

**MINUTES**  
**Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime**  
**July 14, 2015**

The Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, Fourth Floor, Conference Room 4B, from 2:05 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

**Members in Attendance:**

Co-Chair the Honorable John A. Danaher, III, Co-Chair Susan Omilian, Brian Austin, Jr., Joseph W. Bibisi, Laura Cordes, Melissa Farley, Jennifer Rossi for Janice Heggie Margolis, Mui Mui Hin-McCormick, Karen Jarmoc, David Lawrence-Hawley, Robin Montgomery, David Snyder for Karen Martucci, and Deborah Witkin

**Members Excused or Absent:**

Chester Brodnicki and Antonia Cordero

**OVS Staff Present:**

Linda Cimino, Valina Carpenter, James Morgan, and Jean Weisbrod

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome  
Susan Omilian called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.
2. Approval of the March 10, 2015 Meeting Minutes  
Susan asked for a motion to accept the minutes of March 10, 2015. The motion was moved and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented.
3. Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF) Update  
Jim Morgan distributed and reviewed the *Office of Victim Services Criminal Injuries Compensation Program Budget statement for month ending 06/30/15, FY 07/01/14 – 06/30/15*. Jim reported that \$2.5 million of the budget was expended. The total amount of disbursements is \$500,000 less compared to last year's amount. Jim reported the CICF is a revolving fund and the funds not spent at the end of the year remain in the fund for future years. Susan asked about the trend of claims with the OVS Compensation Program which led to a discussion with council members about the increase in the number of claims filed within the last quarter.

Jim distributed and reviewed the *Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF) Contributions (P.A. 06-152), Fiscal Year 2014-2015*.

Jim reported that for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 the gross amount collected is \$2.038 million, which is an \$88,000 increase from the last fiscal year. Council members discussed ways to increase awareness among the courts to show the benefits of the contributions to the CICF.

Jim distributed and reviewed the *Sandy Hook Worker's Assistance Fund, Quarterly Revenue and Expense Report, Project Period: 04/01/13 – 06/30/15*. Jim reported there is \$157,000 remaining in the Fund and payments will be made until the end of August 2015. Linda reported that recommendations for any unused funds have not yet been determined.

4. Overview: Connecticut Office of the Victim Advocate

Natasha M. Pierre, Esq., Connecticut State Victim Advocate provided an overview of the Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA), including the duties of the office personnel, such as providing referrals, training, and victim rights enforcement. She stated that 50% of their contacts are from matters not yet deemed criminal and 50% are victims of burglary and theft.

Natasha stated a goal of the OVA is to have a victim's rights enforcement mechanism in place five years from now. The OVA is working to raise statewide awareness about the agency by developing a calendar, a victim's memorial, and an OVA business card.

Natasha distributed *A Guide for Victims of Crime, Statutory Rights of Victims in Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings* and *Meet Natasha M. Pierre, Esq., CT State Victim Advocate*.

Council members discussed issues related to victim's rights and the roles and duties of the OVA.

5. Legislative Updates

Laura Cordes distributed the *Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services 2015 Connecticut Legislative Session Update*.

Laura reported on Public Act (PA) No.15-207, which passed unanimously, ensures that all sexual assault evidence collection kits will be transferred to the state forensic lab within 10 days of collection and that the kits will be tested by the lab within 60 days. In addition, this bill amends Connecticut's current Rape Shield Law, which protects a victim's previous sexual history from being used by the defense. When the defense chooses to challenge the Rape Shield Law, the hearing on that motion is now required by law to be held in private (in camera) away from the press and the public. This PA is effective October 1, 2015.

Karen Jarmoc reported that PA No.15-211 established a Domestic Violence Offender Program Standards Advisory Council to review, update and amend, as needed, the domestic violence offender program standards that were presented by the Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Committee.

Karen reported that Special Act No.15-10 established a task force to study the statewide response to minors exposed to family violence and systems that respond to them.

Karen also reported on Proposed Senate Bill No.650, An Act Concerning Temporary Restraining Orders, which did not pass. This bill would have allowed the court to order the respondent to surrender all firearms and ammunitions in his or her possession to the police. This bill also contained recommendations from last years' Task Force.

Jennifer Rossi reported that effective July 1, 2015, the Ignition Interlock Law will require all Connecticut residents who have been charged with a DUI, even if it is their first arrest and they are eligible for an alcohol diversion program, to install an ignition interlock device on their vehicle after a 45-day license suspension. The amount of time they will keep the interlock on their car will depend on how many times they have been arrested for DUI.

Valina Carpenter reported on PA No.15-02, Sections 17 and 18. The PA revises Connecticut General Statute (C.G.S.) 54-126a which requires the Office of Victim Services to notify victims registered with the Board of Pardons and Paroles of the time, date and location of the hearings for an inmate. This change includes victim notification for an inmate serving an indeterminate sentence and who was sentenced prior to July 1, 1981; OVS will work with the Board of Pardons and Paroles to locate victims and victims' family to notify them of the hearing. In addition, if the victim is a deceased police officer, OVS will notify the chief of police of the town in which the crime occurred of the hearing. Also, OVS will provide victims of crime information detailing the process by which to receive notices of Board of Pardons and Paroles hearings, which is consistent current OVS practice.

Linda Cimino reported on PA No. 15-16 which allows sexual assault forensic examiners to provide immediate care and treatment to victims of sexual assault at health care facilities operated by an institution of higher education. Linda stated that, at this time, this only applies to the University of Connecticut, Student Health Services.

Linda reported that PA No.15-85, Section 22, amends C.G.S. 54-208 to exclude life insurance as a collateral source to be considered by the OVS Compensation Program. This change is effective October 1, 2015.

Linda also reported on PA No.15-195, which revises C.G.S. 54-211 to allow OVS, under certain circumstances, to waive the time limitation on crime victim compensation applications for minors who are victims of human trafficking. This change is effective October 1, 2015.

6. New Business

Council members discussed and agreed that the September meeting agenda should include the following presentations by OVS staff:

- CT SAVIN; and
- Civil Protection Order.

Council members discussed and agreed that the November meeting agenda should include the following topics:

- Culturally sensitive victim response; and
- Health care and family violence screenings

Laura Cordes distributed and discussed the *Field Guide for Law Enforcement Response to Sexual Assault Crimes in Connecticut*. This guide is a collaboration of CONNSACS, Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council, the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, and the Law Enforcement of Sexual Assault Crimes Project Planning Committee.

Laura distributed and discussed *UNTESTED: Eliminating the Backlog of Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits in Connecticut*.

Jim Morgan reported the 2015 Judicial Branch grant awarded from the Office for Victims of Crimes (OVC) is \$22 million. Previous grants from the OVC have been \$5 million per year. The increase is due to a significant increase in the federal allocation of grant funds for all Victims of Crime Act state grantees. In addition, OVS will be receiving a grant from OVC for \$300,000 designated solely for trainings.

7. Adjournment

Susan adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

Jean Weisbrod, Recorder