How Do I Write Incidents of Violence

--Use the information on this page to help you describe and document incidences of abuse:

1. **Can you remember when the incident occurred?** 
   1. It is okay if you do not remember a specific date, but try to think about the **month**, season, and/or time of year the incident occurs.

Examples: Was the Christmas tree up? Were the kids in school or out of school? Was it cold outside? Etc.

*Remember: If you are unsure of the exact date, it is okay to use an approximate date.*

1. **Was there a police report filed?**
   1. Case #?
   2. What did the police say?

Examples: Were the police sensitive to your situation?

* 1. Were any charges filed?

Examples: Was a report made? Was an arrest made? What was the result of the report or arrest? Are charges still pending?

1. **Did anyone (neighbors, children, co-workers) see the abuse?**
2. **Describe the incident in *as much* detail as you can remember. It is important to *paint a clear and detailed picture* for the attorney.**
   1. Include information about what you were doing right before the abuse began.

Examples: Were you making dinner? Were you arguing with him/her?

* 1. Can you remember what set him/her off?

Examples: Were the kids crying? Money issues?

* 1. How did the physical, sexual, and/ or verbal abuse escalate?

Examples: Did he/she hit you with his/her fists or slap you? Was it opened hand, closed hand? Did he/she swear at you; what words did he/she use (it is okay to use his/her exact words)?

*Remember: If you feel comfortable, provide the most detailed description you can. If you are describing sexual abuse, you do not need to go into great detail. You can simply say, “He/she forced me to have sex."*

* 1. Did he/she say that he/she would physically hurt you or kill you?
  2. Did you have any injuries? WHERE was the injury?

Examples: Was there a red mark on your arm? Did you have a bruise; where?

* 1. Did the sexual assault result in an STD or pregnancy?
  2. Finally, why did the abuse stop? What caused the incident to end?

Examples: Did the police arrive? Did you leave?