

Instructions for utilizing the evidence collection chart

Original located from <https://withoutmyconsent.org/resources/something-can-be-done-guide/evidence-preservation/>

To help victims organize their evidence, Without My Consent recommends creating an evidence chart. WMC provides a sample evidence chart below so that you can see what a completed chart looks like. Here are instructions on how to create and fill in your own evidence chart. You can use your evidence chart as the table of contents for your binder. Later, if you are seeking legal action you or your attorney can use this chart and its attachments to create a declaration in support of your claim.

- Create a six-column chart.
- Title the columns:
 1. **Date:** The date of the event you're describing. Try to list events in chronological order, so the chart will serve as a timeline of events, as well as a guide to the evidence you are marshaling in support of your claim. Use the chart to tell a story.
 2. **What Happened:** Describe each item/event briefly, but with enough clarity that someone who doesn't know much about it can understand it. Don't use vague descriptions like:

He's always texting me.

Instead, state facts like:

He sent 7 texts between 10:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. The texts say, '[quote texts].' The texts are on my phone, which I'd be happy to make available for the judge to see. Screen shots of the texts are attached as Exhibit A.

Attach your screen shots and printouts as exhibits to the chart.

3. **Evidence That It Happened:** Identify the evidence that you already have. Is it a screen shot and PDF of a harassing post/email? Is it a voicemail message saved to your phone? Is it a statement you would be willing to make under oath that something happened the way you say it did? Is it a statement that you believe a third party witness would be willing to make under oath? Make high-quality, reliable copies of the evidence (e.g., if a web page make sure to capture the whole page, along with its URL and the date/time you captured it).
4. **Who Do You Think Did It:** For each item, identify the party or parties responsible.
5. **Evidence That They Did It:** Identify why you think this party or parties is responsible for the event listed. List any other contextual clues within the messages themselves that reveal the identity of the sender. For example:
 - Texts display sender's name and phone number.
 - Ex-partner has threatened me with the photos in the past. For example, [insert specifics].
 - The 4:00 a.m. text message states, "You'll be sorry."

- The photos were posted to a webpage along with comments about me [or our relationship or him] that only he could know. [Insert specifics.]

6. **Evidence Still Needed/Who Has It:** If you believe you will be able to obtain evidence for the items listed in 3 and 5, but do not have it yet, list it here. Describe briefly but clearly what you believe the evidence is, what you believe it will show, and where you think you will be able to obtain it. If you believe a third party may be in possession of important evidence, consider whether you should ask them for it sooner rather than later, or send a litigation hold request, to ensure it is preserved.

When you reach out for assistance, be prepared to talk about the three most recent incidents of abuse and the three worst incidents of abuse — those may be two separate things. If there are more than three incidents, continue to fill in the Evidence Chart until have documented every incident.