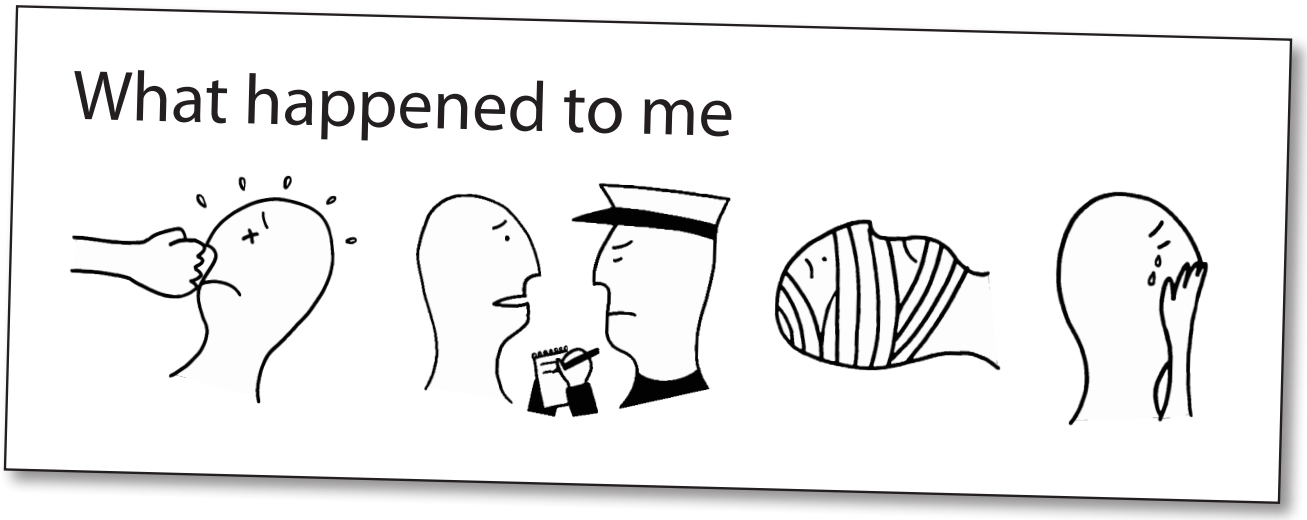
# Step 4: Write a personal statement about what happened to you




## Tell Your Story

You must include a personal statement about what happened to you with your U-Visa application. This statement is your opportunity to tell the government why you should get a U-Visa. Remember there is no court hearing or interview - the statement is your only opportunity to explain everything that happened to you. So you should tell the government how you meet all the requirements: ***crime***, ***helpfulness***, and ***harm***. Read Part I of this Manual again to remind yourself of what these requirements are. You should also say why you deserve foregiveness for any crimes you have committed or for any immigration violations.

The statement also helps you explain any gaps in your story or anything that might seem strange to the government. For example, if you did not seek medical help after being injured, you can explain that you could not afford to, or that you were afraid to because you did not have papers. You can also use your statement to explain any answers to questions on the other U-Visa forms you filled out.

Your personal statement must be in English so if you do not speak English you will need to find someone to help you translate it into English. But, be sure to include your original statement in your native language because the government likes to get written statements in your own language, as long as you have it translated.

At Appendix 6, we have included blank paper for you to write your personal statement.

## Content of Your Personal Statement

Below is a list of questions you should answer in your statement. There is no form so these questions are a way to get you started. The first box asks some basic questions about you. The middle three boxes ask questions about the three U-Visa requirements. The last box asks questions about why you should get a waiver, if you need one. Try to write a statement that has answers to all of these questions.

### Questions you should answer in your statement

**About you**

- What is your full name?
- What is your date of birth?
- Where were you born?
- When did you come to the U.S.?
- How did you come to the U.S?
- Why did you come to the U.S.?

**The crime**

- What crime were you the victim of?
- Who did the crime?
- Did they do it once, or many times?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- How did it happen?
- Did anyone see it happen?

**How you were hurt?**

- How did the crime hurt you?
- Were you hurt physically?
- Were you hurt mentally?
- How badly were you hurt?
- If you were already sick, did the crime make you worse?
- Did you recover?
- Did you take any medicine?
- Did you see a doctor or a therapist?
- If you didn't get help, why not?
- Did anyone else know you were hurt?
- If you suffered domestic abuse, did you suffer harm over a period of time? If so, explain.

**How you helped police?**

- Did the police come?
- Did you call the police?
- If you didn't call the police, why not?
- Were you afraid to call the police?
- Did you make a statement to police?
- Was the person charged with a crime?
- Did you tell the police who did the crime?
- Did you help the police in any other ways?
- Did they make any arrests?
- Was there a trial?
- Did you testify at the trial?
- Was the person convicted?

**Why you should get a waiver**

***You only need to answer these questions if you are applying for a waiver. See Part I, Requirement 4.***

- Why do you need a waiver?
- Did you commit a crime or break immigration laws?
- Why did you break the law?
- Do you regret doing it?
- Have you changed your life since then?
- Did you use drugs as a way of coping with the daily abuse you suffered?
- How will you avoid breaking the law in the future?
- Were you in jail or on probation?
- Did you attend all the meetings and classes you had to go to?
- Do you have family in the United States? How will it affect them if you leave?

## How do I write my statement?

Look at the template below. It shows you what the beginning of your statement should look like. The shaded parts at the beginning show where you should put your own name, your place and date of birth, the date when you came to the United States, and so on. The shaded parts further down the statement show where you should describe in your own words the crime you suffered, how it hurt you, how you helped police, and why you need a waiver. The government wants to hear what happened to you in your words. Do not worry about spelling or grammar mistakes.

Break your statement into sections and number each paragraph. This will help your statement look neat and organized.

The template below is not a whole statement. We have left gaps where you should put in your own words.

IMPORTANT NOTE: refer back to the Chart on Page 31 to see what questions you must answer in your statement.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You must include that you sign the statement under the penalty of perjury and that everything is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.

You MUST sign and date the statement in pen.

### Declaration of (Full Name) in Support of U-Visa Application

1. My name is (full name).
2. I was born in (place of birth) on (date of birth).
3. I first came to the United States on (date).
4. (Explain how you came to the United States.)
5. (. . .)

8. On (date), I was the victim of (crime).
9. (Say who did the crime.)
10. (Explain what happened to you.)
11. (Give more details about the crime.)
12. (. . .)

(Keep going. Write about how you were hurt, how you helped the police, and why you need a waiver.

31. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

*Signature*

Full name

Today's date