

**MINUTES**  
**Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime**  
**November 16, 2010**

The Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, in the fourth floor conference room on Tuesday, November 16, 2010, from 2:05 p.m. to 3:19 p.m.

**Members in Attendance:**

Co-chair Steve Eppler-Epstein, Joseph Bibisi, Chester Brodnicki, Antonia Cordero, Kevin Lawlor, Janice Heggie Margolis, Kimberly Joyner, Nancy Kushins, Daniel F. Lewis, Robin Montgomery, Susan Omilian, Erika Tindill, and Rocco Tricarico

**Members Excused or Absent:**

Deputy Chief Court Administrator the Honorable Patrick L. Carroll, III, and Jan VanTassel

**OVS Staff Present:**

Linda J. Cimino, James Morgan, Tina Bouchard, Joanna Buikus, Valina Carpenter, Brenda Jordan, and Susanne Pakele

**Guest:**

Denise Covington, SAFE Program Coordinator

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome  
Steve Eppler-Epstein called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. and welcomed members. Members introduced themselves.
2. Approval of the Minutes from the September 21, 2010 Meeting  
Steve asked for a motion to accept the minutes of September 21, 2010. The motion was moved and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented.
3. Public Attendance at Meetings  
Steve distributed a proposed policy regarding public attendance at Advisory Council meetings. Members reviewed the policy and discussed whether the policy should provide information on where crime victims may speak on issues that are not on an agenda for Council discussion and whether to clarify the level of discussion participation for the public on agenda items.

Members will review changes to the policy at the January Council meeting.

4. OVS Updates  
Tina Bouchard reported on various presentations and trainings provided by OVS staff, including that more than 13 presentations on the Connecticut

Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) system were provided, two of which were taped by the Connecticut Television Network. The first recording was during the October meeting of the Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission and the second during a public informational session that was held at the Legislative Office Building in November. Tina informed members that OVS publications, such as the “tear-off sheets” which are provided to police departments, have been or will be revised to reflect SAVIN information. Tina also reported that OVS is co-sponsoring with Mothers Against Drunk Drivers a Death Notification workshop on November 17, 2010.

A member inquired if trainings on SAVIN were provided to police departments. Linda Cimino responded that outreach to police departments would occur with the distribution of the revised “tear-off” sheet.

Joanna Buikus reported that a wage loss formula sheet was developed to provide claimants with an understanding of how wage loss was calculated and that the deductible waiver form was simplified.

Joanna explained that the Compensation Program will attempt to compromise balances for claimants whose medical related losses exceed the statutory maximums and their claims for compensation were approved with payment. Since OVS has started capturing the data related to compromised claims, approximately \$70,000 of medical provider balances have been waived for crime victims.

Joanna also reported that seventy-five percent of the claims determined from July through September 2010 were compensable with an average processing time of six to seven months. The processing time from review hearing date to review decision averaged two and a half months.

Susanne Pakele reported that 88 qualified applicants responded to the vacant victim services advocate position at the Stamford Geographical Area court. Susanne also commented on the exceptional service provided to the family members by Victim Services Advocate Beata Bagi during the Steven Hayes trial.

A member recommended that the Advisory Council write a thank you letter to Ms. Bagi for the services she provided. Steve suggested that in addition, the Council should consider writing an appreciation letter to all of the OVS victim services advocates for their service.

Valina Carpenter reported on the following CT SAVIN statistics:

- 6,846 site searches to VINE link (the web page provided by vendor Appriss to access SAVIN information)
- 1,782 new registrations for notification
- 258 telephone notifications and 1,286 e-mail notifications

Jim Morgan reported that the Request for Proposal (RFP) posted for contractual victim assistance services for next July is due December 15, 2010. The RFP can be found on the Judicial Branch Bid Opportunities web page (<http://www.jud.ct.gov/external/news/busopp/>). Jim reported that a bid would also be issued for the Assistance to Survivors of Homicide Victims program for services to begin in July.

Linda reported that the Commission on the Standardization of the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations released a revised Technical Guidelines for Health Care Response to Victims of Sexual Assault, which contains minor changes to the instructions of the sexual assault evidence collection kit (kit). The revised kits will be available in early 2011.

The Department of Criminal Justice is responsible to roll out the Technical Guidelines. The anticipated plan is to have two or three informational sessions, primarily to acute care hospitals when the kit is available.

Brenda Jordan reported that effective this month, both of the OVS toll-free telephone numbers are accessible nationwide. The Claimant Satisfaction Survey is under revision and a draft of the revised survey will be brought to the January Council meeting for feedback. The Letter Review Committee has revised or developed approximately 114 letters and forms for both the Victim Services and Compensation Units. The Committee is assessing, if appropriate and feasible, whether changes have improved the claimants' understanding of the process.

5. Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund Update

Jim distributed the Criminal Injuries Compensation Program Budget statement for month ending 10/31/10 and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF) Contributions by court. Members reviewed and discussed the documents and the policy/procedure in place for the court to consider monetary contributions to the CICF.

6. Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification Update

Linda reported on some minor changes to the SAVIN web site and reported that Phase II is underway with an anticipated operational date of February 2011. Linda reported that two issues under review are removing case dismissals and nollies timely from the SAVIN system and registering victims for notification of expiration and termination of orders of protection. Phase III is the integration of the Department of Correction, Psychiatric Security Review Board, and Probation Department computer systems.

7. Gail Burns-Smith Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Pilot Program Update

Nancy Kushins reported that Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc., received additional stimulus funds to support and assist in the implementation of the SAFE program. The funding would provide for a CONNSACS sexual assault advocate who will work closely with the SAFE program and clinical

coordinators and the rape crisis centers, hospitals, and law enforcement in the pilot region, and a statewide conference focusing on a multi-disciplinary victim-centered approach to sexual assault in the late winter or early spring.

Denise Covington, program coordinator of the SAFE pilot program reported that as a result of issues with the Memorandum of Agreement between the pilot hospitals and Judicial Branch and the hospital orientation process, the launching of the program has been delayed.

The Quinnipiac University SAFE training program is nearly completed. After completion of the program, SAFE program students will complete a clinical component during December/January. Quinnipiac University will offer two more courses next spring.

8. New Business

Steve recommended that the Council discuss at the January meeting legislative updates from OVS and Council members, any budget impact to OVS, and communications between the Judicial Branch/OVS with the new administration.

Linda offered to provide a walk-through of the OVS office for new members prior to the January meeting from 1:30 to 2:00 p.m.

9. Adjournment

Steve adjourned the meeting at 3:19 p.m.

Brenda Jordan, Recorder