

OUTREACH AND ADVOCATE EXCHANGE

SOUTH CAROLINA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

South Carolina Crime Victim Services Division

Department of Crime Victim Compensation (DCVC)

www.sova.sc.gov



Third Quarter
January-March 2018

DCVC Community Outreach

The Third Quarter provided the Department of Crime Victim Compensation with numerous opportunities to meet with various organizations to educate them on the services and benefits of the compensation program.

The Outreach Coordinator and the Assistant Deputy Director coordinated several meetings in the community to collaborate developing partnerships with organizations across the state. A few of the organizations are:

- South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC)-Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Training
- Mother's Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- School Counselors
- South Carolina Fire Academy

The discussions centered around the importance of educating the community to help bridge the gap in victim services thereby, ensuring valuable information is provided on

the compensation program.

DCVC is excited to embark on this new journey by collaborating and uniting with new organizations.

Also, the Outreach Coordinator continues to set up displays at Harvest Hope Food Banks. As a result of this outreach, DCVC was asked to present for the first time at the Gaston Community Crime Watch.

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Department of Crime Victim Services Training, Provider Certification, and Statistical Analysis (CVST)

Article by Kim Hamm

The Department of Crime Victim Services Training, Provider Certification, and Statistical Analysis (CVST) is the newest department to the Crime Victim Services Division of the Attorney General's Office. With the passage of Act 96 of 2017, OVSEC was renamed and moved from under the Crime Victim Ombudsman's office to form its own entity with additional responsibilities including training and collection of statistical data pertaining to crime victims in South Carolina. CVST is charged with providing oversight of training, education, and certification of victim

assistance programs for South Carolina.

With a staff of just two employees, CVST manages training certification for over 4,100 Victim Service Providers and accredits hundreds of trainings annually. In November 2017, Kim Hamm was named the first Deputy Director of the new department. Kim brings years of victim services experience in both the private and public sectors. Fabienne Bolet, a veteran in Victim Services Provider certification, was transferred with OVSEC to maintain her work as Administrative Coordinator for

Victim Service Provider (VSP) certification at CVST. Our team is small but mighty!

In our first year as a new department we have some lofty goals to further professionalize the field for victim service providers and update many processes. We have much work to do and we look forward to sharing our progress and successes with the victim services community.

DID YOU KNOW?

April is:

SC Victims' Rights Week
When: April 10-12, 2018
Where: DoubleTree by Hilton
Location: 2100 Bush River Road, Columbia, SC 29210
Website:
www.scvrwconference.org

National Child Abuse Prevention month

Sexual Assault Awareness month

May is:

National Mental Health month

New DCVC Employee:

Mignon Lee-Thompson

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DCVC Community Outreach Cont.:

LEADERSHIP

According to Dale Carnegie

Leadership is the art of adjusting people's behavior to maximize their potential.

According to Dale Carnegie the Ten Qualities of an Outstanding Leader are:

1. Leadership by Example
2. Visionary
3. Strong Communicator
4. Trustworthy
5. Calm
6. Open Minded
7. Professional
8. Clear Thinking
9. Nurturing
10. Supportive

This quarter the Outreach Coordinator conducted a community networking day and focused on various organizations and businesses in the Forest Acres area of Columbia. Community networking is an opportunity to reach local businesses and provide information on crime victim compensation and coordinate training for their staff.

Additionally, the Outreach Coordinator conducted a programmatic site visit with the Fifth Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office Victim Services Program.

The coordinator met with all victim service personnel to discuss the program and their unique and innovative services provided to victims.

The site visit was a success!

Upcoming Community Outreach Events:

- Vocational Rehabilitation Community Resource Night
- South Carolina Morticians Association, Inc.
- Hannah's House
- Harvest Hope Food Banks
- Community Outreach Networking Day
- Solicitor Office Site Visit

Department of Crime Victim Assistance Grants

Article by BJ Nelson

The South Carolina Office of the Attorney General, Department of Crime Victim Assistance Grants has announced the availability of Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and State Victims Assistance Program (SVAP) grant funds for direct service to victims of crime to eligible agencies and organizations for Federal Fiscal Year 2018. The deadline to apply is April 3, 2018. These proposals will fund 12-month projects beginning October 1, 2018. Guidelines and overview documentation is available at <http://www.scdps.gov/ohsjp/voca.asp>.

For further assistance, please contact Joe Corey at (803) 734-0798 jcorey@scag.gov, Ginger Dukes at (803) 734-0792 gdukes@scag.gov, Virginia Funk-Currie at (803) 734-0793 vfunkcurie@scag.gov, William House at (803) 734-0785 bhouse@scag.gov, or Barbara Jean (B.J.) Nelson at (803) 734-0791 bnelson@scag.gov.

Many of you remember Lynne Medlin who was once with our office for 16 years. We are excited to announce that Mrs. Medlin has recently returned to work with the Accounting

Section of the Department of Crime Victim Assistance Grants. Lynne can be reached at (803) 734-0911 Imedlin@scag.gov. Additionally, the Accounting Section welcomes Roberta Ruth. Roberta joined the Accounting Section as a Fiscal Tech on February 20, 2018. Roberta can be reached at ruth@scag.gov.



Typically the Role of Victim Service Professionals may include:

- Providing information on victimization
- Providing information on victims' legal rights and protections
- Providing information on the criminal justice process
- Providing emotional support to victims
- Helping victims with safety planning
- Helping victims with victim compensation applications
- Helping victims submit comments to courts and parole boards
- Intervening with creditors, landlords, and employers on behalf of victims
- Helping victims find shelter and transportation
- Providing referrals for other services for victims
- Notifying victims of inmates' release or escape

DCVC's Eligibility Services

The Eligibility Services section of the Department of Crime Victim Compensation is comprised of five (5) Program Coordinators and a manager. The responsibility of the section is to conduct complex and sensitive investigations for crime victim compensation applications. Program Coordinators review law enforcement documents and other crime related material to determine if the claim is eligible in accordance with South Carolina Law. Compensation claims are divided and assigned to the Program Coordinators by the 16 judicial circuits. The Program Coordinators have established working relationships with law enforcement officials to include victim advocates, Solicitor's Offices, Attorneys, Judges, Chiefs, Sheriffs, Investigators, and Detectives. They interview the individuals

listed above, in addition to victims, claimants, funeral homes, counselors and other service providers to gather facts and submit supportive documentation based on their findings. This is done via telephone communications, email transmissions, and field/site visits.

Members of Eligibility Services have a combined total of approximately 63 years of law enforcement experience. One staff member retired from Richland County Sheriff's Department as an Investigator, one worked at the SC Law Enforcement Division (SLED), three worked in the capacity of either a deputy sheriff or police officer in Lexington, Richland, Laurens and Newberry Counties, and one worked in victim services at Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center. In addition, two members are Veterans of the United States Armed

Forces, serving in the US Army. Four members are children of Retired Veterans serving in the US Air Force and the US Army.

The longest serving member of the department has been a dedicated and loyal staff for approximately 24 years. The department has maintained the same six (6) staff members for the last nine (9) years, thus proving their allegiance to the agency and their commitment to serving crime victims.

Department of Crime Victim Ombudsman

Article by Veronica Swain Kunz

It wasn't too long ago that an advocate for victims' rights exclaimed, "At least treat us as well as criminals!" Laws protecting the interests of crime victims are in their infancy when compared to the long history of legal protections for defendants. It has only been since the 1980s that crime victims had the legal right to be told when their offender was arrested; when their trials would be held; when they would be released from prison. Judges regularly ordered victims to leave the courtroom during hearings. In 1996, South Carolina voters overwhelmingly agreed that *victims' rights are human rights*, and

made the bold step to amend our state's Constitution to affirm that crime victims – the customers of the criminal justice system – should assume their rightful place in the criminal justice process.

Every day In the Department of Crime Victim Ombudsman, we hear from people who believe their rights have been violated, and it is our job to help them better understand the criminal justice process. As a third party liaison, we are in a great position to reiterate what a Victim Service Provider has probably already told them: there are limitations to what law enforcement can and cannot do. Prosecutors have to be able to prove cases beyond a reasonable doubt. Judges will not

send everyone to jail. Criminals are allowed to get out on bond. It is not uncommon for cases to take up to two years to get to a trial.

We are also here to advocate directly for survivors if it appears something has "fallen through the cracks" of our victim services system. We refer victims to local agencies if they're not aware of who can help them. We call Victim Service Providers, police and prosecutors to get insight into what's happening with their cases.

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Department of Crime Victim Ombudsman Cont.:

We fully investigate Formal Complaints and make recommendations, if necessary, to help improve services to crime victims. And we are a resource for all of our victim service/ criminal justice partners to educate, advocate, negotiate and promote growth and excellence in their own victim service procedures.

We take a lot of pride in our work, and we love what we do. Please do not hesitate to refer crime victims to us, or to call us yourselves if you have questions or need help. You can reach Veronica Swain Kunz, Lena Grant, and the newly-hired Christina Toler at 803-734-0357, or email us at CVO@SCAG.GOV.

DCVC Training and Collaboration

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During the third quarter, the Department of Crime Victim Compensation (DCVC) conducted training with various agencies and municipalities statewide.

The agency coordinated, collaborated and conducted trainings with funeral homes across the state to provide training related to death claims.

The feedback provided on the training surveys was very positive. Each funeral home stated "I strongly agree that the training was beneficial on all aspects and the Training Team was very informative and made the process of crime victim compensation understandable."

Other trainings and field visits were conducted by DCVC statewide during the third quarter to educate organizations on the compensation program and includes; Sexual Assault Programs, Basic Core, Eligibility Services and

Restitution Recovery.

The agency completed a total of 14 trainings and 16 field visits statewide and trained approximately 350 participants.

The Department of Crime Victim Compensation will be participating in Victims' Rights Week (VRW) 2018 by conducting 3 different types of workshops. The conference will be held April 10-12 at DoubleTree By Hilton Hotel, 2100 Bush River Road, Columbia South Carolina 29210. For additional information regarding VRW, please go to www.scvrwconference.org.

Each VRW is a wonderful opportunity to network and be a part of an amazing group of professionals and educators.

Upcoming Training Events:

- Victims' Rights Week
- Funeral Homes
- Hospitals
- Basic Core
- Field Visits
- Site Visits

