have coming in each month?
- What is the source? (pension, social security, etc.)

[Consider asking if they do any of the activities that suspect was spending their money on, i.e. do you ever go to casinos, out to dinner, travel, etc.]

### ***Medical-Related Questions***

- How would you say your health is right now?
- Do you have any major medical illnesses?
- What are they?
- What treatment do you have for these?
- Do you take any medications?
- Do you have a regular doctor?
- What's the doctor's name?
- Where is his/her office?
- When did you last see this doctor?
- Where you in the hospital in the last year?
- What was this for? Did you have any surgery?

### **Part 3: Impact of Crime:**

- Do you know why we are interviewing you today?
- Can you describe briefly what happened to you?
- Can you tell us about how this has affected you [describe what impact this has had on you]

State the time and that you are ending the recording (if required by state law).

*This guide was created by Page Ulrey, Bonnie Olson, and Kathy Van Olst. It is used here with the authors' permission.*