

Worksheet 3.1

Is It Ethical?

Scenario 1

Jo, a woman who is trying to leave her violent husband, asks Betty, the victim assistance provider at a local domestic violence shelter, to help her find a place to stay for a while. The shelter has been filled to capacity the past 2 weeks. Betty's friend has a vacant garage apartment. After checking with her friend, Betty offers the apartment as a safe place for Jo and her two young children to stay until everything is settled.

Scenario 2

Marsha, who is a victim assistance provider, is working with Jean, a stalking victim who wants to sue the employer of the man who stalked her. The stalker accessed Jean's financial records through the database at his place of employment. Marsha advises Jean, "Getting involved in a stressful lawsuit isn't a good idea right now. You really need to focus on your recovery."

Scenario 3

Kevin, a victim assistance provider, has been working with Heidi for a couple months. She recently moved to a different town to get away from her abusive boyfriend, and she has asked Kevin not to share her new address and phone number with anyone. One day she calls Kevin; she is distraught and reluctantly discloses that she is thinking about suicide, but she begs him not to tell anyone. He explains that he is obligated to report someone who is suicidal and will give her contact information to law enforcement.

Scenario 4

Rebecca, a white victim assistance provider who majored in psychology in college, realizes that an African-American victim she is working with, Shauna, has a substance abuse problem. Shauna is just starting to open up to Rebecca after several weeks of silence. When Rebecca suggests that Shauna see a substance abuse counselor or check out a 12-step program, Shauna accuses Rebecca of trying to get rid of her because she is black. Rebecca denies the accusation and assures Shauna that she will continue working with her. Rebecca figures that she has had enough experience to help Shauna with her substance abuse problem.

Scenario 5

Jeff, who works long hours as a victim assistance provider at a law enforcement agency, regularly takes records home and finishes up his documentation at night. After he eats dinner with his wife and two adolescent daughters, Jeff spreads his work on the kitchen table and puts in a couple more hours.