

HAS YOUR LIFE
BEEN AFFECTED BY CRIME?

Programs to
HELP
you.



OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES
Focusing on a brighter future



ABOUT OVS

The mission of the Office of Victim Services is to provide statewide leadership and the highest quality advocacy, services, and education guided by the individual crime victim's experience.

The Connecticut Judicial Branch, Office of Victim Services (OVS) provides information and services to victims of violent crime and their families, including advocacy during criminal court proceedings and financial help for out-of-pocket expenses caused by the crime.

SERVICES OFFERED

- Financial help for out-of-pocket expenses related to the crime, including medical, dental, counseling, funeral, and lost wages.
(1-888-286-7347)
- Court-based victim services advocates to provide support during court proceedings and information on crime victims' rights and the criminal justice system.
- Victim services advocates at the Board of Pardons and Paroles to help crime victims during the pardons and paroles process. **(1-800-303-2884)**, listen for prompts to be connected to an advocate)
- Toll-free Helpline **(1-800-822-8428)** for information on crime victim rights and referrals to state and community agencies.
- Confidential victim notification programs that provide information to victims about changes in inmate status, requests made by an inmate for changes in registration status with the Sex Offender Registry, and when orders of protection end.
- Toll-free CT SAVIN **(1-877-846-3428)** for notification of certain court events.
- Training for criminal justice and victim service professionals on victim rights and services.
- Funding to community-based victim service agencies in Connecticut to provide crisis intervention, counseling, 24-hour Hotlines, and other services.
- Sexual assault forensic nurse examiners to provide compassionate care and forensic examination services to sexual assault victims that go to participating hospitals. **(1-800-822-8428)**

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VICTIM SERVICES ADVOCATES

Victim Services Advocates help crime victims with criminal justice proceedings. Advocates inform crime victims of their rights and refer them to resources that may reduce the effects of trauma associated with crime.

OVS has victim services advocates at courthouses throughout the state to help victims of personal injury crimes, their family members, and family members of homicide victims. There are also victim services advocates at the Board of Pardons and Paroles (Board) to help crime victims during the pardons and paroles process.

ADVOCATES MAY HELP VICTIMS BY

- Serving as a contact between victims and court and Board staff.
- Telling victims about their state constitutional rights.
- Explaining the criminal justice system.
- Giving victims updates on the criminal case.
- Going to court and Board proceedings with victims and advocating for their rights.
- Referring victims to social service agencies.
- Telling victims about the victim notification programs and helping with registering for notification.
- Explaining:
 - how to write a victim impact statement and may help victims with reading the statement;
 - restitution and helping with requests for restitution;
 - the Compensation Program and may help victims complete an application;
 - how to get your property returned that was held as evidence; and
 - orders of protection and helping victims get orders of protection.

Please call OVS toll-free at **1-800-822-8428** for more information about OVS victim services advocates and crime victims' rights or visit the OVS Web site at www.jud.ct.gov/crimevictim/.

VICTIM NOTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Notification programs provide important information to victims and other eligible persons about changes in status of inmates, requests made by a convicted sex offender for changes in status regarding registration with the Sex Offender Registry, and termination and expiration of orders of protection.

OVS provides the following free and confidential notification programs:

POST-CONVICTION CHANGE IN INMATE STATUS

Provides notification about changes in the status of inmates sentenced to the Department of Correction. Notifications include:

- Release
- Halfway house release
- Pardons hearing
- Parole hearings/release
- Re-entry furlough
- Sentence modification
- Sentence review
- Transitional supervision

SEX OFFENDER STATUS CHANGE

Provides notification when an inmate applies or asks the court for a change in status on their registration with the Sex Offender Registry.

The changes in the Sex Offender Registry that an inmate may request include:

- Not having to register.
- Limiting the information that is available to the public.
- Removing any limits on the information that is available to the public.

WHO MAY MAKE A REQUEST TO BE NOTIFIED?

- Crime victims or the parent(s) or guardian(s) of minor crime victims.
- Family members of homicide victims.
- Legal representative of crime victims.
- State's attorney.
- Inmate's immediate family members.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

Call OVS toll-free at **1-800-822-8428** and ask for a Confidential Request for Notification of Status of Inmate form or visit www.jud.ct.gov/crimevictim/.

NOTIFICATION WHEN PROTECTIVE AND RESTRAINING ORDERS END

Automatic notification is provided to a protected person when the protective order ends or 5 weeks before a restraining order ends.



CT SAVIN

Connecticut Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (CT SAVIN) is a free, confidential service that provides crime victims, victim advocates, and other concerned citizens notification about specific criminal court related events.

CT SAVIN is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Registrations and notifications are available by telephone and e-mail in English, Spanish, Polish, or Portuguese.

INFORMATION NEEDED TO REGISTER FOR NOTIFICATION

To register you will need to know the defendant's first and last name or the criminal case docket number.

TO REGISTER FOR PHONE NOTIFICATION

To register you will need a touch-tone telephone. You may also register more than one telephone number.

1. Call 1-877-VINE-4CT (1-877-846-3428);
2. Select a 4 digit PIN number (the same PIN may be used with multiple telephone numbers); and
3. Follow the instructions.

TO REGISTER FOR TTY PHONE NOTIFICATION

1. Call the Nationwide (in-bound) toll-free number for TTY devices (1-866-847-1298);
2. You will be connected with a CT SAVIN/VINE Representative (VSR);
3. The VSR will talk with the caller and manually register the caller for notification.

TO REGISTER FOR NOTIFICATION ON-LINE

1. Go to www.jud.ct.gov;
2. Click on the CT SAVIN button;
3. Click on Search and Register tab;
4. Follow the instructions.

RECEIVING NOTIFICATION CALLS

Notification calls are made between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. and will continue for every 30 minutes until the registrant or voicemail answers the call. The calls will then continue every two hours (up to 48 hours) until a correct PIN is entered. If there is a change in bail, the calls will continue for 48 hours or until a correct PIN is entered.



SEXUAL ASSAULT FORENSIC EXAMINERS (SAFE) PROGRAM

The Gail Burns-Smith Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Program provides specially trained sexual assault forensic examiners to assist victims of sexual assault at participating hospitals. Victims receive compassionate care and timely, comprehensive forensic examination services.

The SAFE Program is named after the late Gail Burns-Smith, a national and local advocate for victims of sexual assault and abuse. SAFE services are offered at 6 participating hospitals in the Hartford, Middlesex, and Windham counties.

WHAT IS A SEXUAL ASSAULT FORENSIC EXAMINER (SAFE)?

A SAFE is a registered nurse, advanced practice nurse, or physician who received specialized training in the collection of forensic evidence for sexual assaults, while providing patient-centered, comprehensive care.

WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT FORENSIC EXAM?

An examination that includes the gathering of information, physical exam for injury, collection of evidence, and provide for the care of sexually transmitted disease and prevention of pregnancy, as well as referrals for follow-up care.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE SAFE PROGRAM?

- Sexual assault victims receive compassionate and specialized care.
- Improved quality of forensic evidence.
- Helps responding agencies to work more closely together to provide services.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SAFE SERVICES?

- A person 13 years old or older who is a victim of a sexual assault or abuse.
- The sexual assault or abuse happened within 120 hours.
- The sexual assault victim is able to provide informed consent.

For more information about the Gail Burns-Smith Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Program, please call OVS toll-free at **1-800-822-8428**.



COMPENSATION FOR CRIME VICTIMS

The Compensation Program provides financial help to crime victims, their family members, and other persons who have financial loss because of the crime.

The Compensation Program can only pay for eligible crime-related expenses that are not covered by insurance or another payment source.

WHO CAN RECEIVE VICTIM COMPENSATION (MONEY)?

- The dependents or a designated decision maker of a homicide victim.
- A child who witnesses domestic violence and is not related to the victim.
- Relatives of sexual assault, child abuse, domestic violence, or homicide victims.
- A person who paid some or all of the funeral expenses.
- A person who provided care to a personal injury victim.

BENEFITS

- Personal injury up to \$15,000.
- Survivor benefits up to \$25,000.
- Non-relative child witness of domestic violence up to \$2,000.

ELIGIBLE COSTS INCLUDE (LIMITS MAY APPLY)

- Medical, dental, counseling.
- Lost wages or support.
- Funeral up to \$5,000.
- Crime scene clean-up up to \$1,000.
- Medical expenses related to the injury to a guide or assistance dog.

WHAT IS NOT COVERED

- Property loss/damage.
- Pain and suffering (physical and emotional stress).
- Any other non-economic loss.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- You were injured during a crime or injured while helping police during a crime.
- You did not cause the crime or do anything illegal.
- The crime was reported to police within 5 days or within 5 days when a report could reasonably be made.
- You are a sexual assault victim and told certain medical and mental health providers or advocates about the sexual assault or you went to a health care facility to have an exam done and did not report the crime to police.
- Filing period: two years (waiver form available).

For more information about the Compensation Program or to receive an application, please call the Compensation Program toll-free at **1-888-286-7347** or visit the OVS Web site at www.jud.ct.gov/crimevictim/.

RIGHTS OF CRIME VICTIMS

As a crime victim, you have certain rights under the Connecticut Constitution.

You have the right to:

- Be treated with fairness and respect throughout the criminal justice process;
- Have the case completed in a timely manner following arrest of the accused, provided no rights of the accused are shortened by it;
- Be reasonably protected from the accused throughout the criminal justice process;
- Be told of court dates;
- Attend the trial and all other court proceedings (arraignment, pre-trial, and sentencing) unless you are testifying, in which case the court may decide that you can't attend the trial until after you are done testifying;
- Talk to the prosecutor about the case;
- Have the chance to agree or disagree with any plea agreement between the accused and the prosecutor and to make a statement to the court before the court decides if it will accept the agreement;
- Make a statement to the court at sentencing;
- Request restitution for expenses or property lost or damaged because of the crime; and
- Get information about the arrest, conviction, sentence, imprisonment, and release of the offender.

Connecticut Constitution Article First, Section 8(b)

Important **TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

TOLL-FREE

COMPENSATION 1-888-286-7347

SERVICES 1-800-822-8428

COMPENSATION

TEL 860-263-2761 FAX 860-263-2780

ADMINISTRATION

TEL 860-263-2760 FAX 860-263-2777

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

RELAY SERVICE

CALL 711



TOLL-FREE
800-822-8428

ADMINISTRATION
860-263-2760

The Judicial Branch of the State of Connecticut complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need a reasonable accommodation in accordance with the ADA, contact a Judicial Branch employee or an ADA contact person listed at www.jud.ct.gov/ada/.



Office of Victim Services
State of Connecticut Judicial Branch