

### Scenario #1

You find out a report was made two days ago and staff did not reach out to you to support the survivor. When you ask why, the staff says that “It wasn’t a real PREA case, the guy was definitely lying. Plus I know you’re super busy.”

#### **What can you say and do moving forward?**

- **Prior to taking action:** Speak with your team first and identify short-term and long-term solutions
- **Short term:** Potential response: “It’s my understanding that in order to make that determination, a full investigation must be provided.”
- **Short-term:** If told, “Yes there was an investigation conducted.” Potential response: “Oh, is that the typical amount of time it takes to investigate a report?” “In my experience, it’s taken much longer to complete an investigation.”
- **Short-term:** Potential response, “I am busy, but I will always make time to respond to the needs of survivors in the facility.”
- **Long-term:** Identify who is responsible for ensuring PREA investigations occur and communicate with them about the need for an investigation.
- **Long term:** Create or re-evaluate the coordinated response with the PREA coordinator and warden / facility administrator to ensure advocates are integrated into the initial response when a PREA report is made and the investigation process begins to ensure survivors have their advocate present.

**Key takeaway:** Stand in your power as an advocate

### Scenario #2

“As you enter the facility, you and a correctional officer joke about last night’s basketball game. When you meet with your client, they share that they feel uncomfortable sharing with you because you seem too friendly with staff at the facility. They worry that you will let staff know about their situation.”

#### **What should you say and do moving forward?**

Potential (validating) responses to survivor:

- “Thank you for letting me know how this has been making you feel. I understand how vulnerable that could make you feel. But just know that every time you share something with me that is potentially triggering to you, it helps me know when to repair your trust in me and how to support you moving forward. This was a moment of self advocacy for you that helps me support you.”
- “I also understand that it’s hard to see me communicate with staff who haven’t treated you well.”
- “While I need to have a cordial and professional relationship with them in order to

be able to provide services, I do want to affirm with you that my confidentiality protects our conversations and I take that very seriously because I know it ensures that you and your experiences are kept safe from people who may not have your best interests in mind.”

**Key takeaway:** The validity of distrust of the incarcerated person because of their engagement in these systems.

### Scenario #3

In their letters to you, a few survivors write that the facility is opening and reading your letters to them. They worry about the staff knowing about their abuse and retaliating against them.

#### What should you say or do?

- Communicate with your supervisor and JDI/VALOR about the situation and get feedback on how to respond.
- Fill out the [barriers to access](#) reporting form so that JDI/VALOR can document this issue and communicate with CDCR Headquarters about the issue.
- Identify who you need to speak to and how high up the chain of command you need to go in order to ameliorate the situation.
  - Ask staff if the poster re: how to treat confidential mail is in the mail room.
  - Ask staff if they could remind mail room staff of how to treat mail as confidential
  - Offer to provide training to mail room staff.
- Take a look at the messaging you're providing around confidential mail when you provide information about letter correspondence to survivors (ie. Our agreement is that staff treat mail as confidential, however, in practice mail isn't always treated as confidential. Be mindful of what you feel comfortable sharing with me via letter given that information).

**Key takeaway:** Using this experience an opportunity to create systems change by providing training, protocols, and policies, in addition to addressing the specific survivors letters being opened (with permission from the survivor).