

MINUTES
Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime
February 8, 2022

The Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime met via Microsoft Teams.

Members in Attendance: Co-Chair Judge Laura F. Baldini, Co-Chair Susan Omilian, Linda Blozie for Gerrie Wild, Melissa Farley, Gail Hardy, Michelle Lettieri for Bob Garguilo, Amy Lupoli, Irene Mikol, Marc Pelka, Jessica Pizzano, Deborah Witkin, Andrew Woods, Yvette Young

Members Excused or Absent: Beth Hamilton, Ebonie Suggs

OVS Staff in Attendance: Linda J. Cimino, Mary Kozicki, James Morgan, Jean M. Weisbrod

Guest in Attendance: Alison Chandler, Adam Johnson, Patrick Madden, Allison Tippery

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Announcements
Susan Omilian opened the meeting at 2:03 p.m. Council members and invited guests introduced themselves.
2. Approval of November 9, 2021 meeting minutes
Susan asked for a motion to accept the November meeting minutes. The motion was moved and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented.
3. Report on OVS Victimization Needs Assessment
Patrick Madden and Allison Tippery reviewed the PowerPoint presentation, *Connecticut Victims Needs Assessment Project Update*, that was distributed to Council members via email prior to the meeting.

Patrick reported on the current project status, survey results, and victim service provider focus groups.

Allison reported on the in-depth interview summary and the demographics of interview participants.

Council members discussed issues related to demographics and diversity amongst the participants of the survey and how it represents the state's population.

An update will be provided at the April 2022 meeting.

4. Update on Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention Advisory Committee
Andrew Woods reviewed the PowerPoint presentation, *Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention Advisory Committee Report*, that was distributed to Council members via email prior to the meeting.

Andrew reported on CT Public Act 21-35, Section 9, which establishes a committee to advise the Public Health and Human Services Committees of the General Assembly on the establishment of a Commission on Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention.

Andrew discussed their recommendations which included findings of gun violence reduction strategies, ways to align support services, and funding resources.

5. Presentation on Coercive Control
Linda Blozie reviewed the PowerPoint presentation, *Understanding Coercive Control and Related Elements of Public Act 21-78*, that was distributed to Council members via email prior to the meeting.

Linda discussed the concept of coercive control and the methods used which include emotional, psychological, technological, and financial controlling behaviors.

She reported that Public Act 21-78 amends and establishes the statutory definitions of domestic violence and coercive control. As a result, coercive control can now be used as eligibility criteria in an application for a restraining order.

Council members discussed issues related to the challenges of coercive control and the civil remedies that the Court can utilize.

6. OVS Report
 - a) Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund Report
The *OVS Victim Compensation Program Budget statement for month ending 01/31/22 FY 07/01/21 - 06/30/22* and the *Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund Contribution (CICF) Summary of Court Contributions (P.A. 06-152) through 12/30/2021 FY 07/01/21 - 06/30/2022* were distributed to Council members via email prior to the meeting.

James Morgan reviewed the *OVS Victim Compensation Program Budget Statement for month ending 01/31/21 FY 07/01/21 - 06/30/22*. Jim reported total disbursements through 01/31/22 are \$1,622,000, which is \$360,000 above total disbursements through 01/31/21. He reported that there is sufficient state and federal funding to make compensation payments for this fiscal year.

Jim reviewed the *Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund Contribution (CICF) Summary of Court Contributions (P.A. 06-152) through 12/30/2021 FY 07/01/21 – 06/30/22*. Jim reported court contributions through 12/31/21 are \$583,000 which is \$204,000 above collections through 12/31/20. He reported that total revenues into the CICF from all sources as of 01/31/22 are \$464,000 higher than what was received through 01/31/21.

b) OVS Update

Linda Cimino reported:

- 1,979 Victim Compensation claims were processed in calendar year 2021
 - 1,272 Personal Injury applications
 - 152 Survivor Benefits applications
 - 555 Emotional Injury applications
- The SAFE Program has compiled a list of over 100 medical providers in the state of Connecticut that have completed the OVS SAFE training.
- The next SAFE Program training session will begin 4/12/2022. The class will include 13 applicants who became aware of the training through the CT League of Nursing.
- The SAFE program has 16 SAFEs compared to 26 SAFEs at this time last year due to the impact of COVID-19 and other factors on health care providers.
- The Connecticut Hospital Association will host training classes for nurses and health care providers to demonstrate the elements and steps of the forensic evidence collection kits.

Mary Kozicki reported:

- Nine victim services advocates have been hired and two victim services advocates transferred from Helpline to court-based positions in recent months.
- Their training team consisted of internal and external presenters and utilized a combination of in-person and virtual presentations which included 100 classroom hours supported by courtroom observations. In addition, the training was offered to all OVS VSAs for a refresher on any training topic.

7. Roundtable Discussions

a) Legislative proposals and issues on state and federal level

No report provided.

b) Impact of COVID-19 on victim service delivery including vaccination rollout in Connecticut (continued)

Andrew Woods reported that staff members from Hartford Communities That Care and a Department of Public Health Deputy Commissioner will visit victims of violent crime in Hartford to provide COVID-19 and trauma information, distribute masks and COVID-19 test kits, and raise awareness about services that are available.

Linda Blozie reported that the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence has started a concentrated effort through its member organizations to reach out to survivors of domestic violence and underserved populations to provide COVID-19 information, vaccinations, and PPE.

8. New Business

April agenda items:

- Final report of the OVS Victimization Needs Assessment
- State and Federal Legislative updates
- Long-term pandemic impacts

9. Adjournment

Judge Baldini asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved and seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Jean M. Weisbrod, Recorder