

Connecticut Judicial Branch
OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES



OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES
Focusing on a brighter future

BIENNIAL ACTIVITIES REPORT

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015

*Submitted to the Judiciary Committee
Connecticut General Assembly*

*Pursuant to Section 54-203 (b) (18)
of the Connecticut General Statutes*



© 2016, State of Connecticut Judicial Branch. Copyright claimed in report, exclusive of cover image supplied by [140236510]/Thinkstock.

“I never knew at one of the worst times in my life, there was such a supportive program that would have truly helped me. I thank Victim Services for the support, kindness, and help I received. At a time it was hard for me to believe anything but evil existed, Victim Services helped restore my faith in the good in the world. Thanks so much!”

- Victim Compensation Unit Survey Comment



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH

CHAMBERS OF
PATRICK L. CARROLL III
CHIEF COURT ADMINISTRATOR

231 CAPITOL AVENUE
HARTFORD, CT 06106

January 15, 2016

Senator Eric D. Coleman, Co-Chair
Representative William Tong, Co-Chair
Members of the Judiciary Committee

It is my pleasure to present this report outlining the activities of the Office of Victim Services for the biennium October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2015. This document is submitted in compliance with Connecticut General Statutes § 54-203 (b) (18).

I hope that you find this report helpful. Please let me know if I can provide you with any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Patrick L. Carroll III".

Patrick L. Carroll III, Judge
Chief Court Administrator

PLC:sw

c: Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers
Hon. Elliot N. Solomon, Deputy Chief Court Administrator
Joseph D. D'Alesio, Executive Director, Superior Court Operations
Linda J. Cimino, Director, Office of Victim Services

Table of Contents

Office of Victim Services	2
12/14 Support Services	3
Victim Compensation Unit	5
Fiscal Services Unit	9
Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Program	13
Training and Outreach Unit	16
Victim Services Unit	19
Quality Assurance Unit	23
Legislative Updates	26
Committees	27
Advisory Council for Victims of Crime	28

Office of Victim Services

Focusing on a brighter future

The Office of Victim Services (OVS) has a long and proud history of providing supportive services, victim advocacy, financial assistance, and information to crime victims from the scene of the crime until services are no longer required.

Legislatively enacted by Public Act 78-261, OVS has progressed from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, whose sole purpose was to assist crime victims with the financial impact of crime, to a multi-faceted agency that also provides:

- victim advocacy;
- victim notification;
- training to criminal justice professionals;
- public outreach and training;
- sexual assault forensic examination services; and
- funding to community-based nonprofit agencies, who assist in meeting the myriad needs of Connecticut's crime victims.

Victim quote on the services received from the Victim Compensation Unit

“OVS [staff] has been caring, helpful, and professional to an extreme degree. ... OVS has helped to bring about pretty much the only thing that has gone well in more than two years since we were victimized. I am grateful for this, and I appreciate the care and concern for our personal situation that OVS as shown.”

OVS has an important role in a crime victim's journey through the criminal justice system as OVS is the one agency that can be involved with a crime victim throughout the entire process. OVS offers services directly and indirectly to crime victims while collaborating with other victim service agencies to provide seamless services.

Included in this biennial report are quotes from crime victims, survivors, and service partners who interacted with OVS staff, benefited from the services offered, or attended OVS trainings. Their words from surveys, letters, and thank you notes reflect the quality of the services provided and the value the services hold for crime victims.

Biennial Highlights

- In 2014, OVS joined other victim service providers to host an event recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Victims of Crime Act, a federal law that provides funding for victim related services and activities. More than 50 individuals consisting of victim service professionals, students, crime victims, and their families attended the event, held at the Hartford Public Library.
- OVS Director Linda J. Cimino was appointed by Governor Dannel P. Malloy to serve on the Victims' Rights and Enforcement Advisory Commission, charged with reviewing policies, services, and victims' rights in the state and to make recommendations for compliance and enforcement of crime victims' constitutional and statutory rights.
- OVS hired 16 staff members: two administrative assistants assigned to Central Office, two claims examiners, a victim services supervisor, and 11 victim services advocates. OVS expanded the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Program by adding the position of clinical coordinator.

12/14 Support Services

In respect of and to support the healing process of the victims, the families of the victims, and the Newtown community, the Office of Victim Services (OVS) refers to the tragedy that occurred on December 14, 2012, at the Sandy Hook Elementary School as 12/14.

During this biennium, OVS continued to respond to the emotional and financial needs of the victims, family members of the victims, first responders, and the Newtown community. This response included applying for federal grants to fund services, administering a financial assistance program for first responders, and providing administrative support to a Newtown recovery fund.

Grant Funding

OVS secured two grants from the U.S. Department of Justice under the Anti-Terrorism Emergency Assistance Program for reimbursement of support efforts and for the continuation of services.

The first grant, in the amount of \$1,445,350 reimbursed community-based organizations, the town of Newtown, various municipalities, and the State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection for the costs incurred in the provision of crisis intervention services, victim related law enforcement support, and the relocation of the Sandy Hook Elementary School students to a new school.

The second grant, in the amount of \$7,133,692 was provided to the Town of Newtown and 11 community-based organizations for services to surviving family members, other students enrolled in Newtown schools, Sandy Hook Elementary school employees, first responders, and Newtown residents.

First responder quote on the services received from the Sandy Hook Workers Assistance Program

"I don't know quite where to begin to say thank you to you and to all of those with whom you work to help those of us that served at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012.

I considered [the compensation] a gift from God supplied to me through you and all others involved in this program."

Biennial Highlights

- The Judicial Branch was awarded more than \$8.5 million in federal grant funding to reimburse various agencies that responded on 12/14 and to support the continuation of mental health and other services. During this biennium, 13,966 individuals received grant-funded services.
- The OVS administrative functions for a Newtown recovery fund transferred to the Newtown Recovery and Resiliency Team, which maintains a central repository of information on supportive services.
- The Sandy Hook Workers Assistance Program (Program) ended with more than \$272,000 being disbursed to applicants since its establishment on April 1, 2013. The Program assisted certain professionals who suffered a mental or emotional impairment as a result of their response or scheduled response on 12/14.
- OVS recommended to the General Assembly that the remaining Sandy Hook Workers Assistance Fund balance of \$115,000 be transferred to organizations that best fulfill the Program's purpose.

Sandy Hook Workers Assistance Program

The Sandy Hook Workers Assistance Program (Program), established by Special Act 13-1, statutorily ended on August 31, 2015.

The Program provided financial assistance to emergency responders, medical and mental health professionals, and Sandy Hook Elementary School employees who suffered a mental or emotional impairment as a result of their response or scheduled response on 12/14.

Applicants were required to submit applications to OVS no later than June 30, 2014, to receive financial help with unreimbursed:

- wages from their employment or volunteer service (not to exceed 52 weeks); and
- medical and/or mental health expenses.

During this biennium, 36 applications were received with 10 applications approved for payment and the remaining applications closed as no losses were submitted.

Sandy Hook Workers Assistance Fund

The Special Act also established the Sandy Hook Workers Assistance Fund (Fund) to pay the Program's benefits, administrative expenses, and operating costs.

From October 1, 2013, through August 31, 2015, \$170,343.93 was received by the Office of the State Treasurer, which was directed under the Special Act to accept gifts, donations, and grants from private and public sources.

During this biennium, OVS awarded \$201,614.90 in compensation to applicants with 82 percent of the funds reimbursing lost wages and 18 percent reimbursing medical/mental health expenses. The Judicial Branch has absorbed the Program's operating and administrative costs since its inception.

Immediate Needs/Collaborative Recovery Fund

Shortly after 12/14, the United Way of Western Connecticut (UWWC) and the Newtown Rotary Sandy Hook School Fund combined donations to create a short-term Immediate Needs Fund (INF).

The INF provided financial help with:

- basic household expenses and groceries for the families, school personnel, and first responders experiencing a decrease in income; and
- the costs associated with mental health care not covered by another financial source.

OVS joined the effort in February 2013 by establishing a dedicated telephone number and developing a process to receive requests for assistance on behalf of the UWWC.

Victim quote on the administrative support provided by OVS for the INF/CRF Fund

"I want to thank you for helping me navigate the reimbursement process. You laid everything out very clearly and always responded in a timely manner. You made a stressful task seem much more manageable."

In June 2014, the management of the INF transferred to the Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation, Inc., and the INF name changed to the Collaborative Recovery Fund (CRF).

OVS continued its support until August 1, 2014, when the administrative functions transferred to the Newtown Recovery and Resiliency Team, established to serve as the central point of contact for 12/14 support services.

During this biennium, OVS received and submitted 677 requests for mental health related financial assistance from 122 Newtown families with \$454,292.93 in mental health/medical expenses being paid by the INF/CRF.

Victim Compensation Unit

Focusing on a brighter future

Overview

The Victim Compensation Unit offers financial help to victims; family members of homicide, sexual assault, and domestic violence victims; non-relative child witnesses of domestic violence; and other eligible persons for certain unreimbursed expenses associated with violent crime.

Victim Compensation Program

The Victim Compensation Program may award victim compensation on eligible claims for unreimbursed crime-related expenses not covered by other financial sources. Eligible crime-related expenses include the costs for medical and mental health care, lost wages, funeral expenses, and crime scene cleanup.

Awards may not exceed \$15,000 for personal injury claims, \$25,000 for survivor benefits claims, and \$2,000 for mental health counseling for non-relative child witnesses of domestic violence. Victim compensation claims filed by dependents, relatives, and non-relative child witnesses are processed as part of the crime victim's claim.

Claimants who disagree with the determination issued by the Victim Compensation Program have a statutory right to request a review of the determination by a victim compensation commissioner.

The Office of Victim Services (OVS) has a statutory right to recover two-thirds of the compensation paid from monies a claimant receives as a direct result of the crime. If the court orders restitution to a claimant for expenses paid by the Victim Compensation Program, OVS is entitled to receive full reimbursement, unless the court orders differently.

Victim quote on the services received from the Victim Compensation Unit

“OVS [staff] has been caring, helpful, and professional to an extreme degree. They did everything they could to help me deal with unusual aspects of the case and they went out of their way to ensure that the financial opportunity was maximized for us. ... OVS has helped to bring about pretty much the only thing that has gone well in more than two years since we were victimized. I am very grateful for this, and I appreciate the care and concern for our personal situation that OVS has shown.”

Biennial Highlights

- Public Act 14-130 extends victim compensation to victims who received a physical injury in a motor vehicle incident in which the driver violated Section 14-224 (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes.
- An outreach component was developed to provide potential eligible victims and their family members with information on the Victim Compensation Program and other OVS services.
- Eligible services were expanded to include tutoring, summer camp, and personal trainer expenses and gym memberships that are recommended by a licensed medical or mental health provider.
- Several process improvements were initiated as a result of feedback received from victims and families requesting victim compensation, including the removal of the notarization requirement on a Victim Compensation Program document, providing a means for claimants to maintain documents related to their victim compensation application, and allowing claimants to fax and email applications.

Funding

OVS receives state and federal funding to compensate eligible persons for unreimbursed crime related expenses.

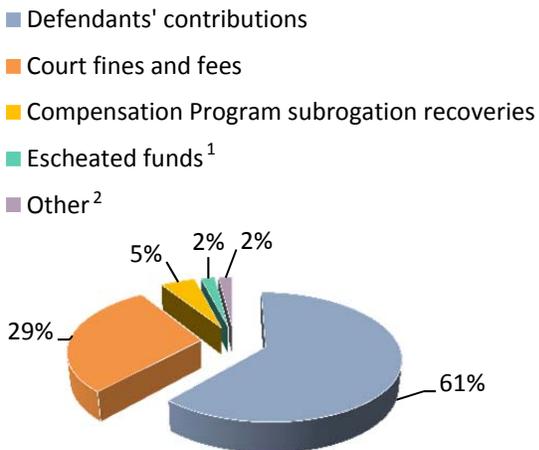
The Connecticut General Assembly allocates funds from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF). Deposits into the CICF are specified in the Connecticut General Statutes and include:

- defendants' contributions (Section 54-56h);
- court fines and fees (Sections 54-143, 15-140p, 53a-217e, and 54-56g);
- five percent of inmate work-release wages (Section 18-85);
- halfway house client wages (Section 18-101); and
- escheated funds collected pursuant to Section 53a-30 (Section 54-215(b)).

CICF Contributions

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015

Total Revenues: \$7,255,009



¹Escheated funds are restitution funds collected by the Court Support Services Division that have not been distributed within five years because the victim could not be located.

²Other category includes halfway house client wages, five percent of Department of Correction inmate work-release wages, Victim Compensation Program reimbursements from overpayments, private donations, and investment interest.

OVS also receives federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Compensation funds. Fiscal administration of these funds is managed by the Fiscal Services Unit.

The following table reflects the statistics as reported to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, in compliance with the VOCA requirements for this biennium.

VOCA State Performance Report

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015

Number of applications received	2,164
Number of applications approved ¹	1,865
Number of applications not eligible ¹	262

¹Decisions on applications may occur in a year different than received.

Payments by Crime Type

Homicide	\$2,522,049
Assault	2,010,738
Child Abuse	363,275
Sexual Assault	278,060
DWI/DUI	72,500
Other vehicular crimes	134,348
Arson	16,000
Robbery with injury	668
Risk of injury	362
Total	\$5,398,000

Expenses Paid

Economic Support (lost wages and loss of support)	\$2,334,767
Medical/dental	1,724,613
Funeral/burial	732,619
Mental health	543,213
Other (attorney fees, crime scene cleanup, and travel expenses)	62,788
Total	\$5,398,000

Outreach Activities Initiative

In November 2014, the Victim Compensation Unit management established an outreach component.

A staff member was assigned the task of providing potential eligible victims, family members, and service providers with a victim compensation application and information on the Victim Compensation Program and other OVS services.

During this biennium, 246 victim compensation applications were mailed, faxed, or emailed with 83 completed applications returned.

Victim Compensation Program Activity

Compensation Awarded

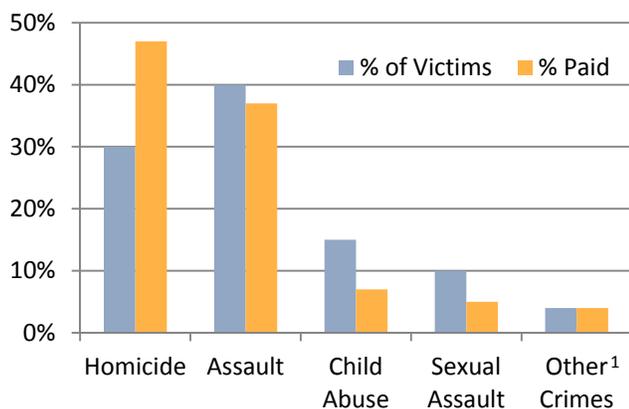
During this biennium, \$5,398,000 in victim compensation was awarded on 1,710 claims for expenses associated with medical and mental health care, lost wages for personal injury victims, funeral and burial expenses, loss of support, and lost wages to attend court proceedings in homicide cases. Payments on applications may occur in a year different than the year the application was received.

Victims and Payments by Crime Type

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015

Total Victims: 1,710

Total Paid: \$5,398,000



¹Other crimes include DWI/DUI, other vehicular crimes, and robbery with injury.

Victim quote on the services received from the Victim Compensation Unit

“Thank you for everything you have done to help me. The medical bills I could not afford and monthly collection notices, which were horrible reminders of an awful event in my life; and due to your hard work on my case and dedication to your job, you were able to make these go away for me. I am now able to finally close the door to that chapter in my life.

Thank you for affecting my life in such a positive and helpful manner. This was the toughest year of my life and I can move on now.”

Filing-time Requirement

Section 54-211 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires a person seeking victim compensation to file a victim compensation application within two years from the date of the personal injury or death. This section also allows OVS to grant a waiver if:

- the claimant was a minor at the time of the criminal incident; or
- the physical, emotional, or psychological injuries resulting from the crime prevented the claimant from filing.

During this biennium, 205 requests to waive the two-year filing requirement were received with 195 requests granted. Decisions on two-year waiver requests may occur in a year different than the year the request was received.

Compromised Claims

The Victim Compensation Program advocates on behalf of claimants approved for victim compensation by negotiating with medical providers to reduce the amount owed and to accept the amount to be paid by the Victim Compensation Program as payment in full.

During this biennium, \$263,985 in expenses was successfully compromised on behalf of claimants.

Process Improvement Initiatives

During this biennium, the Victim Compensation Unit management initiated several process improvements as a result of feedback received from victims:

- the notarization requirement on the Claim of Award form was removed;
- claimants are provided with a pocket file folder to store documents related to their victim compensation application; and
- claimants may fax and email victim compensation applications, Review Requests, and Claim of Award forms. Prior to this change, original signatures were required on these forms.

Recovery Program

Section 54-212 of the Connecticut General Statutes allows OVS to have a lien, not to exceed two-thirds of the amount paid by OVS, if a claimant brings an action against the person or persons responsible for such injury or death or if the claimant recovers monies from his or her own collateral sources.

During this biennium, \$471,979.50 was collected on 298 files, which is a 39 percent increase from the 2011-2013 biennium.

This increase may be attributed to the passing of Public Act 12-133, which extended OVS's rights to recover two-thirds of the compensation awarded from a settlement a claimant receives from his or own collateral sources.

Review of Determination

Section 54-205 (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes grants claimants the right to request a review of the determination made by the Victim Compensation Program on their claim for victim compensation. Claimants must file the review request within 30 days from the date the determination was mailed.

Victim Compensation Commissioners

The governor appoints five Victim Compensation Commissioners (VCC) to a four-year term to hear review requests on Victim Compensation Program

determinations and to issue a new determination based on such review.

The following attorneys served as VCCs during this biennium:

- Atty. Joseph W. Bibisi, chief victim compensation commissioner (appointed by the Chief Court Administrator);
- Atty. Seth D. Feigenbaum;
- Atty. Lisa K. MacDonald; and
- Atty. Louis A. Spadaccini.

In memory of Commissioner Karen Fox

Former Victim Compensation Commissioner Karen Fox passed away on April 11, 2015.

Commissioner Fox served as a Victim Compensation Commissioner from October 2008 through May 2013.

OVS staff would like to acknowledge the exemplary, compassionate service Commissioner Fox provided to claimants as they exercised their right to have a review of the Victim Compensation Program determination.

During this biennium, VCCs heard 36 review requests and issued 38 decisions. Twenty-one of those decisions affirmed the determination made by the Victim Compensation Program, while 17 determinations were reversed by the VCCs. Review determinations may occur in a year different than the year received.

The majority of the reversed determinations were related to additional information being provided during hearings that supported victims sufficiently cooperated with law enforcement officials as required by law.

There was a 55 percent decrease in the number of review requests received than in the last biennium. This decrease may be attributed to improved communications between claims examiners and claimants on why a claim or an expense was found not eligible for victim compensation.

Fiscal Services Unit

Focusing on a brighter future

Overview

The Office of Victim Services (OVS) receives state and federal funding for the purpose of contracting with nonprofit and public organizations to provide information and services to victims of violent crimes and their families. Through the funding of these organizations, crime victims and their family members receive criminal justice support and advocacy, crisis counseling, therapy, group treatment and support, personal advocacy, referrals, and assistance with filing victim compensation applications.

The Fiscal Services Unit is responsible for ensuring that all grant and program specific funds distributed by OVS are expended in accordance with the grantors' guidelines, state guidelines, Judicial Branch regulations, and OVS policies and procedures, so that effective services to crime victims are provided.

Funding

OVS's primary source of federal funding is the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) which provides funds for the Victim Assistance Program, the Victim Compensation Program, and the Anti-Terrorism Emergency Assistance Program.

In addition to the federal VOCA funds, OVS receives state funding to support programs such as victim advocacy services in domestic violence dockets and sex offender supervision units, counseling for family members of homicide victims, and shelter services to victims of human trafficking.

Victim quote on the services received from an OVS Subcontracted Agency

"I have been so isolated for years with both physical and emotional abuse; I never believed there was a way out, so I stayed. After the arrest, I knew it was time to seek counseling for myself. It was very scary to call the hotline and admit that I was living with an abuser ... That first phone call was the beginning of a new life for both my son and me."

Biennial Highlights

- During the second year of this biennium, OVS received state funding of \$150,000 per year to develop and maintain a statewide Spanish hotline for victims of domestic violence. Funding was awarded to the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence for this project.
- On September 1, 2015, OVS was awarded a grant of \$22,025,182 for the 2015 Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) VOCA Victim Assistance Grant. This represents an increase of \$16.7 million over the 2014 FFY award.
- OVS subcontracted agencies received funding to provide 20 training sessions to service providers and the public on the issue of human trafficking crimes and the effects on its victims. More than 430 individuals attended the trainings.
- OVS processed payments for 3,484 forensic examinations, interviews, and evidence collections for 707 adult and 2,777 child victims of sexual assault.
- OVS provided funding for three statewide conferences on crime victim related issues.

Summary of OVS Revenues by Funding Source

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2015

Federal Awards	
Anti-Terrorism Emergency Assistance Program	\$8,579,042
Victims of Crime Act Victim Assistance	10,310,369
Victims of Crime Act Victim Compensation	2,229,000
Total Federal Funds Awarded	\$21,118,411
State Funds	
Alternative Incarceration Program	1,297,750
Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund	
Victim Compensation	4,050,000
Contracted Services	2,111,019
Forensic Evidence Collection	2,069,120
Forensic Interview Reimbursement	239,000
Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners	574,800
Victim Assistance Contracted Services	\$1,317,487
Victim Security Account	18,800
Total State Funds Awarded	\$11,677,976
Total Funding for OVS Funded Programs	\$32,796,387

Victim Assistance Program

The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance Program provides funding to community-based victim service agencies to provide services at no cost to crime victims and includes:

- direct services to crime victims;
- improving victim access to services; and
- increasing victim’s knowledge of the criminal justice system.

During this biennium, OVS issued contracts under the Victim Assistance Program totaling \$16,436,806 to 43 nonprofit victim services agencies, who provided services to 80,628 crime victims.

These funded agencies are located in each of Connecticut’s eight counties. The cities of Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Stamford, and Waterbury have multiple programs that provide a variety of services to crime victims.

Types of Services Supported by Grant Funds

During this biennium, VOCA funds were used by subcontracting agencies to provide crime victims with a variety of services.

The largest percentage of awarded funds were used for advocacy based programs; however, OVS provided funding for therapy programs for adults

and children, on-scene crisis response for child victims of crime, and translation and interpreting services for non-English speaking crime victims.

Advocacy programs provided services to victims in courts, shelters, specific towns and neighborhoods, and on a statewide basis using regional offices. These programs provided victims with crisis counseling, safety planning, assistance with basic needs, assistance with filing victim compensation applications, information and referral to other social service agencies, assistance in court, and translation and interpreting services.

OVS also awarded funding to agencies that provided free therapy services to child and adult victims of crime. These services included the initial psychiatric evaluation, individual and group therapy sessions, follow-up, referral to other services, and assistance with completing applications for victim compensation. Most of the programs offered short-term therapy, and if the victim was eligible for victim compensation, he or she could receive additional therapy to be reimbursed or paid for by the Victim Compensation Program.

Victim quote on VOCA Funding

“I never would have spoken up for myself if it hadn’t been for VOCA. ...[N]ow I’m thinking about what I need and how I feel ... my scars are less visible and I’m stronger.”

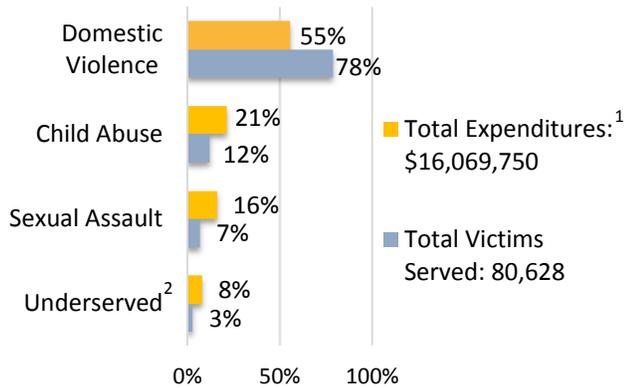
Training on Human Trafficking Crimes

OVS funded programs provided training to service providers and the public on the types of human trafficking crimes, the effect on victims, and how to access services.

During this biennium, OVS subcontracted agencies conducted 20 training sessions that were attended by 432 individuals.

Grant Funded Priority Categories

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2015



¹Total expenditures reflect total project expenditures of grant funds and subcontracting agency matching funds. Unexpended grant funds are reallocated in subsequent years for future victim service contracts.

²Underserved represents victims of various crimes including assault, robbery, hate and bias crimes, adults molested as children, intoxicated driving, elder abuse, family members of homicide victims, abuse of vulnerable adults, gang-related crimes, stalking, federal crimes, economic exploitation, and fraud.

Victim quote on the services received from an OVS Subcontracted Agency

"I see that there are good people in the world, people who are there to help; it makes me hopeful."

Forensic Sex Evidence Exams Account

The Fiscal Services Unit is responsible for processing payments for the costs incurred, not to exceed \$900 per case, by hospitals for the examination and evidence collection of adult and child victims of sexual assault, and for the costs incurred, not to exceed \$250 per interview, by providers or examiners working in conjunction with Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) or Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) for the forensic interviews of child victims of sexual abuse.

During this biennium, hospitals were reimbursed \$1,879,092 for forensic examination and collection services provided to 707 adult victims and 1,849 child victims of sexual assault. Providers working in conjunction with MDTs and CACs were reimbursed

\$235,250 for forensic interviews of 928 child victims of sexual abuse.

Anti-Terrorism Emergency Assistance Program

The Anti-Terrorism Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP) provides funding for services and assistance to victims and other individuals impacted by terrorism and mass violence crimes.

During this biennium, OVS was awarded two AEAP grants totaling \$8.5 million for services to individuals affected by the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. See 12/14 Support Services page 3 for description of funding.

VOCA Victim Compensation Program

The VOCA Victim Compensation Program supplements state funding for reimbursement to crime victims and other eligible persons for crime related expenses not covered by collateral sources. See Victim Compensation Unit page 6 for description of funding.

Subcontractor Monitoring

To ensure that grant funds are expended in accordance with federal, state, and Judicial Branch regulations, as well as OVS policies and procedures, the Fiscal Services Unit provides quarterly training sessions and conducts on-site subcontractor monitoring.

The quarterly trainings and site visits are designed to ensure that the funded programs operate in accordance with the contract and to provide technical assistance, if needed. During this biennium, eight quarterly training sessions were provided and 13 site visits were conducted.

Victim quote on the services received from an OVS Subcontracted Agency

"Words can't really describe how this group has helped me survive and get through my rape. The staff is caring, empathetic, knowledgeable and easy to speak with. Thank you for this tremendous community service."

Subcontractor List

(July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2015)

Anti-Terrorism Emergency Assistance Program

- ~Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut
- ~Clifford Beers Clinic
- ~Family and Childrens' Aid
- ~Kids in Crisis
- ~Newtown Sandy Hook Community Foundation
- ~Newtown Youth and Family Services
- ~Regional Hospice and Home Care of Western CT
- ~Resiliency Center of Newtown
- ~St. Rose of Lima School
- ~Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection
- ~Town of Newtown
- ~United Way of Western Connecticut
- ~Wellmore
- ~Western Connecticut Medical Group

Assistance to Survivors of Homicide Program

- ~Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Hartford
- ~Family Centers
- ~United Services

Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking

- ~International Institute
- ~Women and Families Center

Charlotte's Place - Child Abuse Program

- ~Charlotte-Hungerford Hospital Center for Youth and Families

Child Abuse Treatment Services

- ~Klingberg Family Centers

Child and Adolescent Crime Victims Assistance Program

- ~Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut

Child Sexual Abuse Clinic

- ~Yale University School of Medicine

Child Victim Services Project

- ~Wellmore

Domestic Violence Project

- ~LifeBridge Community Services

Enhanced Services to Victims of Domestic Violence

- ~Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

EsperanzaCT - Domestic Violence Program

- ~Domestic Violence Crisis Center

Hartford Regional Child Abuse Support Services Program

- ~Saint Francis Hospital

Neighborhood Victim Advocacy Program

- ~Family Centered Services of Connecticut

Polish Victim Advocacy Program

- ~Human Resources Agency of New Britain

Project CATCH (Collaboration, Advocacy, and Treatment for Children)

- ~Clifford Beers Clinic

Rape Crisis Intervention Services

- ~Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, formerly Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services

Services to Victims of Family Violence Court-based Program

- ~Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Shelter Services to Victims of Trafficking in Persons

- ~Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Statewide Domestic Violence Spanish Hotline

- ~Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Victim Assistance Program

- ~Community Child Guidance Clinic of Manchester
- ~Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Connecticut Chapter
- ~The Hospital of Central Connecticut

Victim Representative Services for Statewide Supervision of Sex Offenders Unit

- ~Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, formerly Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services

Victim Support Service Program

- ~Survivors of Homicide

Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Program

Focusing on a brighter future

Overview

The Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Program provides compassionate, patient-centered sexual assault forensic examination services to sexual assault victims, 13 years or older, who request SAFE services at a participating health care facility within 120 hours of the assault.

The SAFE Program also provides specialized training and education to qualified health care providers to perform knowledgeable and skilled forensic examinations. These providers, known as sexual assault forensic examiners, are also trained on securing the evidence collected (chain of custody) and providing expert testimony during criminal proceedings.

The SAFE Program is named after the late Gail Burns-Smith, a dedicated community and national advocate for victims of sexual assault.

Victim quote on the services received from the SAFE Program

"I am just so grateful that the SAFE Program exists. Through all of the stress, they kept me calm and made sure I understood the tests. Although I refused some of the tests, they did not judge me or make me feel uncomfortable."

Biennial Highlights

- OVS participated in the 2013 revision of the Technical Guidelines for Health Care Response to Victims of Sexual Assault as a collaborative effort with the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, formerly the Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, and the Commission on the Standardization of the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations (Commission).
- In the fall of 2013, a training program was developed to train qualified health care providers to become sexual assault forensic examiners within the SAFE Program. This 40-hour training program is held twice a year.
- In 2013, SAFE Program management joined a collaboration of state coordinators from sexual assault forensic examination programs in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts to discuss common issues within the New England states. This continuing collaboration has allowed for a comparison of program models, recruitment, training, and other topics.
- In 2014, with approval from the Commission, and in collaboration with the Connecticut Forensic Science Laboratory, changes were made to the CT100 Sexual Assault Kit documentation as a result of SAFE Program chart reviews.
- Public Act 15-16 extended SAFE Program services to health care facilities operated by an institution of higher education. In August 2015, the University of Connecticut, Storrs Campus became a designated site for SAFE Program services.

Participating Health Care Facilities

The Judicial Branch has formal agreements with certain health care facilities in the Hartford, Middlesex, and Windham counties to serve as designated sites for SAFE Program services.

As a designated SAFE site, the health care facilities agree to:

- screen patients for eligibility for SAFE services;
- activate the SAFE Program on-call system for eligible patients;
- provide a private room for uninterrupted use by SAFEs to perform sexual assault forensic examinations and evidence collection;
- have accessible necessary equipment and supplies for sexual assault forensic examinations;
- maintain a locked refrigerator for the evidence collected;
- provide interpreter services for patients who are not proficient in English; and
- perform sexual assault forensic examinations and evidence collection when a SAFE is not available.

Public Act 15-16, An Act Concerning Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners at Institutions of Higher Education, extended SAFE Program services to health care facilities at an institution of higher education, which are licensed by the Department of Public Health as an infirmary and accredited by the Joint Commission or the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc.

In August 2015, the University of Connecticut (UConn), Storrs campus, entered into a two-year agreement with the Judicial Branch to serve as a SAFE designated site.

During this biennium, in addition to the UConn, Storrs campus, the following health care facilities served as SAFE designated sites:

- Hartford Hospital;
- Manchester Memorial Hospital;
- Middlesex Hospital;
- St Francis Hospital;

- The Hospital of Central Connecticut, New Britain; and
- Windham Hospital.

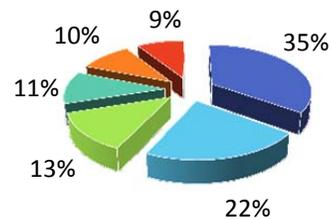
Beginning later in 2015, SAFE Program services will be available at MidState Medical Center in Meriden and at the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center in Hartford.

During this biennium, the SAFE Program responded to 375 cases at participating health care facilities.

Case Response by Health Care Facilities

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015

Cases: 375



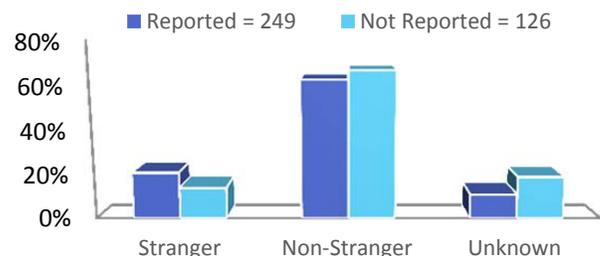
- Hartford Hospital
- Saint Francis Hospital
- The Hospital of Central Connecticut, New Britain
- Middlesex Hospital
- Manchester Memorial Hospital
- Windham Hospital

Sixty-six percent of the victims who received SAFE services reported the crime to law enforcement at the time of evidence collection.

Sexual Assaults Reported Versus Not Reported to Law Enforcement at Time of Collection

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015

Cases: 375



Collaborative Response

To minimize further trauma to sexual assault victims, the SAFE Program utilizes a coordinated, collaborative response to requests for SAFE Program services.

Responding SAFEs contact a sexual assault crisis advocate from the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (formerly Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services) for accompaniment to the SAFE designated site.

While SAFES conduct the medical-forensic examination and collection of evidence in a compassionate but objective manner, the sexual assault crisis advocate supports the victim's emotional and informational needs while providing a personal connection that preserves confidentiality.

Victim quote on services received from a Sexual Assault Crisis Advocate

"[The advocate] sat with me through the whole procedure, assisted the [SAFE] nurse, and did everything she could to make my uncomfortable time be more tolerable."

Training

OVS provides training for sexual assault forensic examiners, sexual assault crisis advocates, and health care providers for a consistency response to sexual assault victims.

Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Training Program

The Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Training Program curriculum was developed in collaboration with the International Association of Forensic Nurses, a national leader in forensic nursing, and approved by the Connecticut Nurses Association for 40 continuing nursing credits.

The training consists of various topics including the dynamics of sexual violence, victim response, advocacy, the collection and handling of evidence, providing court testimony, as well as regulatory

issues such as informed consent and confidentiality.

To assist SAFE students in meeting their clinical competency requirement, the Judicial Branch entered into an agreement with Praxis Clinical to provide standardized clinical instruction. Additionally in 2015, the University of Connecticut agreed to serve as the host site for a Clinical Training Day.

During this biennium, four trainings were offered, with 23 health care providers successfully completing all training and program requirements. These health care providers were awarded contracts with the Judicial Branch to serve as SAFEs in the SAFE Program.

Health Care Facility Trainings

Trainings were conducted at both participating and non-participating health care facilities during this biennium. These two-hour training sessions were provided to emergency department staff to increase competency of care to the sexual assault patient. In addition, to facilitate a more comprehensive response, sexual assault advocates provided instruction on their role and how to access advocacy services for victims.

Quality Assurance Meetings

SAFES are required to attend monthly quality assurance meetings, which provide continuing education, case review, program updates, and collegial discussion on current issues and practices.

During this biennium, topics included victim services, civil protection orders, regulatory issues, law enforcement and defense attorney perspectives, domestic violence, evidence collection review, sexually transmitted infection treatment, and emergency contraception.

Training and Outreach Unit

Focusing on a brighter future

Overview

The Training and Outreach Unit is responsible for training criminal justice system professionals, educating the community about and promoting awareness of the rights and concerns of Connecticut's crime victims, as well as information on Office of Victim Services (OVS) programs, distributing materials to support education and training activities, and staff development.

Training

The Training and Outreach Unit provides training on the topics of victims' rights, services, and victim responses to crime to three primary audiences:

- mandated audiences listed in Section 54-203 (b) (16) of the Connecticut General Statutes (judges; prosecutors; police; probation and parole personnel; bail commissioners; intake, assessment, and referral specialists; correction officers; and judicial marshals);
- the victim assistance community consisting of nonprofit agencies that provide services to crime victims; and
- OVS staff.

Police officer recruit quote on an OVS POST Training

"I was not expecting the Death Notification section of the class. Many people forget that death notifications are a fairly large part of policing. It was an eye-opener of the different phrases to use and the phrases that should not be said to the families suffering."

Mandated Training Activity

During this biennium, the Training and Outreach Unit provided 34 trainings to 843 professionals in the criminal justice system.

The majority of these trainings were provided to law enforcement, primarily through the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) Recruit Training Program. The information provided to this audience included the impact of crime on victims, law enforcement's role as a first responder to victims, and death notification.

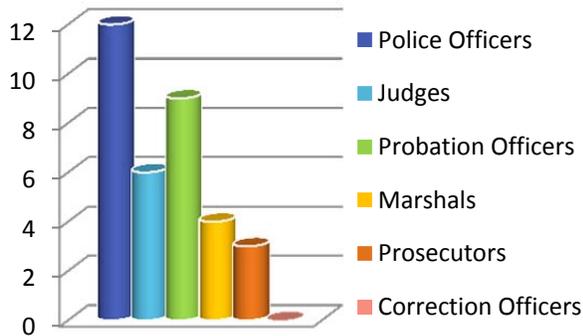
Biennial Highlights

- Public Act 12-133 directed OVS to include the Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division Intake, Assessment, and Referral (IAR) Specialists as a mandated training audience.
- The OVS Director presented on a new training topic, entitled *Culture of Crime Victims*, during the Judicial Branch's first Diversity Week, which provided Judicial Branch employees with an understanding of why culture matters. The intent of the OVS presentation was to provide Judicial Branch employees with information on how trauma affects crime victims regardless of their race, ethnicity, and economic background.

Mandated Training Activity

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015

Total Training Sessions: 34



During this biennium, the Training and Outreach Unit presented to a new training audience, the Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division, Intake, Assessment, and Referral (IAR) Specialists.

The Training and Outreach Unit developed curriculum to expand the knowledge base of IAR Specialists on effective ways to provide services and interact with crime victims. The curriculum included information on OVS services and programs, the rights of crime victims in Connecticut, and the physical, emotional, and financial impact of crime.

During this biennium, six trainings were held with 101 IAR Specialists attending.

Victim Assistance Community Training

As the state's lead agency established to provide services to crime victims, OVS has an important role in the delivery of training to victim assistance professionals across Connecticut.

Since the late 1990s, OVS has co-sponsored the Melanie Ilene Rieger Memorial Conference Against Violence, an annual statewide conference that educates the public, criminal justice professionals, and victim service providers on the needs of crime victims in Connecticut.

During both the 2014 and 2015 conferences, OVS staffed an informational table to provide attendees with information on OVS programs and services. During the 2015 conference, OVS

offered a presentation on civil protection orders, including eligibility, process, and a comparison to other orders of protection available to victims in Connecticut.

In November 2014, OVS and Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Connecticut Chapter, co-sponsored its sixth *Death Notification: Delivering the News With Compassion* workshop.

Seventy-five law enforcement personnel and other victim-related professionals learned techniques on delivering compassionate death notification and acquired information on managing stress and developing resilience.

Each quarter, the Training and Outreach Unit and Fiscal Services Unit provided half-day trainings to the staff of OVS subcontracting agencies. The trainings included information on OVS services, victim rights, victim notification, and testifying at a trial. During this biennium, 214 staff members from subcontracting agencies attended the eight OVS trainings.

OVS subcontracting staff quote on an OVS Subcontractor Training

"I thought this was an excellent training. The first training was very applicable to the work I do. I appreciated how questions were encouraged, answered kindly and helped further my understanding."

Criminal Court Professionals

A new training topic was introduced during this biennium, as a result of an invitation by the Judicial Branch, Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency, Diversity Day Subcommittee to present at the Judicial Branch's first annual Diversity Week.

The training, entitled *Culture of Crime Victims*, focused on the similarities of the psychological effects of trauma on crime victims regardless of their ethnicity, race, or economic background.

Two presentations were held during Diversity Week in October 2014 that were attended by 51 court employees. An additional training was provided by request in December 2014 to 20 court employees at the Bristol Geographical Area court.

Community Education Activity

The Training and Outreach Unit offers a community education program designed to increase victim service providers and the public’s awareness of the rights and services available to crime victims.

Presentations

During this biennium, community education activities included 132 presentations on OVS services and victim-related topics to 2,431 individuals from various community groups, such as sexual assault crisis centers, domestic violence programs, and senior centers, as well as high school and college students.

Resource Tables

The Training and Outreach Unit staffed resource tables at various venues to distribute OVS materials and raise awareness about OVS services. During this biennium, OVS provided information at 16 resource tables at professional conferences, health fairs, college fairs, and other community events.

OVS subcontracting staff quote on an OVS Training

“Prior to tonight I had no idea of what a rape kit was. Now I feel prepared to advocate for one in a victim’s best interests. Thank you for your time and experience!!”

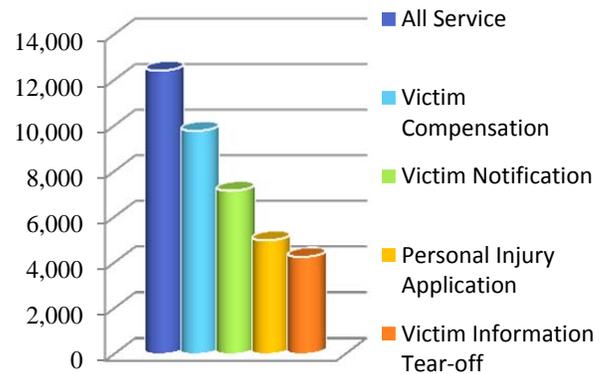
Distribution of OVS Materials

The Training and Outreach Unit collaborated with the Judicial Branch, Accreditation and Auditing Unit; Court Service Center staff; and Public Information Desk staff to establish a process to monitor and track OVS brochures and forms at courthouses throughout the state to ensure the most current version of OVS materials are accessible to the public.

Top 5 OVS Materials Requested

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015

Number of materials: 38,606



During this biennium, more than 38,000 copies of OVS materials were distributed to courthouses, law libraries, community-based programs, hospitals, and other service providers throughout the state.

Staff Development

The Training and Outreach Unit coordinates staff activities and trainings that meet OVS goals and values and develops core competencies and specialized work-related knowledge.

Staff Training

During this biennium, OVS staff attended 39 Judicial Branch and 28 external trainings that included courses on leadership skill building, Limited English Proficiency, cultural competence, computer-based programs, domestic violence, sex offender management, elder abuse, and child sexual abuse.

Staff Recognition

The Training and Outreach Unit facilitates the Staff Recognition Committee, which organizes two annual staff appreciation days that promote staff engagement, personal development, teamwork, and staff recognition.

During these events, presentations on the health benefits of laughter and self-care were provided. In addition, staff recognition awards were presented to seven OVS staff for their dedication, exceptional service, and efforts to contribute to the OVS mission.

Victim Services Unit

Focusing on a brighter future

Overview

The Victim Services Unit is responsible for assisting crime victims throughout the criminal justice process by informing crime victims of their rights and providing support and information to assist them in exercising those rights, referrals to community services, and victim notification.

Victim Services Advocacy Program

The Victim Services Unit has victim services advocates (VSAs) assigned to criminal courthouses throughout the state, the Board of Pardons and Paroles, and to the Office of Victim Services (OVS) Helpline to respond to the needs and the expanding rights of crime victims within the criminal justice system.

Court-based Victim Services Advocates

As crime victims often are not familiar with the workings of the criminal justice system, OVS VSAs are uniquely positioned to assist crime victims through all of the stages of the criminal justice process. VSAs serve as a liaison with court personnel and ensure that crime victims understand their rights at each proceeding, as well as accompany crime victims to court and assist with the delivery of victim impact statements.

Victim quote on services received from the Victim Services Advocacy Program

“Our family could not have survived the court system without the Victim Services program. The information and guidance we have received for the past three years has been phenomenal. We are very fortunate to have an awesome victim advocate now and going forward.”

Biennial Highlights

- Public Act 14-217, An Act Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015, extended civil protection orders to victims of sexual abuse, sexual assault, or stalking who do not qualify for relief under Section 46b-15 of the Connecticut General Statutes. In response to the Public Act, OVS hired and trained eight new VSAs to assist victims with the application process.
- The Connecticut Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification program was expanded to include notifications related to the custody status of inmates at Department of Correction facilities.
- In 2013 and 2014, four VSAs received the Mothers Against Drunk Driving victim assistance award for their dedication in providing quality services to victims of drunk driving.
- In 2014, a VSA received the Field Instructor of the Year award from the University of Saint Joseph College in recognition of the VSA’s outstanding support and guidance to a social work student.
- Since 2009, the Victim Services Unit has participated in the Judicial Branch Intern Program, which provides internships to graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in law school, paralegal studies, and other criminal justice fields. During this biennium, several court-based VSAs served as site supervisors to 16 interns.

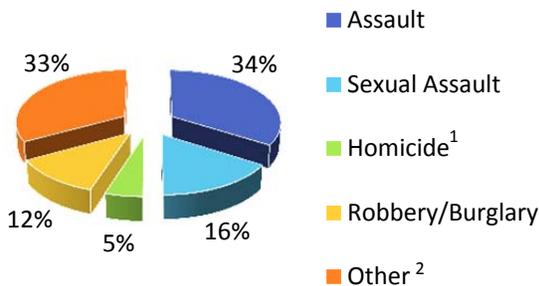
Court-based Advocacy Program

The duties and responsibilities of VSAs, outlined in Section 54-220 of the Connecticut General Statutes, are to:

- provide initial screening of each personal injury case;
- assist victims in the preparation of victim impact statements to be placed in court files;
- notify victims of their rights and request that each victim attest to the fact of such notification of rights;
- provide information and advice to victims in order to assist victims in exercising their rights throughout the criminal justice process;
- direct victims to public and private agencies for services;
- coordinate victim compensation applications to OVS; and
- assist victims in the processing of requesting restitution.

Court-based VSAs Services to Victims/Families by Type of Victimization

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015
Number of new victims: 11,517



¹Includes homicides with a motor vehicle.

²Other crimes may include arson, DUI personal injury, harassment, hate and bias crimes, identity theft, kidnapping/unlawful restraint, other felonies and misdemeanors, risk of injury, reckless endangerment, and stalking/threatening.

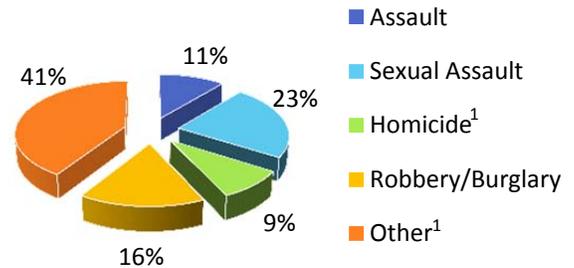
Board of Pardons and Paroles Advocacy Program

The Victim Services Unit assigns two VSAs to the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BOPP), as directed under Section 54-220a of the Connecticut General Statutes, to assist crime victims appearing at BOPP hearings or submitting victim impact statements.

The VSAs assigned to the BOPP also provide victims with information on the parole and pardon process and referrals to social service agencies.

BOPP VSAs Services to Victims/Families by Type of Victimization

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015
Number of new victims: 1,003



¹See Court-based VSAs Services to Victims/Families by Type of Victimization chart for the explanation on the homicide and other categories.

Civil Protection Order Advocacy

In response to Public Act 14-217, which extended civil protection orders to victims of stalking and non-familial/non-household sexual assault and sexual abuse, eight VSAs were hired and four existing VSAs were assigned to 12 courthouses throughout the state to provide services.

OVS VSAs received extensive training on the process of applying for a civil protection order to assist victims with filing an application and to provide information and support during the process.

The Civil Protection Order Advocacy Program launched in January 2015 with 1,065 applicants receiving services during this biennium.

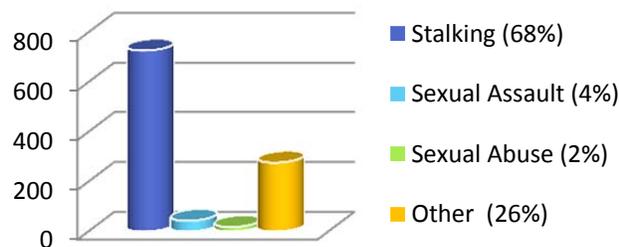
Victim quote on services received from the Victim Services Advocacy Program

“I just want you to know how grateful I am for your continued support during this truly awful time. ... I couldn’t have gotten through this experience without you.”

Civil Protection Order Advocacy Services by Type of Victimization

January 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015

Number of new victims: 1,065



Helpline

Two VSAs are assigned to the toll-free Helpline (800-822-8428) that provides callers with information on OVS and community-based programs and services, victim rights, and victim notification. Victims may also contact OVS through the OVS general email account at OVS@jud.ct.gov.

During this biennium, Helpline VSAs received 8,581 calls and emails from victims of crime seeking assistance and information.

Helpline	Phone	Email
Victims	6,420	242
Service providers/public	1,564	355
Total	7,984	597

The Helpline VSAs also attend Sentence Review hearings the fourth Tuesday of every month, except during the months of July, August, and December, to provide support, information, and assistance to crime victims and their family members.

Victim Notification

The Victim Services Unit is responsible for administering three victim notification programs that inform crime victims and other registrants on orders of protection, changes to the court and custody status of offenders in the criminal justice system and the Department of Correction (DOC).

These notification programs allow crime victims to exercise their constitutional rights to be informed

about, present at, and heard during criminal justice proceedings. These Programs also serve as a valuable safety tool by informing crime victims of an offender's release or possible release from custody or when an offender absconds from prison or fails to appear in court.

Victim quote on services received from the Victim Services Advocacy Program

"[The advocate] explained our rights very clearly and helped us exercise them. She and everyone at OVS was caring and concerned at a time of extreme emotional trauma."

Protection Order Registry Notification Program

The Protection Order Registry Notification program features automatic generation of notification letters to protected parties when protective orders terminate or five weeks prior to the expiration of restraining orders.

Protected parties receiving notification are directed to contact the OVS Helpline for information on obtaining or extending restraining orders and referrals to social service agencies.

During state fiscal years 2014 and 2015, 53,300 protective order notification letters were mailed to crime victims.

Post-conviction Notification Program

The Post-conviction Notification Program is a collaborative effort with the DOC to provide inmate status information to crime victims and other eligible individuals who have registered for notification.

Crime victims, parents/guardians and relatives of crime victims, inmate family members, and state's attorneys may register for notification by submitting a confidential request for notification form.

Registrants are notified when an inmate has made an application to the:

- BOPP;
- DOC for release other than furlough;
- Sentencing court or judge for a reduction in sentence;
- Sentence Review Division for a review of sentence;
- Sentencing court for exemption from the sex offender requirements of Section 54-251 of the Connecticut General Statutes; and
- Sentencing court for an order restricting the dissemination of sex offender registration.

Crime victims who receive notification are informed that they can make a statement to the BOPP, DOC, or court regarding the impact the crime has had on them and any other input the crime victim would like to be considered regarding the inmate’s request.

During state fiscal years 2014 and 2015, there were 993 new requests for notification and more than 5,000 post-conviction notification letters mailed to registrants.

Registrants may also call the OVS Helpline for more information about the inmate’s request, how to write and deliver a victim impact statement, and referrals to social services agencies.

Helpline VSAs assisted more than 500 registrants during July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2015.

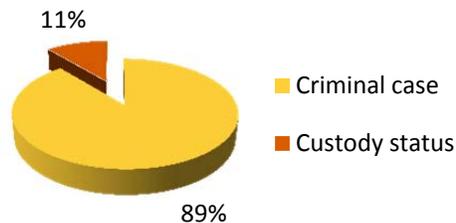
Connecticut Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification

The Connecticut Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification program (CT SAVIN) provides confidential telephone and email notifications in English, Spanish, Polish, and Portuguese on certain criminal justice events.

Crime victims and the public may register for notification by contacting the Helpline, an OVS VSA, community based advocates, the CT SAVIN dedicated telephone number (877-846-3428) or register online at the CT SAVIN Web page accessed from www.jud.ct.gov/crimevictim/.

In October 2013, CT SAVIN was expanded to include notifications related to the custody status of inmates held at a DOC facility. During this biennium, more than 3,000 individuals registered for inmate custody status notification, while more than 26,000 notification requests were for criminal case events.

CT SAVIN New Registrations
October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015
Total Registrations: 29,801



Notification of criminal case events include:

- upcoming court hearings;
- change in bail;
- case transfers;
- failure to appear;
- plea hearings;
- the issuance, modification, or termination of an order of protection;
- case disposition;
- probation violation and violation decisions;
- sentence reduction decision; and
- appeal filed and appeal decision.

Notification of custody status events include:

- scheduled release or release from prison, parole, and to the community;
- escaped from and returned to prison; and
- transfer to a prison in another state.

CT SAVIN generated 255,721 notifications during this biennium, with the majority of notifications being provided by email on court-related events.

CT SAVIN Notifications		
<i>October 1, 2013 - September 30, 2015</i>		
<i>Total Notifications: 255,721</i>		
Events	Phone	Email
Criminal case	39,542	213,853
Custody status	416	1,910
Total	39,958	215,763

Quality Assurance Unit

Focusing on a brighter future

Overview

The Quality Assurance Unit is responsible for assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of Office of Victim Services (OVS) programs and services, to make recommendations to improve service delivery, to develop and monitor tools used by management that assesses program activity, and to ensure that internal and external communications are written in plain and supportive language.

Quality Assurance

OVS strives to provide compassionate, victim-centered services to crime victims and their family members. To ensure that OVS is providing the best possible services, the Quality Assurance Unit:

- assists in the development of policies and procedures, program standards, and performs audits;
- develops computer-based tools for program and service assessment and recommends modifications to existing computer applications that track data and information;
- develops written materials for crime victims and the public; and
- assesses feedback from crime victims, their family members, and other individuals who apply for victim compensation.

OVS Vision Statement

Connecticut will be a state where all victims of crime are treated with respect and fairness and will receive comprehensive, coordinated, and victim-centered services.

Biennial Highlights

- The Quality Assurance Unit assisted the Victim Compensation Unit management in obtaining a unique email address for the Victim Compensation Program to allow staff to communicate electronically with victims seeking victim compensation. The email address OVSCompensation@jud.ct.gov launched in April 2015.
- Quality Assurance Unit staff hosted a workshop entitled *Communicating Effectively: Making Compensation Documents More Victim-Friendly* during the 2015 VOCA National Training Conference in Washington, D.C. More than 50 victim service professionals from across the country attended the workshop, which provided tips and tools on how to fashion better communications that work for both victims and victim compensation programs.
- Quality Assurance Unit staff facilitated a plain language workshop over a four-month period on developing victim compensation program materials in plain language. The workshop, hosted by the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), Training and Technical Assistance Center, was held by teleconferencing and attended by victim compensation program administrators from the states of Arizona, Kentucky, Nebraska, New Hampshire, and Oregon.
- OVS was highlighted in an OVC *Bulletin* edition on its initiative to have OVS printed and electronic materials written in plain language.
- New public service announcements were released to 45 radio stations across Connecticut on sexual assault forensic examination services, victim rights, and civil protection orders.

Information Technology Activities

The Quality Assurance Unit values the importance of converting raw data into meaningful information that assesses services to ensure the needs of crime victims are being met as effectively and efficiently as possible.

During this biennium, the Quality Assurance Unit assessed the most cost and functionality efficient method for participating health care facilities to activate the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Program. Based on that assessment, the Quality Assurance Unit recommended that the current practice of utilizing a telephone on-call based system for activation and data tracking be converted to a Web-based application.

The Quality Assurance Unit met with the OVS Director, SAFE Program management, and Information Technology Division (ITD) staff to conduct a requirements analysis to identify the needs and conditions of the application. The requirements analysis was documented and submitted to ITD, Applications Development for building of the application, which is expected to launch in the next biennium.

Internal and External Communications

Newsletters

The Quality Assurance Unit assists in fostering a team environment and embraces strong internal communications so that OVS staff and Judicial Branch staff have access to current information on OVS activities and policies and programmatic changes.

To support this internal dialogue, the Quality Assurance Unit emails staff a quarterly newsletter on OVS activities and a bi-annual OVS newsletter for Judicial Branch employees, which is posted on the Judicial Branch private network.

OVS Materials

The Quality Assurance Unit develops publications, forms, public service announcements (PSAs), and other electronic and printed materials that inform victims, the victim assistance community, and the public about the rights of

crime victims and the services available to them. During this biennium, the Quality Assurance Unit reviewed and revised 30 publications and forms with several being translated in Spanish, Polish, and Portuguese.

A significant revision included changing the layout of the Information and Support Services tear-off sheet pad so that the English version is printed on one side and the Spanish, Polish, or Portuguese translation is printed on the other side. This change will reduce the number of pads a police officer carries, as the tear-off-sheet is provided to victims at the crime scene.

Crime Victims Guide to the Criminal Court

During this biennium, the Quality Assurance Unit led a committee tasked with developing a new publication that provides information on the criminal justice system and victim rights to empower crime victims and their families with knowledge and to help them feel less intimidated and vulnerable as they navigate the various criminal justice processes and departments.

Subject experts, such as members from the victim services and mental health fields and various state agencies that provide services to victims, as well as crime victims, who provided an invaluable personal perspective, reviewed the publication, entitled the *Crime Victims Guide to the Criminal Court*.

During the next biennium, judges, state's attorneys, defense attorneys, and police officers will be invited to review the publication prior to printing.

Public Service Announcements

To promote OVS programs and services, the Quality Assurance Unit submits PSAs quarterly to the Judicial Branch, External Affairs Division for submission to radio stations across Connecticut.

During this biennium, three new PSAs were developed with a total of 22 PSAs being released to 30 English and 15 Spanish radio stations.

The new PSAs provided information on:

- The OVS SAFE Program and how to access services;
- civil protection orders, including eligibility requirements and the availability of OVS VSAs to assist with the application process; and
- the constitutional rights of victims, including the right to restitution, to be heard, to be informed, and to be reasonably protected from the accused.

Plain Language

The Quality Assurance Unit was invited to facilitate a plain language workshop for state victim compensation programs on behalf of the federal government’s Office for Victims of Crime, Training and Technical Assistance Center.

During this biennium, a series of workshops were held over a four-month period and attended by staff from victim compensation programs in the states of Arizona, Kentucky, Nebraska, New Hampshire, and Oregon.

Through OVS’s leadership, the workgroup developed a victim compensation application, brochure, and several letters written in plain language with general information so that the templates could be used by staff from state victim compensation programs, who did not participate in the workgroup.

Poster Development

Human Trafficking

Public Act 13-166, An Act Concerning Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons required the Office of the Chief Court Administrator to develop a notice regarding services for human trafficking victims to be posted in truck stops and certain establishments serving alcohol. The Chief Court Administrator assigned the development and distribution of the human trafficking poster to OVS.

In the development of the poster, research was conducted on which nationalities were most affected by human trafficking in Connecticut. Based on this research, the text on the poster was



translated in Chinese Cantonese, Chinese Mandarin, English, Korean, Laotian, Polish, Portuguese, and Spanish.

The poster directs human trafficking victims and others with knowledge of human trafficking situations to call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, a federal anti-trafficking toll-free hotline.

With the assistance of the Training and Outreach Unit, the poster was distributed to seven truck stops and 143 on-premise liquor establishments throughout Connecticut with the direction to display the poster in plain view for the public.

Victim Compensation Program

During this biennium, the Quality Assurance Unit led a committee on the development of a new Victim Compensation Program poster to be distributed to acute care hospitals, children hospitals, walk-in emergency clinics, colleges, universities, libraries, police departments, victim service providers, and courthouses throughout the state.



Victim Feedback

Since 2002, OVS has been measuring different aspects of a claimant’s experience with the Victim Compensation Program by surveying the individuals who request victim compensation.

During this biennium, the Quality Assurance Unit mailed 1,810 surveys to claimants with 383 completed surveys being returned, representing a 21 percent return rate.

The combined overall satisfaction reflected that 88 percent of claimants surveyed were satisfied with the services received by the Victim Compensation Program while 95 percent agreed that their claims examiner was courteous and professional.

Legislative Updates

The following Public Acts, enacted during this biennium, enhanced the Office of Victim Services (OVS) services to crime victims and/or amended Chapter 968 Victim Services of the Connecticut General Statutes, which governs the work of OVS.

Public Act 13-166, An Act Concerning Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons required the Office of the Chief Court Administrator to develop a notice regarding services for human trafficking victims to be posted in truck stops and certain establishments serving alcohol with the development and distribution of the poster assigned to OVS. The Act also directed the remaining proceeds from auctions of forfeited property to be deposited in the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund instead of the General Fund and required OVS to analyze compensation and restitution services to victims of sexual exploitation and human trafficking, to recommend legislation to enhance compensation and services, and to report its findings to the Judiciary Committee.

Public Act 14-110, An Act Concerning Applications to the Pretrial Alcohol Education Program requires defendants to notify victims, who sustained a serious physical injury, of their application to the Pretrial Alcohol Education Program and gives victims the opportunity to be heard on such application.

Public Act 14-130, An Act Revising Motor Vehicle Laws extends victim compensation to victims who sustained a physical injury in a motor vehicle incident in which the driver violated Section 14-224 (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Public Act 14-217, An Act Implementing Provisions of the State Budget for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015 created civil protection orders for victims of sexual abuse, sexual assault, or stalking who do not qualify for relief under Section 46b-15 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Public Act 15-16, An Act Concerning Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners at Institutions of Higher Education extended SAFE Program services to accredited health care facilities operated by an institution of higher education.

Committees

During this biennium, Office of Victim Services (OVS) staff members served on the following committees, councils, and multidisciplinary teams, whose specific purposes related to studying or addressing a particular issue or need of crime victims in Connecticut.

Access to Facilities Implementation Committee: is responsible for the implementation of the recommendations of the Access to Facilities Committee, which is responsible for identifying barriers that impede entry to and movement around Judicial Branch facilities. Program Manager James Morgan, member.

Commission on the Standardization of the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations: is responsible for reviewing and revising the Technical Guidelines for Health Care Response to Victims of Sexual Assault, make recommendations to the Chief State's Attorney, and annually review the design of the sexual assault evidence collection kit. Director Linda J. Cimino, member.

Connecticut Interstate Compact for Juveniles State Council: is the rule-making authority of the Interstate Compact for Juveniles and has the statutory authority to enforce compliance between signatory states to promote the welfare protection of juveniles, victims, and the public by governing the states' supervision of juveniles and the return of runaways, absconders, escapees, and juveniles who have fled prosecution. Deputy Director Valina Carpenter, member.

Connecticut National Crime Victim Rights' Week Planning Committee: a temporary committee, consisting of various state and nonprofit victims service agencies, established for the purpose of hosting an event recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Victims of Crime Act. Court Planner II Tina Bouchard, member.

Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee: examines intimate partner homicides to identify systemic gaps and barriers to service to recommend coordinated community responses that will enhance the safety of victims and accountability of batterers. Director Linda J. Cimino, member.

Governor's Task Force on Justice for Abused Children: oversees the need for greater coordination of Multidisciplinary Team agencies involved in the investigation, intervention, and prosecution of child sexual abuse and serious physical abuse cases. Victim Services Supervisor Koren Butler-Kurth, member and co-chair of the Victim Services workgroup.

Multidisciplinary Team (MDT): coordinate the prompt investigation and prosecution of suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to reduce the trauma of any child victim and to ensure the protection and treatment of the child. Several OVS victim services advocates are members of their local MDTs.

Melanie Ilene Rieger Memorial Conference Committee: is responsible for planning and implementing the annual Melanie Ilene Rieger Memorial Conference Against Violence. Court Planner II Tina Bouchard, member.

Victims' Rights and Enforcement Advisory Commission: established by Governor Dannel P. Malloy, the Commission is charged with reviewing policies, services, and crime victims' rights in the state and to make recommendations for compliance and enforcement of constitutional and statutory rights of crime victims. Director Linda J. Cimino, governor appointed member.

Trafficking in Persons Council: is responsible for determining what services are available to human trafficking victims and how to best coordinate a response. Director Linda J. Cimino, member.

Advisory Council for Victims of Crime

Overview

The Advisory Council for Victims of Crime (Council), created under Section 54-203 (b) (11) of the Connecticut General Statutes is comprised of members from the judicial and executive branch agencies involved with victims of crime, the chief Victim Compensation Commissioner, and representatives from victim populations including:

- survivors of homicide victims;
- family violence victims;
- sexual assault victims;
- victims of drunk drivers;
- assault victims; and
- robbery victims.

Council members are appointed by the Chief Justice to a four-year term. The 2010-2014 term, co-chaired by the Honorable Patrick L. Carroll, III, and Attorney Steven Eppler-Epstein, concluded during this biennium with new members joining the Council for the 2014-2018 term. The Honorable John Danaher and Attorney Susan Omilian serve as co-chairs for the current term.

The Council is statutorily required to meet at least six times per year to discuss and make recommendations on Office of Victim Services (OVS) programs and services, legislative, and other matters that improve victim services, and to report its activities annually to the Chief Court Administrator.

During this biennium, the Council discussed:

- OVS programs and funding;
- OVS activities related to the 12/14 response;
- victim-related services and programs offered by community-based agencies; and
- various legislative bills that would improve or affect services to crime victims.

In addition, the Council wrote letters of appreciation to Judicial Branch leaders, the OVS director, the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Program coordinators, and the emergency department directors at participating health care facilities for their roles in the success of the SAFE Program.



Council members (left to right): Attorney Susan Omilian, Attorney Joseph Bibisi, Janice Heggie-Margolis, Chief Robin Montgomery, Karen Jarmoc, Attorney Jan VanTassel, Chester Brodnicki, Antonia Cordero, Attorney Steven Eppler-Epstein, Jillian Gilchrest, who attended on behalf of Council member Laura Cordes, and Judge John A. Danaher.

Photo courtesy of Court Planner II Brenda Jordan

Council Members

2010-2014 Term

Co-Chair Honorable Patrick L. Carroll, III
Chief Court Administrator, Judicial Branch

Kevin Lawlor, Esq.
Division of Criminal Justice, Executive Branch

Co-Chair Steven Eppler-Epstein, Esq.
Low income victims of crime

Brian D. Moore
Department of Correction, Executive Branch

Joseph W. Bibisi, Esq.
Chief Victim Compensation Commissioner

Karen Jarmoc
Victims of domestic violence

Chester Brodnicki
Child victims

Robin Montgomery
Law enforcement

Antonia Cordero, D.S.W.
Academia

Susan Omilian, Esq.
Survivors of homicide victims

Laura Cordes
Victims of sexual assault

Rocco Tricarico
Victims in non-English speaking communities

Janice Heggie-Margolis
Victims of drunk drivers

Jan VanTassel, Esq.
Victims with disabilities

2014-2018 Term

Co-Chair Honorable John A. Danaher, III
Litchfield Judicial District, Judicial Branch

Janice Heggie-Margolis
Victims of drunk drivers

Co-Chair Susan Omilian, Esq.
Survivors of homicide victims

Mui Mui Hin-McCormick
Victims in non-English speaking communities

Brian Austin, Jr., Esq.
Division of Criminal Justice, Executive Branch

Karen Jarmoc
Victims of domestic violence

Joseph W. Bibisi, Esq.
Chief Victim Compensation Commissioner

David Lawrence-Hawley
Community-based mental health services

Chester Brodnicki
Child victims

Karen Martucci
Department of Correction, Executive Branch

Antonia Cordero, D.S.W.
Academia

Robin Montgomery
Law enforcement

Laura Cordes
Victims of sexual assault

Deborah Witkin
Low income victims of crime

Melissa Farley, Esq.
External Affairs, Judicial Branch

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

860-263-2760

TOLL-FREE COMPENSATION

888-286-7347

TOLL-FREE HELPLINE

800-822-8428



Office of Victim Services
State of Connecticut Judicial Branch
225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, CT 06109
www.jud.ct.gov/crimevictim