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Network for Victim Recovery of DC Applauds the Criminal Rule Committee for Advancing Crime Victims' Rights in DC

The Changes to Rules 17 and Rule 60 of the Superior Court Criminal Rules Will Take Effect on November 27, 2017.

WASHINGTON, DC—November 7, 2017— The Network for Victim Recovery of DC (NVRDC) welcomes the upcoming changes to the DC Superior Court Rules of Criminal Procedure, which will take effect on November 27, 2017. The changes to Rule 17 and Rule 60 provide the protection District crime victims lacked for decades. The Rule 17 change sheds light on a much-litigated legal issue—the right to privacy for crime victims.

NVRDC has experienced first-hand the lack of privacy protections for victims' personal and confidential records during criminal cases (for example, mental health, medical and cell phone records). This was a particularly egregious violation of privacy given that victims were usually unaware that their personal and/or confidential records were the target of a subpoena and that the seeking party was not obligated to notify the victim, obtain his or her consent, or provide any opportunity to object. The changes to Rule 17 require notice to the victim *prior* to the issuance of a subpoena, absent exceptional circumstances, and make great strides towards protecting victims' privacy. The Rule 60 changes further this respect by incorporating the rights afforded to victims under the Crime Victims' Rights Act (18 U.S.C. §3771) into the Superior Court Criminal Rules of Procedure. This change helps acknowledge and legitimize the importance of ensuring that victims are given a meaningful voice within the criminal justice system.

For these reasons, NVRDC is thankful to all who contributed in advocating for these much needed rules changes and for advancing the movement of crime victims' rights.

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About NVRDC - Network for Victim Recovery of DC empowers victims of all crimes to achieve survivor defined justice through a collaborative continuum of advocacy, case management, and legal services. Learn more about NVRDC, its services, programs, and upcoming events www.nvrdc.org.