

Developing a SAKI Site Coordinator Transition Plan

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) aims to create a coordinated community response that ensures just resolution to sexual assault cases through (1) a comprehensive and victim-centered approach, (2) jurisdictional capacity-building to prevent high numbers of unsubmitted SAKs in the future, and (3) supporting the investigation and prosecution of cases for which sexual assault kits (SAKs) were previously unsubmitted. A designated SAKI Site Coordinator is an essential role for supporting the comprehensive SAKI model addressing the issues of unsubmitted SAKs and overall sexual assault response reform. The SAKI Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) team recognizes the diverse and critical role of SAKI Site Coordinators and has created resources to support SAKI Site Coordinators.

Many SAKI sites stay in the SAKI program for multiple grant cycles, during which personnel turnover may happen. SAKI TTA recommends that SAKI sites have a transition plan to ensure a smooth transfer of SAKI Site Coordinator responsibilities from one person to another.

Due to the critical role of the SAKI Site Coordinator supporting multiple aspects of the SAKI award, SAKI TTA recommends that the SAKI Site Coordinator position be a full-time position rather than the responsibilities being added to an existing MDT member's duty.

If a SAKI site has multiple purpose area awards, SAKI TTA recommends that each awarded purpose area have its own SAKI Site Coordinator.

This document provides information and resources to clarify the role and responsibilities of a SAKI Site Coordinator, and provides insight to strategies for an easy transition of this role to another individual. The SAKI site transition plan should be implemented whenever the SAKI Site Coordinator role shifts to another person, including for a temporary leave of absence. Having a strategic transition plan reduces disruptions in SAKI goal progression and is part of an overarching, sustainable response to sexual assault under

Key Site Coordinator Responsibilities

- ◆ Foster communication to ensure a coordinated effort among all SAKI team members
- ◆ Hold all entities accountable for their roles within the SAKI site program
- ◆ Ensure SAKI goals and milestones are achieved
- ◆ Institutionalize systems, policies, and protocols developed by the multidisciplinary team (MDT), such as the following:
 - Victim Notification Protocol
 - Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) Hit Follow-Up Protocol
 - Other key resources for successful sustainability of the SAKI model

For more information, please refer to *Considerations for Hiring a SAKI Site Coordinator*.

the SAKI model. Departing and new SAKI Site Coordinators should reach out to the SAKI TTA team as soon as reasonably possible for assistance with strategic planning to ensure smooth communication between the SAKI site and SAKI TTA. Also, SAKI TTA can assist with coordinating strategies for a smooth transition and provide further assistance to the interim or new SAKI Site Coordinator.

Create the Transition Plan during Award Start-Up Activities

At the onset of the SAKI site's program, the SAKI MDT should develop a strategic transition plan to transfer the SAKI Site Coordinator roles and responsibilities to a designated individual should the need arise. Ideally, this transition would include an opportunity for the current SAKI Site Coordinator and incoming SAKI Site Coordinator to work together. This overlap provides an excellent foundation to effectively mentor and onboard the new SAKI Site Coordinator. But

Departing SAKI Site Coordinators and new SAKI Site Coordinators should contact their SAKI Regional Team Lead or the SAKI TTA Help Desk at SAKITTA@rti.org.

often there will not be an opportunity for overlap between SAKI Site Coordinators because agency hiring polices prevent it or the departure is sudden. In these instances, you can smooth the continuance of activities by having a defined transition plan that not only addresses onboarding a new SAKI Site Coordinator, but also identifies an interim one, someone from the MDT familiar with the SAKI program. Ideally this interim SAKI Site Coordinator can assist with the onboarding process by mentoring the new SAKI Site Coordinator.

In the event of a gap in time after the SAKI Site Coordinator departs and the new one starts, the interim Site Coordinator must ensure continued activities of the SAKI program. SAKI TTA is available to support an interim SAKI Site Coordinator with resources and guidance.

Content of the Transition Plan

SAKI Site Program Information

The transition plan should include a method for transferring records, documents, tracking sheets, and other types of stored information to the new SAKI Site Coordinator. These resources often have historical information that informs current activities and supports a holistic understanding of the SAKI site program. Table 1 includes a list of potential items a SAKI site should consider including in its records transfer plan. Although all SAKI site records contain important information for a successful SAKI Site Coordinator transition, the new SAKI Site Coordinator should prioritize becoming familiar with the goals and objectives of all SAKI awards, including current and closed awards. This can be accomplished by reviewing all previous SAKI grant narratives as well as the goals and objectives that are maintained in the performance metric tool (PMT). As outlined in the *Considerations for Hiring a SAKI Site Coordinator* brief, using a shared drive or network accessible to key MDT members for storing program-related materials can facilitate critical information transfer.

Table 1. Critical Information to Transfer

Award narrative(s), goals, and objectives
Previous PMT and semiannual reports
Instructions for creating login credentials for grant reporting websites, the SAK tracking system, and any other site-specific accounts
Timeline of activities (e.g., MDT meeting schedule, grant reporting schedule)
Contact lists, including SAKI site MDT members, BJA, and SAKI TTA
Critical documents such as SAK Inventory Plan, SAK Inventory Certification Form(s), SAK Inventory, Lawfully Owed DNA (LODNA) Census Plan, LODNA Census, LODNA Collection Plan, Inventory of All Unresolved Violent Crime Cold Cases, Victim Notification Policy, and CODIS Hit Follow-Up Policy
Completed and implemented policies as well as policies in development

Initial Steps for New SAKI Site Coordinators

A new SAKI Site Coordinator might have several actions that need to take place simultaneously. To assist with organizing some immediate first steps, SAKI TTA has provided Table 2.

Table 2. Key Initial Steps for New SAKI Site Coordinators

Review SAKI Site Coordinator Transition Plan
Review previous grant application narratives and PMT reports
Review key program documents such as SAK Inventory Plan, SAK Inventory Certification Form(s), SAK Inventory, Lawfully Owed DNA, LODNA Census Plan, LODNA Census, LODNA Collection Plan, Victim Notification Policy, and CODIS Hit Follow-Up Policy
Meet with SAKI TTA
Schedule introductory meetings with SAKI MDT members
Review resources on the SAKI TTA website
Attend and lead MDT meeting
Attend SAKI TTA Site Coordinator Working Group

Establishing Positive Relationships

It is essential for the new SAKI Site Coordinator to develop relationships with key members from their SAKI site, MDT, BJA, and SAKI TTA. Ideally the previous or interim SAKI Site Coordinator will facilitate these introductions as part of their mentoring. The transition plan should include a list of key individuals with their contact information and roles within the SAKI site program.

To support a new SAKI Site Coordinator, SAKI TTA will schedule an introductory virtual meeting to summarize the SAKI TTA program, describe available resources, aid in the review of site goals, and establish a regular check-in schedule for other needed assistance. The new SAKI Site Coordinator should also meet with other SAKI site personnel, the SAKI MDT partners, and any SAKI subrecipient or subaward agencies to gain insight into their roles on the SAKI team and develop a positive relationship.

PMT Data Collection and Tracking

SAKI grantees are required to report performance measures quarterly in the PMT as well as submit semiannual reports in the U.S. Department of Justice's grants management system, JustGrants, to address narrative questions related to the site's goals, objectives, barriers, and successes. In addition to tracking grant activity toward program goals, PMT and semiannual reporting can also identify areas for improvement. The new SAKI Site Coordinator should review previous PMT and semiannual reports to gain an understanding of the progress made under the SAKI program. The new SAKI Site Coordinator should learn what agencies, subrecipients, and sub-awardees contribute data for the quarterly and semiannual reports, and how this data is tracked. In general, the new SAKI Site Coordinator and the SAKI team should discuss data collection and tracking as soon as possible.

SAKI TTA Resources Available for New SAKI Site Coordinators

SAKI TTA has created several resources, housed on the SAKI TTA website, to support new SAKI Site Coordinators. These resources include *Considerations for Hiring a SAKI Site Coordinator*, *Developing SAKI Goals and Objectives and How to Track Progress*, *Key Considerations and Strategies for Engaging and Maintaining Multidisciplinary Team Partners*, *Setting*

a Foundation for Sustainability in Sexual Assault Response Reform, and *Understanding SAKI Performance Metric Tracking*. Collaboration between the SAKI Site Coordinator and SAKI TTA creates a foundation to assist the SAKI Site Coordinator with addressing SAKI site challenges. SAKI TTA recommends that SAKI Site Coordinators attend the quarterly SAKI Site Coordinator Working Group meeting. This virtual meeting provides access to a network of SAKI Site Coordinators and holds discussions associated with SAKI milestones, challenges, and successes. SAKI TTA can also facilitate peer-to-peer connections between new and more experienced SAKI Site Coordinators.

Conclusion

The SAKI Site Coordinator serves as the central point of contact for the SAKI team and is essential for the success of a SAKI site project. Efforts to address sexual assault and violent crime reform in the SAKI program may span several SAKI award cycles. During this time, the role of SAKI Site Coordinator may transition from one individual to another. A SAKI site team can use the considerations presented in this document to support a smooth transition without disruptions to program goals.

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