



The University of Texas at Austin  
Institute on Domestic Violence  
& Sexual Assault  
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# Methods Report

ReVEAL: Recording Victim Video Statements as  
Evidence to Advance Legal Outcomes in  
Family Violence Cases:  
Determining Efficacy, Cost Efficiency, & Impact on  
Outcomes

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# Table of Contents

I.	Research Team .....	2
II.	Acknowledgements .....	3
III.	Executive Summary.....	4
IV.	Project Background .....	5
V.	Practice Background: Use of Evidence in Family Violence .....	6
VI.	Project Methodology .....	9
VII.	Next Steps for Refining Methodology in Subsequent Phases .....	21
VIII.	References .....	23
IX.	Appendix A: Camera Equipment Inventory ....	26
X.	Appendix B: Logic Model.....	27
XI.	Appendix C: Criminal Case Flow Chart .....	29
XII.	Appendix D: Interview Protocols.....	30
XIII.	Appendix E: Video Quality and Usability Assessment .....	38
XIV.	Appendix F: Victim Focus Group Protocol.....	40
XV.	Appendix G: Law Enforcement Survey.....	42
XVI.	Appendix H: Variables of Interest in Case Data .....	46

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## Executive Summary

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This report details the methodological approach to the first phase of the study *Recording Victim Video Statements as Evidence to Advance Legal Outcomes in Family Violence Cases (ReVEAL)*. Family violence<sup>1</sup> is a widespread and serious crime in Texas. In 2014, law enforcement received reports of 185,817 family violence incidents and 275 Texans died because of family violence-related crimes (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2014). Lifetime reports were even more staggering. In 2011, more than 5.3 million adult Texans reported being victims of family violence; 38% of all adult women indicated that they experienced an incident meeting the legal definition of family violence in Texas (Busch-Armendariz, Cook Heffron & Bohman, 2011). The criminal justice system plays a critical role in responding to family violence through the investigation and prosecution of suspected incidents of family violence, disrupting patterns of abuse, and offering legal remedies to victims of violence (Buzawa & Buzawa, 2003). One strategy used by the criminal justice system to improve the quality of evidence gathered in the immediate aftermath of a family violence crime is to record video statements from defendants, witnesses, and primarily victims. The first phase of ReVEAL evaluated the use of handheld cameras and video evidence in family violence cases.

Video captures visual and audio evidence at the scene of a crime. Prior to the start of this evaluation, Texas jurisdictions using the video evidence had not conducted formal evaluations, but initial reports showed promise. This report outlines the methodological approach for the first phase of an evaluation to examine the use of video-recorded statements taken by law enforcement at the scene of family violence calls in three sites in Texas. The research team assessed the use and potential impact of the video evidence in the investigation and prosecution of family violence cases; explored the impact of video statements on victim's experiences in criminal justice interventions; and analyzed cost savings to law enforcement with the use of cameras.

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<sup>1</sup> Including domestic/dating violence. This report uses the term family violence for consistency with the Texas Family Code.

## Project Background

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The ReVEAL evaluation is a partnership with the Office of the Governor of Texas Criminal Justice Division (CJD) and the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) to strengthen the quality of case evidence and improve prosecution rates in family violence-related crimes across the state. TCFV disseminated video recording equipment (see Appendix A: Camera Equipment Inventory) to sixteen Texas jurisdictions in early 2016. The impetus for the project came from two jurisdictions that had previously established similar programs to use video evidence in family violence cases. The District Attorneys (DAs) of these sites, acted as statewide experts and consultants in other jurisdictions. The model programs used handheld video cameras (camcorders) to gather evidence and statements during family violence investigations. The recordings were then made available to attorneys as part of the case review process and included with the case file if the case was accepted for prosecution. TCFV and District Attorneys from the model programs conducted six regional trainings to provide an overview to the equipment, recommendations for use, and development considerations before implementing the practice. Camera recipients were responsible for distributing the equipment to law enforcement; establishing policies for use and storage; and securing resources to accommodate gathered video files. The Office of the Governor CJD selected the IDVSA research team to conduct the evaluation of the new program.

## Practice Background: Use of Evidence in Family Violence

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The first phase of the ReVEAL evaluation occurred in the context of gradual shift to evidence-based prosecution of family violence in the criminal justice system. To prepare for the evaluation, IDVSA researchers conducted a thorough review of previous studies and information on criminal justice approaches to family violence. Several major factors emerged from the literature to help shape the evaluation design. The Texas Family Code defines family violence as an act of violence by a member of a family or household towards another member of that household with an intent to cause physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or a threat that reasonably places that person in fear of imminent physical harm. Family is defined as blood relatives, current and former romantic partners (including spouses and dating relationships), biological or foster parents of the same child, and current or former members of the same household (including roommates) (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2014). Evolving public opinion and increased awareness of the lethality of family violence necessitated a shift in the criminal justice system's approach to a model that focuses on disrupting the patterns of abuse used to exert power and control of one partner over the other (Buzawa & Buzawa, 2003). Since the 1970's, policing and prosecutorial policies developed to improve consistent enforcement of family violence laws, with the most recent policies encouraging the arrest and prosecution of any offender for which there is enough evidence to convict, regardless of the victim or complaining witness' desire to prosecute (Messing, 2014). Often called *evidence-based prosecution*, these strategies encourage the prosecution of any case in which the totality of the evidence suggests that a crime has occurred (Gerwitz, Weidner, Miller, & Zehm, 2006; Messing, 2014). These strategies minimize the reliance on victim testimony for the successful prosecution of a case, as victims may provide inconsistent levels of participation due to the context of an abusive relationship, dependence on the offender, trauma resulting from the abuse, and fear of retaliation (Buzawa & Buzawa, 2003; Goodman, Bennett, & Dutton, 1999; Robinson & Cook, 2006). The *Crawford v. Washington* (2004) and *Davis v. Washington* (2006) legal decisions marked many statements to law enforcement as "*testimonial hearsay*," limiting the ability to prosecute these cases without victim cooperation (Messing, 2014). This increased reliance on substantiating evidence in family violence cases to make case decisions that will hold offenders accountable (Klein, 2009; Messing, 2014).

### Use of Video

Capturing the nuance of abuse can pose a challenge to the criminal justice system when assessing the severity of the crime, as family violence typically consists of a variety of behaviors that occur over time, including a variety of abuse tactics including emotional and financial abuse (Dempsey, 2007). Tactics to improve rates of prosecution and conviction include collecting statements and evidence swiftly in the wake of a family violence event, arresting the offender at the scene, and offering supportive protection to the victim (Bechtel, Alarid, Holsinger, & Holsinger, 2012; Nelson, 2012; Robinson & Cook, 2006). Video cameras can document the

aftermath of the assault and gather high quality evidence swiftly and efficiently. Additionally, law enforcement can collect video evidence with various devices, including handheld cameras and body-worn cameras. The novelty of the technology's application to family violence-related crimes limits the availability of supporting research. A few studies are especially pertinent to this evaluation. Dawson and Dinovitzer (2001) examined one Canadian jurisdiction that gathered video-recorded victim testimony within 24-hours of the incident of violence to find that cases with videos increased the likelihood that the victim would cooperate in the prosecution of their case, resulting in higher conviction rates. More recently, the rise in popularity and use of police-worn cameras provided some insight into the potential use of cameras in family violence cases. A study analyzing the use body-worn cameras (BWC) in Phoenix, Arizona found that cases with body-camera evidence were more likely to result in arrest, have charges filed, have the case furthered, and result in a guilty trial or plea, than cases filed at the same time without BWC evidence (Morrow, Katz, & Choate, 2016). While this research highlights the promise of video evidence in family violence cases, additional research is needed to understand the utility of the video evidence as a tool for investigating and prosecuting family violence as an established practice. The ReVEAL evaluation worked to address the gap in knowledge of the impact of video evidence by evaluating the use of handheld video cameras in family violence cases in three Texas jurisdictions.

## **Theoretical Perspectives Guiding Evaluation Design**

Two theoretical perspectives guided the evaluation design: the theory of change approach to evaluation and the focal concern approach to decision making in the criminal justice system.

**Theory of change.** The theory of change approach to evaluation design seeks to estimate a program's effects on interim and longer-term outcomes, and the need for information on how particular programs can produce those outcomes (Connell & Kubisch, 1998). Program evaluations grounded in this theoretical approach work to create causal chains between inputs to outcomes, using tools such as logic models to deepen understanding about the programmatic strategy and to assess for gaps in logic, resources, and underlying assumptions (Kaplan & Garrett, 2004). In assessing the program, a theory of change model asks that participants be as clear as possible about not only the ultimate outcomes and impacts they hope to achieve but also the avenues through which they expect to achieve those (Weiss, 1995). A successful theory of change evaluation analyzes three attributes: (1) if it is reasonable to believe that the planned activities will result in the desired outcome (2) if the necessary resources are available to carry out the initiative, and (3) if the evaluation parameters are specific enough to reliably track progress and results (Connell and Kubisch, 1998). Researchers have used this approach to evaluate public health and medical interventions (De Silva, 2014; Breuer, Lee, De Silva, & Lund, 2016); urban education reform (Connell & Klem, 2000); and community-based initiatives (Kaplan & Garrett, 2004). The research team applied elements of the theory of change model to the methodology through the development of the ReVEAL logic model (Appendix B: Logic Model) to ground the approach in a theoretical perspective. The ReVEAL evaluation looked at



the expected changes and goals of the camera implementation, and worked to identify outcome and proximal indicators of the goals for increased knowledge of potential program impact.

***Focal concerns theory.*** The framework of focal concerns theory enhanced the methodology of this study. The focal concerns theory is an emerging perspective for explaining decision-making in criminal justice cases (O’Neal & Spohn, 2016; Dollar & Ray, 2013; Steffensmeier, Ulmer, & Kramer, 1998). This theory has been applied to sentencing outcomes for family violence cases (Jeffries & Bond, 2014), police use of force (Crow & Adrion, 2011), and charging decisions in intimate partner sexual assaults (O’Neal & Spohn, 2016), suggesting it is a useful lens for evaluating prosecutorial decision making. The focal concerns perspective suggests that court actors’ (such as attorneys and judges) make decisions based on: (1) the perceived blameworthiness of the offender (2) the risk posed to the community by the offender and (3) the practical constraints and consequences of the legal decision (Steffensmeier et al. 1998). As court actors are unable to access thorough and consistently accurate information about cases, they often use perceptual shorthand to make decisions (Steffensmeier et al. 1998). “Perceptual shorthand” describes the shortcuts in decision-making that court actors use to make case decisions to assess who is dangerous and who is not (Steffensmeier et al. 1998, pp. 767-768). Stereotypical assessments of the individuals involved in the crime (Crow & Adrion, 2011) and the crime itself (O’Neal & Spohn, 2016) inform the course of action for each case. Bond & Jeffries’ (2014) multivariate assessment of disparities between family violence offenders and other types of crime found that family violence offenders received more lenient sentences than offenders in other types of crime. The authors suggested that the focal concerns perspective aids in understanding this disparity, as the relationship between victim and offender lessens perceptions of offender blameworthiness and risk to the community, while increasing the practical constraints of adjudicating the case as victims may be reluctant to assist in the prosecution of the offender (Bond & Jeffries, 2014). In considering the role of the video on the judicial process, the research team applied the focal concerns theory to the evaluation approach in order to identify key points where decision-making could influence a criminal case (See Appendix C: Criminal Case Flow Chart) and the role of the video in this process.

## Project Methodology

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The ReVEAL evaluation employed a mixed-method design that used both qualitative and quantitative approaches, primary data collection and secondary data analysis. The first phase of the study consisted of a process evaluation across selected sites and an outcome evaluation for the site with the longest-standing practice of using cameras to investigate and prosecute family violence.<sup>2</sup> Find the methodological approach to the evaluation outlined below. Early exploration into costs and potential signifiers for a cost-benefit analysis are included; as well as direction for the next phase of the project.

### Guiding Principles of ReVEAL

***Inclusive, collaborative, and empirically driven.*** The development and planning of this project was inclusive and collaborative. The research team collaborated with a wide range of stakeholders, including policy experts, attorneys, victim advocates, and community-based agencies, to establish the need for the evaluation. By identifying gaps in knowledge in the field, the team framed the methodology to address these needs. Simultaneously, the relevant norms of the research field and the team's knowledge and expertise as scientists and scholars informed the evaluation.

***Practice and action-oriented.*** Implementation processes were responsive and transformative. Practice and action-oriented research necessitates working with real world data, requiring the research to be methodologically eclectic and unique to the varied problems inherent to field-based research (Small, 1995). The research design evolved as new data and information became available. Non-research professionals provided significant guidance and feedback at every stage of the research process, including development, implementation, and the interpretation of results.

***Offender accountability and victim safety at the forefront.*** ReVEAL was a multi-disciplinary study with a variety of professions reflected. As such, the primary goals of the evaluation centered on the shared objectives of offender accountability and victim safety, through the strengthening of evidence quality and improvements to the adjudication of family violence crimes across the state. The research team established evaluation questions and outcome measures with these groups in mind, with consideration for the vulnerability of families impacted by abuse. For victims, the research team paid particular attention to issues of confidentiality, re-traumatization, and intrusion on the process of seeking safety and supportive services. The research team also prioritized considerations for cultural literacy and the vulnerabilities of the communities of study, specifically in regards to issues pertaining to the

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<sup>2</sup> Due to the length of time it takes to adjudicate family violence cases, prosecution data was unavailable for the sites receiving cameras in year one of the project.

United States-Mexico border. The data and information were collected in a way to minimize perceptions of coercion for victim participants and to maximize victim autonomy in decision-making<sup>3</sup>.

## Research Questions

ReVEAL was guided by five (5) overarching research questions, with several focused questions under each that guided a detailed analysis. Find the research questions listed below. Does the use of digital video cameras:

- Q1.** Improve law enforcement investigative capacity in family violence crimes?
- Q2.** Improve prosecutorial case readiness in family violence crimes?
- Q3.** Increase the accountability of family violence offenders?
- Q4.** Improve the victim experience in the criminal justice system?
- Q5.** Reduce the costs of adjudicating family violence cases?

## Evaluative Approach

ReVEAL needed process and outcome evaluation methodologies using a mixed-methods design to meet research goals and answer research questions. Process evaluation methods looked at the implementation and fidelity of the practice, while outcomes focused on program impact (Royse, Thyer, & Padgett, 2010). Prior to the start of the study, expert consultation from criminal justice experts and statewide interpersonal violence experts guided the project's proposal as part of a formative evaluation to building understanding of the formal and informal standards of the criminal justice system's approach to family violence cases. Extant research and feedback from partnering stakeholders, including the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) suggested a variance in the way jurisdictions approach family violence cases, at both the criminal justice and community levels. This suggested a need for a process evaluation. A process evaluation focuses on the formation and implementation of programs and the ways in which programs maintain fidelity (Royse, Thyer, & Padgett, 2010). Process questions explored the use of the camera practice by law enforcement and prosecutors at the district attorney's office, including benefits, challenges, and continued areas of growth. The research team conducted an outcome evaluation to understand the camera practice impact on offender accountability and victim safety. Initial cost analysis information was collected as an additional evaluative activity.

## Evaluation Site Selection

Sixteen Texas jurisdictions received video cameras from the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) with funding from the Office of the Texas Governor, Criminal Justice Division. Two jurisdictions had established video camera programs in place at the onset of the study. These

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<sup>3</sup> Detailed information pertaining to protections for participants is located in the section on Human Subjects Protections.

sites were considered for selection due to the availability of established procedures and potential case outcome data. The ReVEAL team assessed all sixteen jurisdictions receiving cameras for potential evaluation fit by reviewing their application to receive cameras. Census and Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data identified ten jurisdictions for evaluative fit and the research team conducted follow-up conversations with the DAs in these sites. Three sites were selected for evaluation. Criteria for selection included: sites currently using the video statement program; geographical location; willingness to participate in the evaluation; support staff to aid with data collection; desire to implement camera program. Site selection was purposive and not meant to represent all sites receiving cameras. Details about the three sites are included below. The research team gathered the information detailed in this section through introductory interviews with representatives from each site. This information is in no way exhaustive of all existing practices for each location.

***Collaboration with sites.*** Sites were given information about the evaluation's premise and goals before agreeing to participate in the study. The scope of work and community participants were established alongside with the DA offices in each respective county. The research team developed data collection tools to encompass a broad range of questions specific to approaching family violence cases, serving victims, and the use of videos as a method of evidence collection. To check for comprehension and understanding, the research team shared interview and survey questions with representatives of the various professions and sites of study.

**Site One.** Site One was a metropolitan area located in the western region of the State, with geographic proximity to the United States-Mexico border. During the time of the study, the population was estimated at 649,121, with approximately 80% of residents identifying as Hispanic/Latino and 70% of families speaking a language other than English in the home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The average household size was 3.03 people per household, with a median income of \$42,037 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Site One included a considerable military presence, with one of the largest army complexes in the United States located there and approximately 44,734 veteran residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). In 2014, the largest law enforcement agency in this jurisdiction responded to approximately 4,693 incidents of family violence (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2014).

Site One includes both urban and rural geographic regions and multiple law enforcement agencies operate within this district. At the start of this study, the municipal police department was the only agency operating a video program. The research team designated this as the primary law enforcement agency for study, interviewing members who used the cameras and gathering their perceptions of the program's impact on family violence cases. Another local law enforcement agency began to use body-worn cameras during the second half of the study. This agency was included as part of the law enforcement survey to gather insights into this type of camera's effectiveness as a comparison group, and to inform the next phase of the study.

In addition to the video program, this jurisdiction used several innovative and unique protocols to handling family violence cases, such as:

**Immediate case review.** Police in this jurisdiction have continuous access to the DA's Office through an electronic portal. In addition to allowing real-time case screening with Assistant District Attorneys (ADAs), this portal replicates the case file and existing evidence for defense attorneys to use in assessing case decisions.

**24-hour contact.** This DA's Office program included a team of counselors and investigators. This team conducted home visits within a day of arrests to connect victims with community resources and inform them of their rights. This team also; collected evidence during home visits, for example, taking photographs of new or previously undocumented injuries, and assessed the victim's desire to prosecute, with the caveat that the DA makes the ultimate decision on whether to prosecute the offender in all cases.

**Specialized prosecution unit.** In addition to the immediate follow-up from the DA's office, the DA's office employs a team of counselors and victim witness coordinators to maintain communication with victims throughout the case lifecycle.

**Site two.** Site Two was located on the southwest border of Texas. At the time of study, approximately 236,091 people resided in Site Two, with the majority of the population identifying as Hispanic or Latino at 95.6% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The average household size was 3.72 people, with a median household income of \$39,408 and 91.1% of families spoke a language other than English in the home. In 2014, the municipal police department responded to 1,961 incidents of family violence (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2014). This jurisdiction did not use video recording technology to investigate or prosecute family violence cases prior to the beginning of this study. This judicial district encompasses two adjacent counties and multiple law enforcement agencies. As part of the program's implementation, a pilot group of 25 patrol officers volunteered to use the cameras before expanding the practice to other officers at the municipal police department. The research team conducted interviews and surveys with officers in both the pilot group and non-pilot group.

**Investigation process.** Police officers respond to suspected family violence cases in their designated geographic locations by securing the area and obtaining statements from all present parties to determine an arrest. If needed, a Crime Scene Investigator responds to the scene to gather physical evidence or photographs. Officials refer cases requiring additional investigative work to the Special Investigation Unit, primarily in cases where the suspect fled the scene or there was not enough information to make the arrest at the time of initial response.

*Case review.* Responding officers have access to an Assistant District Attorney (ADA) by phone if they have questions concerning the arresting offense. All family violence victims receive an Emergency Protective Order (EPO) in this jurisdiction lasting anywhere between 30 and 90 days. The police department works in collaboration with the family violence prosecution team of the DA's Office. This team has the same function as that in Site One, with the additional duty of pursuing protective orders for longer durations in cases where victims request them.

**Site three.** Site Three is located in the southern region of Texas along the Gulf of Mexico coast. Five law enforcement agencies operate within this jurisdiction. At the time of study, the county's population was approximately 23,158 people with the majority of the population identifying as white, non-Hispanic or Latino at 70.6%, followed by the Hispanic or Latino population at 24.6% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The average household was 2.46 people, with a median income of \$42,247 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Of the three sites selected, site three was the most rural region chosen for study. This jurisdiction does not use specialized investigation or prosecution teams due to small staff size. All law enforcement agencies could access the cameras provided to this jurisdiction. At the start of this study, this jurisdiction did not use video recording technology to prosecute family violence cases. The research team selected this site due to the considerations unique to rural regions, with specific regards to limited access to resources such as emergency housing, mental health, childcare, and other supportive services for victims of family violence, as well as cultural perspectives of these communities.

***Human subjects confidentiality and procedure.*** The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at UT Austin reviewed and approved this project (IRB approval No. 2016-09-0060) and serves as the IRB of record. The research team initiated the IRB approval with the submission of the principal research proposal. This proposal contained the overall research protocol, followed by amendments to procedures and data collection tools as the study evolved alongside feedback from the sites. The research team made IRB information and approval made available to all sites.

***Informed consent.*** The consent included written and verbal information about the nature of the study, resources for participants, incentives, risks, and benefits. Researchers gave consent forms to all participants to review before agreeing to be interviewed or participate in a focus group. Copies of the consent form were also given to participants to take with them if desired. Participation was voluntary and confidential for all interview participants. For the law enforcement survey, no signed consent forms were gathered to protect anonymity. Participants could skip any question or stop at any time.

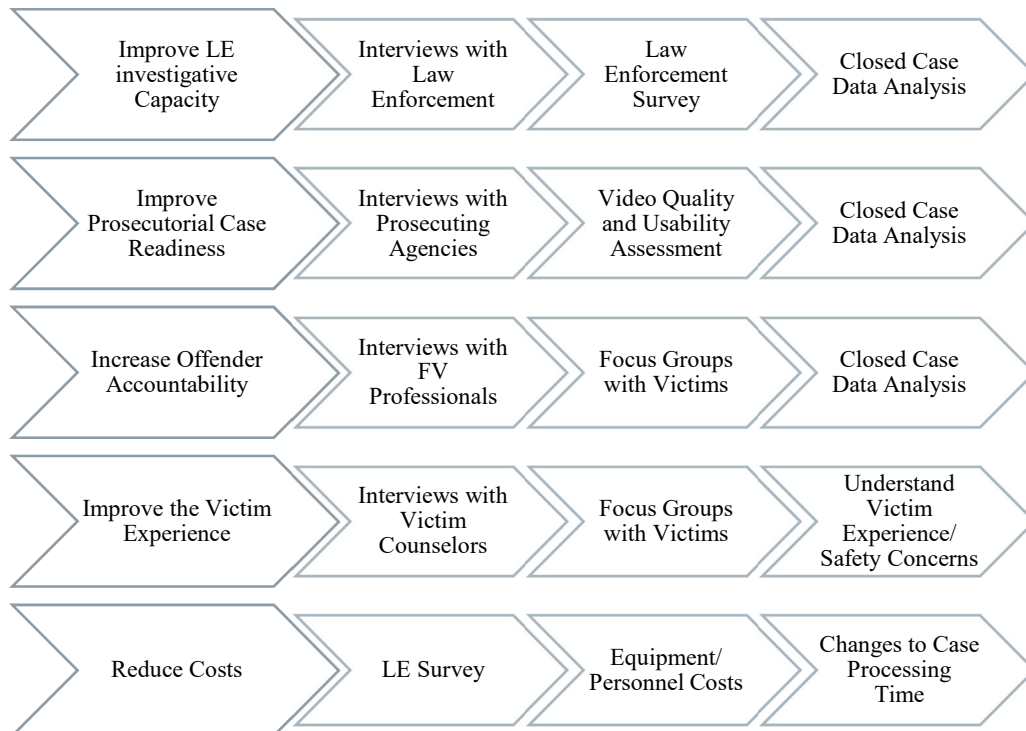
***Privacy.*** The research team took measures to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all data. Participants could use a pseudonym and research staff removed any identifiers in the interviews

and focus groups during the transcription process. The transcripts were kept on a password protected encrypted computer. Data was securely stored at all times during and after the study. IDVSA will keep this electronic data for five years on a secure cloud storage system, protected by The University of Texas at Austin, to which only members of the research team had access.

**Incentives.** This study did not provide professionals who participated in interviews and focus groups as part of their professional roles with an incentive, as the interviews were part of their daily duties. Sites were given a one-time payment of \$2,500 to offset the costs of time for participation, personnel costs, and information technical support costs. Victims who participated in the focus groups were given a one-time payment of \$20 to compensate their time.

## Data Collection Approaches

**Figure 1.** *Research Questions and Project Design*



The research team developed a variety of data collection approaches and tools to answer the research questions and to structure the process and outcome evaluations. Below, Table 1 tallies the number of people interviewed either individually or in focus group, broken down by profession.

**Interviews with professionals.** The process evaluation consisted of site visits where the research team conducted interviews and focus groups using a purposive convenience sample.



Sampled participants included members of law enforcement, attorneys, and victim assistants or advocates who are professionals providing support to family violence victims either in the community or in the criminal justice setting. Interviews were scheduled in coordination with a primary site representative based on the ability of potential participants and their interest in the study. The research team provided consent forms to potential participants and answered any additional questions prior to conducting the interview or focus group. Participants were interviewed by the research team using the interview protocols presented in Appendix D, which included open-ended questions about their roles, perceptions of family violence cases and use of cameras and video evidence. IDVSA staff with previous experience working with family violence professionals and survivors conducted the interviews and focus groups. Participants could be interviewed multiple times during the course of the study to increase understanding and discuss any changes to practices related to video evidence. The interviews and focus groups took approximately one hour to complete. All identifying information was removed during the transcription process.

**Table 1**

*Interviews and Focus Group Participants by Profession*

Professional Role	Number
Prosecutors	22
Law Enforcement	22
Victim Counselors & Victim Witness Personnel (Justice System Based)	10
Victim Counselors & Advocates (Community-Based)	11
Victims	23
Others (Judges, Dispatch, Investigators, Support Staff)	8
TOTAL	96

**Video quality and usability assessment.** Initial site interviews suggested that the content and quality of the video taken at the scene of a family violence crime could influence decision making during the handling of that case. Participants were recruited as a follow-up to initial site visit interviews and focus groups, and participants primarily consisted of prosecutors who would use the videos as part of their case decision-making. In two instances, support staff participated in the focus group to provide supplemental information. To understand the features of the videos that influenced prosecutorial efficacy and case outcomes, semi-structured interviews were conducted using protocol presented in Appendix E. The tool was developed from introductory interviews with each site based on what participants reported made a “good” or “bad” video. These elements included measures of audio and visual content, assessments about



what the victim details in their statement, and supplementary or background features picked up by the video, such as environment, children, or other important details to inform the case.

Participants selected videos from their own jurisdiction for this portion of the evaluation. Participants reviewed the video with members of the research team. Videos were viewed onsite, using the same confidentiality and security protocols utilized by the jurisdiction to protect the privacy of individuals recorded in the video. The interviews took approximately one-hour, with generally no more than three (3) videos viewed in any one session. Audio-recording of the interview was made optional to all participants and hand-written notes were taken by the researchers if recording was declined. After receiving consent from participants, the research team sat with participants as videos were set up on a display, usually a monitor or computer screen. The participants and research team watched the videos together and the researcher would record their observations during this time. Upon completion of the video, the video would be stopped and the audio-recording (if selected) began. Researchers would then ask the participant the participant observation questions and record their responses.

***Focus groups with victims.*** The research team conducted three (3) focus groups with victims in a community-based service provider and shelter in one of the evaluation sites. to ensure the victim voice was included central in the first phase of the Project ReVEAL study, Representatives from Texas Council on Family Violence introduced the research team to the leadership and support staff of the shelter. The designated representative from this introductory conversation arranged interviews with staff and aided in scheduling focus groups with victims. The shelter-based victim advocates and counselors were interviewed using the protocol outlined in the interviews with professionals protocol. Shelter staff provided the recruitment information to their clients (see Appendix F). During the designated time, those interested in participating could go to the focus group location to learn more about the study and review the consent forms before agreeing to participate. Participation was anonymous.

The goal of the focus groups was to understand perceptions of the use of the cameras from the victim perspective. The focus group protocol (Appendix F) asks questions generally about perceptions of the practice being recorded as part of a criminal investigation in a family violence-related case and did not ask about a specific experience or criminal case to protect anonymity. General topics included perceptions about the criminal justice system's approach to family violence cases and perceptions of being video-recorded as part of a family violence investigation, as well as the use of the video in subsequent legal actions taken by the district attorney and other lawyers. Focus groups were moderated by members of the research team who previously worked with survivors of family violence. These individuals also had experience in moderating focusing groups. questions. Focus groups were conducted in both Spanish and English.

**Law enforcement survey.** The researchers conducted a brief survey of law enforcement to understand their perceptions about family violence, time on family violence cases, perceptions about video equipment, and community resources and collaboration (Attachment G). A modified and abbreviated version of McPhredran, Gover, and Mazerolle's (2017) survey instrument was used in the present study with the researchers' permission for the questions pertaining to law enforcement perceptions about family violence cases. Site administrative staff distributed surveys to law enforcement personnel at their daily meetings, as well as consent forms and information on the option to return blank surveys should someone decline participation. Participants were invited to complete the survey if they wished to participate and return them to a drop-off location within a 24-hour time period (typically a securely stored box at the administrative personnel's desk). If an individual declined to participate, they could discard the survey or return the survey incomplete. Signed consent was not required in order to protect anonymity. The surveys took an estimated 10-15 minutes to complete. Participants returned surveys without identifying information to the research team by certified mail or email scan. There was an option for completing the survey online using the Qualtrics software but none of the participating sites chose this option for this phase of the study. IDVSA staff entered surveys into Qualtrics by hand for analysis and then destroyed hard copies of the survey.

**Cost-benefit data.** In year one of Project ReVEAL, the research team began to assess the economic costs and benefits for the criminal justice system and family violence victims of using video-recorded victim statements, as well as supplemental evidence. As part of the professional interviews described above, the team reviewed qualitative data for potential sources of financial costs and benefits from expanded use of video-recorded victim statements. This line of inquiry was carried over into the law enforcement survey, which included questions about time spent on cases. These efforts produced research questions, methodological grounding, and preliminary hypotheses that will be further studied in the proposed Phase II.

**Closed criminal case data.** The research team collaborated with sites to gain access to closed case data. Site letters were obtained from each participating site outlining the potential need to access and analyze closed case data. Closed criminal cases, or cases that reached final disposition before the onset of the study, were used to prevent any threat of the evaluation interfering with case action or case outcomes. This also ensured complete case data was included for analysis. The information in the site letter provided a general outline of potential variables for data collection. A representative from the research team worked with the DA's office and Information Technology (IT) staff member responsible for managing the case tracking software to establish secure procedures for constructing a database from the site's software system. This database did not include identifiers, such as involved parties' names and dates of birth, and coded cases with a case identification number to connect disparate information.

## Data Analysis

**Interviews and focus group data.** Transcripts from interviews and focus groups conducted with family violence professionals and victims of family violence were analyzed using the grounded theory approach of qualitative analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The research team coded transcripts using NVivo. Three research team members coded individually and met regularly to discuss themes, codes, and rectify differences in coding.

The first phase of coding included open, line-by-line coding of the transcripts by the research team. The next stage of coding included axial coding, where major themes emerged through consolidating codes based conceptual significance and similarity (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The third phase included focused coding, concepts to broader themes (Charmaz, 2006). Stakeholders and additional research partners, including lawyers and former legal advocates reviewed and refined the deidentified analysis for interpretation.

**Law enforcement survey.** Surveys were programmed into Qualtrics as they appear in Appendix G. The research team entered survey responses into Qualtrics individually. Responses were numbered using a random number scheme to spot-check inaccuracies and to ensure surveys were not duplicated in the analysis. The surveys were analyzed descriptively using cross tabulations via the Custom Tables procedure in SPSS Version 24. Summary statistics (e.g., percentages and means) were chosen as appropriate for the scale of the variables. Most analyses utilized counts and percentages. Bivariate inferential tests (z-test for proportions and t-test for means, both with a 95% confidence level) were used to assess differences between groups and/or time periods. A Bonferroni adjustment was employed when comparing 3 or more groups or time periods. For the law enforcement survey, opened-ended questions were analyzed using the Thematic Analysis approach (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). This approach uses an inductive approach to coding and use of memos to distill salient themes and concepts (Guest et al., 2014). Open-ended data were coded and grouped by theme by two coders.

**Closed case data.** Two sites provided case file information pertaining to incidents of family violence reported to police and accepted by the DA's Office for prosecution. These cases were "closed" in that they reached final disposition prior to being given to the research team for analysis, minimizing the evaluation's impact on any changes to disposition outcomes or threatening the privacy of involved parties. Variables of interest for analysis included victim and suspect demographics, past criminal history, police actions, observations, and reports, information taken at the scene, other people involved, evidence, forms of video evidence, case actions taken by prosecution, days the case was in progress, case narrative, and case disposition.

The newness of the video practice in two jurisdictions limited the availability of outcome data for this phase of the analysis. Thus, the initial data set from one site was collected to benchmark outcomes of family violence cases before the video practice is implemented. Further analysis will

be conducted as more data is collected for eventual comparison between cases with and without video.

The research team worked with Site One's DA's office and their Information Technology division to create a data set to assess and compare the outcome of completed (or closed) family violence cases when video statements were present, and cases where no video file was available to prosecutors. A dataset was received from Site One including family violence cases from a period of time, based on the date of offense, ranging from 1986 to 2017. The bulk of the cases received were from the years 2009 to 2015. There were a total of 32,305 cases in the data set.

***Missing data approach.*** There was a significant portion of missing disposition (or outcome) data in the cases received by the research team. Of the 32,305 cases, the case outcomes are unknown for 15,995, a total of 49.5% of cases present in the data file. The reason for the missing data is unknown, but is believed to be a combination of system interface and report errors. To understand more about the nature of the missing data, a random sample of 505 cases was drawn across the years 2013 – 2015 for the purpose of investigating this issue, including 196 cases with missing dispositions. The full data set of 32,305 cases contained 21,822 cases during those same years (2013 – 2015), with 3114 cases without dispositions. Representatives from the DA's office used the internal system to look for disposition outcomes for the sample of 196 cases with missing dispositions. The DA's office found outcomes for 154 of 196 of cases. The distribution of disposition outcomes for the sample with previously missing disposition data was compared to the distribution of the rest of the sample of cases. The distribution of the cases was similar, suggesting that the cases with missing data are not significantly different from the cases with complete data. See Table 2 for comparison of missing and complete data samples.

**Table 2***Missing Data Review*

	Original Case File, 2013 - 2015	Random Sample of 505 from Original File	Sample of 505 after Portal Search
Acquittal by the Court (OCA)	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%
Acquittal by the Jury (OCA)	0.6%	1.9%	1.3%
Conviction - Guilty by the Court (OCA)	13.4%	4.9%	3.2%
Conviction - Guilty by the Jury (OCA)	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Convictions - Guilty Plea or Nolo Contendere (OCA)	13.2%	20.1%	19.0%
Declined*	-	-	4.5%
Dismissal (OCA)	42.0%	42.4%	40.9%
Dismissed After Deferred Disposition	3.6%	3.6%	5.0%
Inactive*	-	-	3.2%
Motion to Revoke - Denied/ Continued (OCA)	3.1%	2.6%	2.6%
Motion to Revoke - Granted (OCA)	6.4%	5.2%	4.5%
Not Guilty	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
Placed on Deferred Adjudication (OCA)	16.3%	18.1%	14.7%
PTD Dismissal(OCA)	0.3%	0.6%	0.4%
# Cases with Disposition	18,708	309	462
# Cases without Disposition	3114	196	42
# Cases with Disposition Found in Portal	-	-	154

\* Declined and Inactive dispositions were not present in the original case file.

A revised dataset spanning the full same range of years (1986 to 2017) covered by the original dataset was created from cases with completed data (N=16,245). The research team conducted analysis to assess differences between cases with video statements present and cases with no video statement. Summary and descriptive statistics were chosen as appropriate for the scale of the variable, i.e., t-tests for means and z-tests for proportions. A 95% confidence level was used to assess differences between groups and time periods. A Bonferroni adjustment was employed when comparing 3 or more groups or time periods.

## Next Steps for Refining Methodology in Subsequent Phases

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The first phase of ReVEAL produced initial findings and methodological learnings to improve the scope of the project in the future. The summary of initial findings can be found in the **Project ReVEAL Summary of Preliminary Findings Report**. There are several important next steps to further answer project research questions, improve methodology, address study limitations, and develop additional insight into the efficacy and impact of the use of video evidence in family violence cases.

### Address Missing Data Issues

In Phase II, the research team will reengage with the Information Technology Department (ITD) to systematically resolve the missing data issues. The proposed plan focuses on developing a methodology to produce a representative sample of family violence cases to extract all case records and then review for completeness. The Phase I findings will inform a power analysis in order to establish a sample size for this effort. A preliminary assessment suggests that approximately 400 cases from each year of interest will be sufficient to meet goals of this effort. Additionally, it appears likely that three years of data before and after the introduction of video, 2009 – 2011 and 2012 – 2015, will be sufficient for the project goals.

### Continue to Analyze Case Outcomes and Better for a Better Understanding of Impact

In Phase II, implementation sites will have accrued family violence cases that have reached a judicial system disposition. The research team proposes a similar analytic plan for this data as piloted in Phase I and proposed to continue in Phase II. As cases are available in sufficient numbers, data from new sites can be included in this proposed effort. This research will compare cases with video evidence to cases without video evidence.

### Expansion of Cost Analysis

Future efforts will focus analysis on areas that hold the most potential for revealing significant costs or benefits: case processing time, prosecutor preparation time, law enforcement investigation time, and equipment and storage costs. Initial analysis of law enforcement survey responses indicates that there may be modest time savings to law enforcement from the use of video camera, typically from fewer court appearances. However, qualitative data suggests that there is increased time saved on the prosecution side, in the form of cases that are pre-trial diverted, and in decision-making around case assessment. More exploration is needed about cost savings through the plea deal process. The research team will attempt to quantify the cost of family violence cases and assess the impact of video through time savings. The research team will also attempt to quantify the increased economic costs associated with storage of video files due to security needs, file size, and length of time required for storing the evidence. Examples include data on case preparation hours, trial duration for misdemeanors and felonies, number of

docket transfers, etc. Additionally, extant literature will also be searched to assess the availability of secondary sources for these informational goals.

### **Understand Practice by Adding Additional Sites**

In subsequent phases, the research team plans to include additional sites to understand the impact of the use of video evidence in more Texas communities. This may include regional and population diversity and sites where the camera practices in progress or newly implemented. Sites using body worn cameras in family violence cases may also be selected. Additional sites will add to evidence about program outcomes and implementation strategies.

### **Explore Impact of Body-Worn Cameras**

Jurisdictions all over Texas are adopting and increasing their use of body worn cameras. These cameras may be used in family violence investigations and prosecution. Subsequent project phases will explore methods for using body-worn cameras, including differences and similarities to handheld camera footage.

### **Hear More from Victims**

More information about victim experience and the camera practice is needed, including addressing safety and privacy concerns. Additionally, the research team would like more information about communication of practices and use of video footage with victims of family violence.

### **Learn About Additional Practices that Facilitate the Use of Video Evidence**

The use of video evidence does not occur in isolation—law enforcement and members of the criminal justice system use it with other practices to encourage the collection and application of evidence and victim engagement in family violence cases. These practices may include victim follow-up, on-call prosecutors for early case decision making, specialized domestic violence court, and increased collaboration between agencies. Using focal concerns theory and principals of evidence based prosecution as a framework, the next phase will explore other practices that help facilitate the use of the video.



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## Appendix A

### Camera Equipment Inventory

The following options were provided to jurisdictions selected for camera equipment and grant recipients identified the equipment to be used in their jurisdiction.

Equipment Type	Camera package includes:
SONY HDR-AS200V ACTION CAM	64gb SD card
	Watertight case
	Extra battery
	SD card reader
	Small tripod
	Flash bracket and LED video light
CANON VIXIA HF R60 HD CAMCORDER	32gb/163x SD card
	Watertight case
	Extra battery
	SD card reader
	Small tripod
	Flash bracket and LED video light
PANASONICAX-1 ACTION CAM	64gb SD card
	Watertight case
	Extra battery
	SD card reader
	Small tripod and mount

## Appendix B

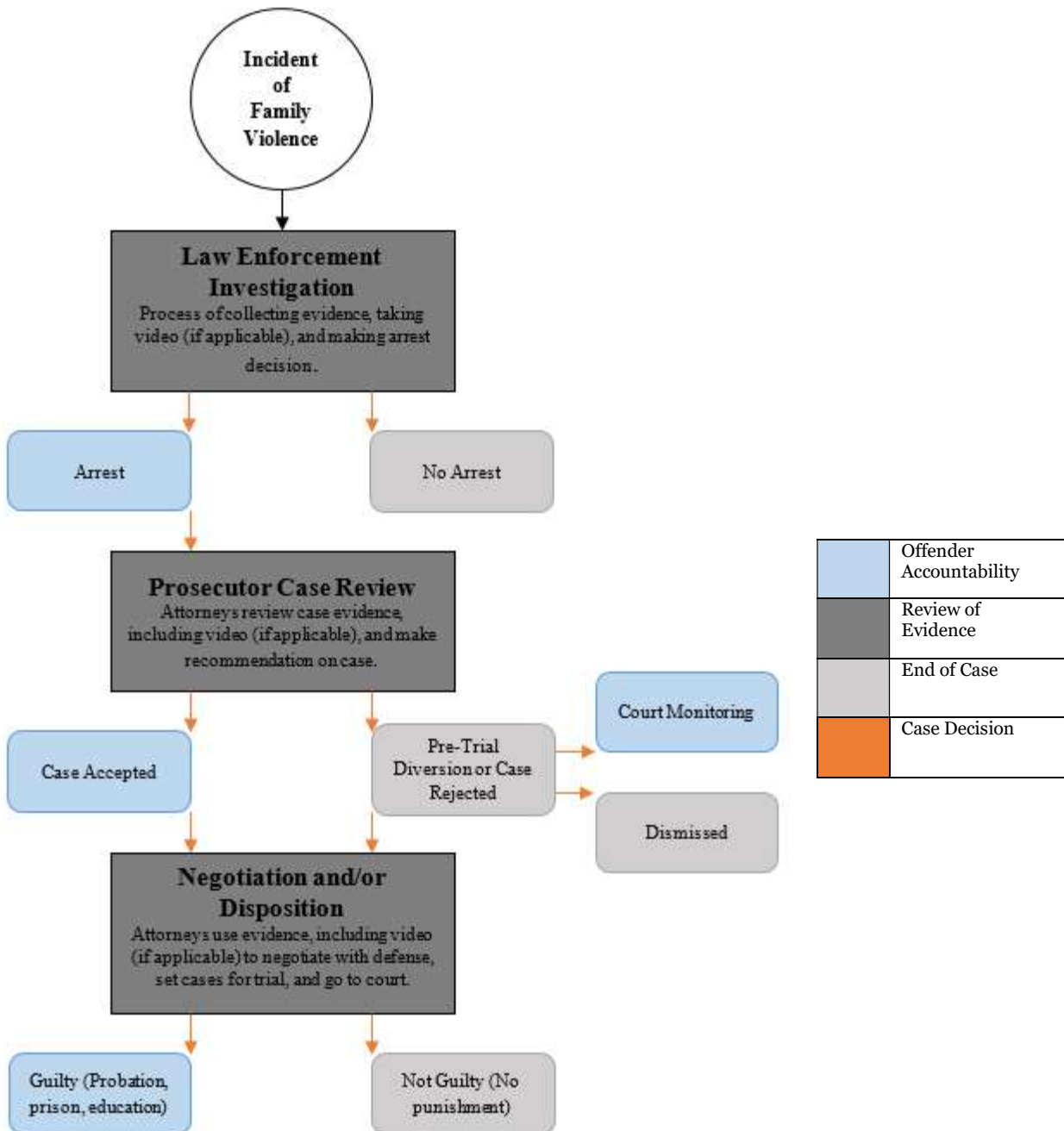
### Logic Model

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes – Impact		
	<i>Theory</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Long</i>
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IDVSA Staff</li> <li>• Consultants</li> <li>• CJD</li> <li>• TCFV</li> <li>• 3 Participating Sites</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CJD</li> </ul> <p><b>Time</b></p>	<p><b>Focal Concerns Theory:</b></p> <p>FCT suggests CJS actors make case decisions based on perceptions of blameworthiness/harm, risk to community, &amp; practical constraints; perceptual shorthand may act throughout.</p> <p>Recording statements and evidence on video will create change in case handling decisions by law enforcement, prosecutors, and support staff; resulting in changes to offender accountability, costs, and victim experience</p> <p><b>Research Questions:</b></p> <p>Do video victim statements will result in improvements to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Improve law enforcement investigative capacity in family violence crimes?</li> <li>2) Improve prosecutorial case readiness in family violence crimes?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Literature Review (1-5)</li> <li>2) IRB Coordination &amp; Approval (1-5)</li> <li>3) Process Evaluation:</li> <li>4) Interviews &amp; FGs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law enforcement &amp; dispatch (1, 4)</li> <li>• Judges &amp; attorneys (2, 4)</li> <li>• Victim advocates &amp; counselors (1, 2 &amp; 5)</li> <li>• Victims of FV (5)</li> </ul> </li> <li>5) Assessment of video evidence collection &amp; perceptions of FV by LE (1 &amp; 4)</li> <li>6) Assessment of video quality/content on case decisions (2 &amp; 4)</li> <li>7) Outcome Evaluation:</li> <li>8) Ongoing interviews with the above</li> <li>9) Comparison of pre- and post-video recording FV closed case data (1-4, potentially 5)</li> <li>10) Cost/Benefit Analysis (4)</li> <li>11) Report to Funder and Stakeholders</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deeper understanding of previous research &amp; methods to guide study</li> <li>• Committee approval and ongoing ethical guidance</li> <li>• Understanding of each jurisdiction's approach to investigating, prosecuting, and experiencing the CJS for FV cases</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of using technology for FV investigations &amp; evidence role in prosecutorial preparedness</li> <li>• Identification potential variations in FV case handling between jurisdictions</li> <li>• Exploration of victim experience as it pertains to best practices/pain points</li> <li>• Assess changes to practices and/or perceptions after video is introduced</li> <li>• Identification of practice improvements/barriers</li> <li>• Changes to case outcomes assessed</li> <li>• Financial savings assessed and weighed against potential barriers to establish cost effectiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased understanding of the factors and tools influencing CJS handling of FV cases</li> <li>• Publishable report</li> <li>• Barriers &amp; pain points identified to guide technical support</li> <li>• Best practices and policies established for video evidence</li> <li>• Evidence to support use of cameras explored through changes to case outcomes and/or increased efficiencies</li> <li>• Improved case outcomes with the goal of maintaining offender accountability while improving the victim's experience and maximizing victim safety.</li> <li>• Reduced costs affiliated with adjudicating FV cases</li> <li>• Documentation and dissemination of research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empirical research expanding on previous knowledge/studies</li> <li>• Improved CJS practices for intervening in incidents of FV through the use of technological advances and innovative interventions</li> <li>• Reduction in FV</li> <li>• Cost effective interventions established so that resources can be allocated to other needs within the community</li> <li>• Expansion and adoption of best practices</li> </ul>

	<div>3) Increase the accountability of family violence offenders?</div> <div>4) Reduce the costs of adjudicating family violence cases?</div> <div>5) Improve the victim experience in the criminal justice system (CJS)?</div>				
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## Appendix C

### Criminal Case Flow Chart



## Appendix D

### Interview Protocols

## Interview Protocol

### Dispatch and Law Enforcement

#### Demographics

- A. Role/Position
- B. Years in current job
- C. Years in the field
- D. Estimated percentage of cases you work on in a given week that are family violence cases?

#### Determining a Family Violence Case:

- 1. How does your department generally receive suspected family (domestic) violence cases?
  - a. *How are calls received and distributed?*
  - b. *Are there officers designated to these types of crimes?*
  - c. *What information are you given when **first** responding to a family violence call?*
- 2. What constitutes a family violence case?

#### Case Approach

- 3. Please take me through the investigation process for a family violence case? Or: Walk me through a typical family violence call...
  - a. *What has occurred?*
  - b. *What is the first thing you do when you arrive at the scene?*
  - c. *What happens next?*
  - d. *What information do you gather from the people on scene (victim, suspect, witness(es), minor child/witness(es))?*
- 4. What evidence is required to make an arrest for family violence?
  - a. *What are some important pieces of evidence and documentation to gather during the investigation? How do you go about collecting evidence?*
- 5. What are your concerns when arresting someone for family violence?
  - a. *What do you do if the suspect is not there or has fled?*

6. Does your agency/jurisdiction practice “no-drop” or “mandatory arrest” type policies?

### **Interactions with the Victim:**

7. How do you gather information from a victim?
  - a. *Do you take videotaped statements of the victim? (If yes, ask question 8. If no, skip).*
8. What is the process for video recording a victim statement?
  - a. *Where do you get the cameras?*
  - b. *How do you introduce the statement process to victim?*
  - c. *What questions do you ask during the video statement process?*
  - d. *What are the important things to videotape during the statement?*
  - e. *Where is the video stored?*
  - f. *What do you use the video for?*
  - g. *How does the video influence how you approach family violence cases?*
  - h. *What changes have you observed to the outcomes of your cases?*
  - i. *Describe a positive outcome, providing as much detail as you can about the specific case.*
  - j. *Describe a negative (or less than positive) outcome, again providing as much detail as you can.*
9. What support services are available to victims of family (domestic) violence cases?
  - a. *With law enforcement?*
  - b. *Outside agencies, such as domestic violence shelters?*
10. Are there any policies and/or requirements for victim contact or follow-up with your agency?

### **Transferring the case to the DA**

11. After you have completed an investigation, what are the next steps for a case?
  - a. *When do you contact the DA?*
  - b. *Describe a typical interaction with the DA’s office about a family violence case.*
12. What are the reasons a family violence case is typically denied by the DA?
13. What do you think prosecutors need to achieve a guilty verdict in a family violence case?
  - a. *What do they need to reach a plea deal?*

### **Economic Questions**



14. What is your best estimate of the annual total cost spent by your office/department related to adult domestic violence services? In other words—what are all of the things that your department spends money on that has to do with family violence?
15. What is the amount of time spent on each family case, or on the average case?

### **Evaluative Questions**

16. Your agency is (going to/is currently) using videotaped statements in family violence cases. What do you see as the main benefits of videotaping victim statements?
17. What are some of the greatest barriers or challenges to videotaping victim statements?
18. If you could change the way in which family violence cases are investigated or prosecuted, what would you change or improve?
19. What additional tools, skills, or resources does your department need to better respond to family violence?
20. For those using cameras: What would you say to another department/agency/jurisdiction about using cameras in family violence cases?
21. What is the best way to get data for this evaluation about past closed family violence cases before cameras were used? What is the best method to get data about ongoing cases that use camera statements?

# Interview Protocol

## Judges, Prosecuting, & Defense Attorneys

### Demographics

- A. Role/Position
- B. Years in current job
- C. Years in the field
- D. Estimated percentage of cases you work on in a given week that are family violence cases.

### Determining a Family Violence Case:

- 1. How does your department and/or agency generally handle family violence cases?
  - a. *When you receive a case, what happens first?*
  - b. *What happens next?*
- 2. What constitutes as a family violence case?
- 3. How does your department decide which cases are accepted for prosecution?
  - a. *What is required to accept a case for prosecution?*
  - b. *What might prevent a case from being accepted?*
- 4. Does this agency/jurisdiction practice “no-drop” or “mandatory arrest” type policies?

### Prosecuting a Family Violence Case:

- 5. What is your approach to prosecuting/defending a family violence case?
  - a. *Walk me through your approach on a “typical” case*
- 6. What evidence is required to effectively hear/prosecute/defend a family violence case?
  - a. *How do you collect this evidence?*
  - b. *How do you use this evidence?*
- 7. What are your concerns when hearing/prosecuting/defending someone for family violence?
- 8. What do you need to effectively hear/prosecute/defend a family violence case?

9. What are the most important factors that influence family violence case outcomes?

**Videotaped Statements:**

10. Is your jurisdiction currently using videotaped statements in family violence cases?

**If yes:**

11. How do you use video victim statements?
- a. *Where is the video stored?*
  - b. *When is it viewed and by whom?*
  - c. *What information do you get from the video statement?*
  - d. *What are some situations where you would use the video statement?*
  - e. *How does the video influence how you approach family violence cases?*
  - f. *What changes have you observed to the outcomes of your cases?*
  - g. *Describe a positive outcome, providing as much detail as you can about the specific case.*
  - h. *Describe a negative (or less than positive) outcome, again providing as much detail as you can.*
12. What do you think about the video victim statements?
- a. *Will they be/are they effective in increasing prosecutorial readiness?*
  - b. *How do the/how will the video statements increase offender accountability?*
  - c. *How do the statements/how will the statements impact victim case participation?*

**Working with Victims:**

13. What is the role of victim input and participation in family violence cases?
14. What support is available to victims of domestic violence cases?
- a. *Within the DA office?*
  - b. *Outside agencies?*
  - c. *What kind of follow-up is provided to victims by DA or LE?*

**Economic Questions**

15. What is your best estimate of the annual total cost spent by your office/department related to adult domestic violence services? In other words—what are all of the things that your department spends money on that has to do with family violence?
16. What is the amount of time spent on each family case, or on the average case?

## Evaluative Questions

17. Your agency is (going to/is currently) using videotaped statements in family violence cases. What do you see as the main benefits of videotaping victim statements?
18. What are some of the greatest barriers or challenges to videotaping victim statements?
19. If you could change the way in which family violence cases are investigated or prosecuted, what would you change or improve?
20. What additional tools, skills, or resources does your department need to better respond to family violence?
21. For those using cameras: What would you say to another department/agency/jurisdiction about using cameras in family violence cases?
22. What is the best way to get data for this evaluation about past closed family violence cases before cameras were used? What is the best method to get data about ongoing cases that use camera statements?

# Interview Protocol

## Victim Advocates (Internal/External)

### Demographics

- A. Role/Position
- B. Years in current job
- C. Years in the field
- D. Estimated percentage of cases you work on in a given week that are family violence cases?

### Case Approach with Victims/Survivors:

- 1. What is your role working with victims/survivors of family violence?
- 2. How do you come into contact with victims/survivors?
- 3. What happens after you first meet with a victim/survivor?
  - a. *What are your goals?*
  - b. *How long do you work together?*
  - c. *What kind of support do you provide?*
  - d. *How does a case become “closed” or when does your contact with them usually end?*
- 4. What support is available to victims in family violence cases?
  - a. *Within your agency?*
  - b. *Other agencies?*
  - c. *How does follow-up happen with victims after a family violence case from law enforcement? The DA? Local community resources?*
- 5. Are there any policies and/or requirements for victim contact with your agency?
- 6. Does your agency/jurisdiction practice “no-drop” or “mandatory arrest” type policies?

### Victim Case Engagement:

- 7. What is it like for a victim of family violence experiencing the criminal justice system?
  - a. *What are some of their main concerns when they come in?*
  - b. *Pressing needs?*
- 8. What kind of input do victims have on their family violence cases?

9. Do law enforcement and/or the DA use videotaped statement in family violence cases? If yes:
- How are the video statements used?*
  - Have any of your clients discussed then with you? If so, what are their impressions? Concerns?*
  - What impact if any, do these statements have on the criminal justice process? Victim engagement in family violence cases? Victim safety?*
  - What changes have you observed to outcomes with family violence cases since camera use began?*
  - Describe a positive outcome, providing as much detail as you can about the specific case.*
  - Describe a challenging (or less than positive) outcome, again providing as much detail as you can.*

### **Economic Questions**

10. What is your best estimate of the annual total cost spent by your office/department related to adult domestic violence services? In other words—what are all of the things that your department spends money on that has to do with family violence?
11. What is the amount of time spent on each family case, or on the average case?

### **Evaluative Questions:**

12. What do you think about the way family violence cases are prosecuted in your jurisdiction/area/community?
13. If you could change the way in which family violence cases are handled by the criminal justice system, what would you change or improve?
14. Your agency is (going to/is currently) using videotaped statements in family violence cases. What do you see as the main benefits of videotaping victim statements?
15. What are some of the greatest barriers or challenges to videotaping victim statements?
16. What additional tools, skills, or resources does your department need to better respond to family violence?
17. For those using cameras: What would you say to another department/agency/jurisdiction about using cameras in family violence cases?
18. What is the best way to get data for this evaluation about past closed family violence cases before cameras were used? What is the best method to get data about ongoing cases that use camera statements?

## Appendix E

### Video Quality and Usability Assessment

**IDVSA to complete this section while watching the video statement. Please consent the participant using the appropriate consent site, including information pertaining to participant identification of the number of videos to be used and audio recording procedures.**

Viewing Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Please identify (circle) who was involved in this video:

Victim	Witness(es)	If multiple, how many?
Defendant	Minor Witness(es)	If multiple, how many?_

1. Please rate the image quality of the video. (Is the image in focus, can you clearly make out what is being recorded?)

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
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2. Please rate the audio quality of the video. (Can you understand what is being said?)

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
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3. Please rate the usefulness of the content of the video.

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
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4. Please rate the overall quality of the video statement(s)?

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
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5. Please rate the extent to which the officer thoroughly interviewed the victim (or person/people giving the statement).

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
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6. Did the officer use a family violence supplement/questionnaire? Yes or No  
b). If yes, what questions were asked of the victim?

**After viewing the video, start the recorder (if applicable), and advise the participant: We are going to ask you a few questions about the video you just watched. These questions are to help us understand how quality and content of the video could influence the prosecution of a family violence case.**

**The first five questions are to be answered on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being “very poor or unusable” and 5 being “excellent”.**

7. Please rate the image quality of the video. (Is the image in focus, can you clearly make out what is being recorded?)

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
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8. Please rate the audio quality of the video. (Can you understand what is being said?)

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
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9. Please rate the usefulness of the content of the video.

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
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10. Please rate the overall quality of the video statement?

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
---------------	----------	---------------------------	----------	---------------------------

11. Please rate the extent to which the officer thoroughly interviewed the victim (or person/people giving the statement).

5 – Excellent	4 – Good	3 – Acceptable or Average	2 - Poor	1 – Very Poor or Unusable
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**Questions 6-10 are open-ended, please answer them to the best of your ability.**

12. What do you think about the statements in this video? Please describe what this tells you about this case?
13. How would this video inform your actions on this case?
14. Is there anything missing in this video that would tell you more about this case?
15. Does this video provide you with any useful evidence for this case? Please describe.
16. Is there else anything that stood out to you about this video? Please explain.



## Appendix F

### Victim Focus Group Protocol

#### Steps:

- 1.) Review consent form with the participants, emphasizing any information in bold.  
Participants will nod their head to agree to audio recording.  
Participants will take a seat to agree to participate in the focus group.  
If any participant does not nod their head agreeing to be recorded, please take hand-written notes during the group.
- 2.) Provide the incentive to the participant prior to participating in the group.
- 3.) Once everyone has provided consent, start the recorder (if applicable) and follow the guide below.

#### Questions:

1. Today we are going to ask questions about your opinion of the District Attorney's office and the Police Departments and their role on (family) domestic violence cases. Let's start by talking about the local police department. What do you think about PD's approach to family violence cases?
  - a. Prompts:
  - b. What have you heard about their response to family violence cases?
  - c. What are they doing well?
  - d. What needs to be improved?
2. The Police Department has a practice of taking a videotaped statement of a survivor/victim at the time of a domestic (family) violence case. Survivors/Victims are asked questions about the incident on camera to help law enforcement and prosecutors learn more about the case. What do you think about this practice?
  - a. Prompts:
  - b. What are the concerns or problems with this approach?
  - c. What are the potential benefits to the law enforcement? Prosecutor?  
Victim/Survivor?
3. Now let's talk about the DA's office. They do a couple of different things to address domestic violence. The first thing is the come back to check on a victim/survivor?  
Prompts: What are the concerns or problems with this approach?
  - a. What are the potential benefits to the law enforcement? Prosecutor?  
Victim/Survivor?
4. At the DA's office, they use the videotaped statement to learn more about cases. Sometimes they show it to the victim/survivor and the defense attorney can see it. What do you think about the use of the video by the DA?
5. What do you think it would be like for victims/survivors to be interviewed on tape at the time of an incident?

6. What could law enforcement do to improve safety for domestic violence victims/survivors?
7. What could the DA's office do to improve the safety for domestic violence victims/survivors?

## Appendix G

### Law Enforcement Survey

This survey is interested in your perspectives on family violence and policing. Your answers and comments are anonymous. If for any reason you have any questions, please contact Leila Wood, Ph.D. at The University of Texas at Austin, at 512 471-3198 or send an email to leilawood@austin.utexas.edu. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

**Based on your experience and opinion, please check your level of agreement with each of the following statements\*:**

1. I am more likely to be injured during a domestic violence call than any other type of call.

1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Disagree	3 – Slightly Disagree	4 – Slightly Agree	5 – Agree	6 – Strongly Agree
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2. Domestic violence offenders must be arrested even when the victims don't feel it is necessary.

1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Disagree	3 – Slightly Disagree	4 – Slightly Agree	5 – Agree	6 – Strongly Agree
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3. Domestic violence calls take too much time and effort.

1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Disagree	3 – Slightly Disagree	4 – Slightly Agree	5 – Agree	6 – Strongly Agree
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4. Police should arrest domestic violence cases only when there is clear evidence of injury.

1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Disagree	3 – Slightly Disagree	4 – Slightly Agree	5 – Agree	6 – Strongly Agree
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5. Prosecutors usually follow-up effectively in domestic violence arrests.

1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Disagree	3 – Slightly Disagree	4 – Slightly Agree	5 – Agree	6 – Strongly Agree
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6. Arresting someone at a DV call seldom helps reduce future domestic violence DV incidents.

1 – Strongly Disagree	2 – Disagree	3 – Slightly Disagree	4 – Slightly Agree	5 – Agree	6 – Strongly Agree
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7. Does your agency have a domestic violence unit? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know

**IF YES:**

7a. Are you a member of that unit? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐  
Don't Know

7b. Have you previously been a member of that unit? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐  
Don't Know

8. Of all the calls you respond to, what percentage would you estimate qualifies as family violence?

- a. 0% (*Skip to end of survey*)
- b. 1-20 %
- c. 20-40 %
- d. 40-60 %
- e. 60-80 %
- f. 80-100 %

9. Have you used a handheld camera for gathering evidence and/or statements during a family violence call?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure

10. If yes, how would you rate the ease of use of the handheld video cameras?

1 – Very Difficult	2 – Difficult	3 – Somewhat Difficult	4 – Somewhat Easy	5 – Easy	6 – Very Easy
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11. If yes, do you think the handheld video cameras are effective in collecting information for family violence cases?

1 – Ineffective	2 – Ineffective	3 – Somewhat Ineffective	4 – Somewhat Effective	5 – Effective	6 – Very Effective
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12. If yes, do you think the handheld video camera reduces the length of time it takes to investigate family violence cases?

1 – Definitely	2 – Very Probably	3 – Probably	4 – Possibly	5 – Probably Not	6 – Definitely Not
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12a. If you answered **1-4**, how much time on average would you estimate is **decreased** in using handheld video cameras during family violence investigations? Please estimate the typical amount of time per case and if you cannot recall specifically, please use your best guess: \_\_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

12b. If you answered **5-6**, how much time on average would you estimate is **increased** in using handheld video cameras during family violence investigations? Please estimate the typical amount of time per case and if you cannot recall specifically, please use your best guess: \_\_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

13. Have you used any other video camera types to collect evidence and/or statements during a family violence call (e.g., body worn camera, dash camera, etc.)?

13a. Yes, please identify type: \_\_\_\_\_

14. If yes, how would you rate the ease of use of the other type of video cameras?

1 – Very Difficult	2 – Difficult	3 – Somewhat Difficult	4 – Somewhat Easy	5 – Easy	6 – Very Easy
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15. If yes, do you think the other type of video cameras are effective in collecting information for family violence cases?

1 – Ineffective	2 – Ineffective	3 – Somewhat Ineffective	4 – Somewhat Effective	5 – Effective	6 – Very Effective
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16. If yes, do you think the other types of cameras reduce the length of time it takes to investigate family violence cases?

1 – Definitely	2 – Very Probably	3 – Probably	4 – Possibly	5 – Probably Not	6 – Definitely Not
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16a. If you answered 1-4, how much time on average would you estimate is decreased in using handheld video cameras during family violence investigations? Please estimate the typical amount of time per case and if you cannot recall specifically, please use your best guess: \_\_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

16b. If you answered 5-6, how much time on average would you estimate is increased in using handheld video cameras during family violence investigations? Please estimate the typical amount of time per case and if you cannot recall specifically, please use your best guess: \_\_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

17. How many times in the past month have you gone to court for a family violence case?

- a. 0
- b. 1-2 times
- c. 3-4 times
- d. 5 or more times

18. On average, how many hours did you spend going to court for family violence in the last month?

- a. 0
- b. 1-3 hours
- c. 4-6 hours
- d. 7-8 hours
- e. 8 or more hours

19. Based on your experience and opinion, what is the most useful innovation toward that you can think if to improve the investigation of family violence cases?

20. Based on your experience and opinion, what would be the most useful innovation toward reducing the time required to investigate family violence cases?

Please provide the following information for statistical purposes.

21. Age

22. Rank \_\_\_\_\_

23. Gender

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Other, please identify: \_\_\_\_\_

24. Race/Ethnicity

- a. White
- b. Asian
- c. African American
- d. Native American
- e. Hispanic
- f. Other

25. Number of years with current law enforcement agency: \_\_\_\_\_

26. Number of years with previous law enforcement agency: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix H

### Variables of Interest in Case Data

#### Victim and Suspect Information

- Age
- Gender
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Language
- Resident Zip Code
- Employment status
- Previous criminal history
- Previous FV arrests

#### Police Actions

- Relationship as identified in Offense Report (OR)
- Use of a weapon in the incident
- Visible injury on victim
- Visible injury on suspect
- Current or previous protective order between the parties
- Emergency protective order issued
- Previous family violence reported between the parties
- Witness present
- Arrest made
- Video evidence of any kind gathered (e.g. hand-held, dash camera, body-worn camera)
- Video statement of victim
- Video statement of defendant
- Video statement of witness

#### Prosecution Actions

- Charge(s) filed?
- Has the video recording been viewed? By whom and for what purpose?
- Number of times victim has contact DA office?
- Victim input on case outcome?
- Services offered or referred to victim?
- Defendant's legal representation?
- Court case assigned to?
- For open cases:
  - Days case has been open?
  - Current status of the case?
- For open cases:

- Days case has been open?
- Status of the case?
- For closed cases:
  - Was the statement used in a plea bargain?
  - Was the video statement used in court?
  - Were pictures (stills) from the video statement used in court?
  - Outcome of case? (Plea, Trial, Conviction, Dismissal)
  - If the defendant was found guilty, what was the sentence? (Probation, Jail Time, Other)
  - If the case was reset, how many times?
  - Duration of case from acceptance to case disposition.