

Homicide; Stressful Decisions and Planning

For most survivors, the trauma of murder of their loved ones is made worse by the need to make decisions and plans that are very stressful. The person who would most likely deal with the following decisions or planning is someone to whom victim advocates would provide services and assistance.

As Victim Assistance Professionals, these are necessary steps, which may be coming alongside families of victims as they must decide and plan in which would need assistance.

- Notifying family and friends of the death of the homicide victim
- Identifying the body of the homicide victim
- Dealing with the religious or cultural issues the death raises with the victim's family
- Informing law enforcement officials or victim services professionals of any religious or cultural taboos or requirements of Native American families and survivors of homicide victims. (Examples: cultural time of burial such as 3 days after the death and if any organs and other body items are at the autopsy/pathologist office, many cultural requirements are that those items must be back and buried with the victim).
- Making the cremation/funeral/burial arrangements
- Reviewing and paying the medical bills
- Reviewing and paying the cremation/funeral/burial bills
- Reviewing and paying the medical bills of the homicide victim and any people who were also at the crime scene during the homicide, if they were injured in addition to the homicide of the victim.
- Working with victim advocates for crime victim compensation and making sure that Native Americans understand that they are eligible to access state crime victim compensation.
- Dealing with the Court Process: advocates should collaborate with their prosecutors to create a summary of court activities to provide to crime victims and survivors to understand the court and trial procedures.