Before You Start
A Checklist for Rural Service Providers Reaching Out to Faith-Based Organizations Regarding Sexual and Domestic Violence

❖ Learn about the faith-based organizations in your area.

❖ Are there congregations and/or faith-based gatherings?
❖ Faith leader or clergy associations?
❖ Faith-based nonprofits?
❖ A group of congregations? Representing one faith? Or many? Comprising faith leaders, laity, or both?

❖ If the organization is a congregation, learn about the congregation.

❖ What do they call themselves?
❖ When are the important holidays and special seasons?
❖ If there are sacred texts, what are they called?
❖ Are there special food requirements?
❖ On which day(s) do they gather as a community?
❖ Do they have recognized leaders? If so, what are they called? If not, who makes decisions?
❖ What are the basic tenets of the faith that might affect victims and survivors?
❖ Are there denominational or geographical similarities to other congregations with which you are working?

❖ Talk to members of your staff and/or friends of your agency who may be able to connect you with someone in the congregation. Start with a congregation where you have a connection.

❖ What is the best way to make an appointment?
❖ Who is the best person to talk to?
  ◊ Community leader?
  ◊ Lay leader?
  ◊ Administrative assistant?
  ◊ Faith leader? Pastor, Priest, Rabbi, Imam, Minister, etc.?
  ◊ Religious Education Director?
  ◊ Visitation Minister?
  ◊ Congregational president?
  ◊ Parish nurse?
❖ What are the congregation’s current concerns and focus? How do they connect to your work?

❖ Gather resources.

❖ Business card and agency resources.
❖ Symbolic gift (agency t-shirt, mug, booklet, etc.)?
❖ Safe Havens’ resources for rural faith-based communities. For more information, see www.interfaithpartners.org.