

Mission

The mission of the State Office of Victim Witness Advocacy (SOVWA) is to participate in the development, support and expansion of victim services across the state.

SOVWA provides direct victim assistance to victims of crime in cases investigated and prosecuted by the Division of Criminal Justice.

Additionally, SOVWA has oversight of the 21 County Offices of Victim Witness Advocacy and the 21 County SART/ FNE Programs within each of the county prosecutors' offices. The office also supports the Statewide VINE Program.

In addition to victim services and program development, SOVWA provides technical assistance and training in the areas of victims' rights and services to state, local and nonprofit victim services agencies, and the 21 county offices of victim witness advocacy, as well as input in the areas of policy development, funding planning, program evaluation and needs assessments.

Established in 1986 within the Division of Criminal Justice, the State Office of Victim Witness Advocacy (SOVWA) provides assistance to crime victims, witnesses and their families across the State.

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Contact Numbers

County Offices of Victim Witness Advocacy

Atlantic
609-909-7800

Bergen
201-646-2057

Burlington
609-265-5048

Camden
856-225-8440

Cape May
609-465-6480

Cumberland
856-451-3177 x157

Essex
973-621-4689

Gloucester
856-384-5500

Hudson
201-795-6508

Hunterdon
908-788-1403

Mercer
609-989-6428

Middlesex
732-745-3394

Monmouth
732-431-7160

Morris
973-285-6200 x6309

Ocean
732-929-2195

Passaic
973-881-4887

Salem
856-935-7510 x8333

Somerset
908-575-3359

Sussex
973-383-1570

Union
908-527-4596

Warren
908-475-6284

Victims of Crime Compensation Office 877-658-2221

NJ State Police Victim Services 609-882-2000

NJ Department of Corrections
Victim Services 609-292-4036 x5299

NJ Parole Board Victim Services 609-292-4582

NJ Coalition to End Domestic Violence 609-584-8107

NJ Coalition Against Sexual Assault 609-631-4450



New Jersey's State Office of Victim Witness Advocacy
Office of the Attorney General • Division of Criminal Justice
P.O. Box 085 • Trenton, NJ 08625-0085

www.NJvw.org • 609-376-2444 • 609-376-2438



New Jersey's State Office of
**Victim Witness
Advocacy**

www.NJvw.org
866-326-7206

A victim of crime shall be treated with fairness, compassion and respect by the criminal justice system...

(Constitutional Amendment, Article 1, Paragraph 22)

Victim Assistance

SOVWA provides victims and witnesses with services that help them cope with the aftermath of victimization and make their participation in the criminal justice system less difficult and burdensome. Some of the services offered are:

- Criminal Justice Orientation and Information
- Victim Impact Statements
- Referrals to Counseling and Supportive Services
- Case Status Notification
- Court Accompaniment
- Assistance in Applying for Benefits from VCCO
- Transportation Services
- Child Care to attend Meetings and Court Proceedings
- HIV Testing of Defendants
- Assistance in Obtaining Restraining Orders
- Employer/Creditor Intercession
- Assistance with Property Return

A victim centered response is possible through collaboration and coordination with the law enforcement community, public agencies, nonprofit service providers and faith-based community programs.

Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE)

VINE provides victims with information about the custody status of offenders. When an offender is arrested or released from custody, the victim will be telephoned through VINE's automated notification feature. Additionally, a victim may also access the custody status of an offender, whether housed in a New Jersey county jail, state prison or other correctional facility, 24-hours a day by calling the bellow toll-free number.

- VINE Toll Free Number: **1-877-846-3465**

Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Forensic Nurse Examiner Program (FNE)

The SART/FNE Program provides victims of sexual assault, who are 13 years of age or older, with a prompt and coordinated response to their victimization. The SART, which consists of a specially trained law enforcement officer, an FNE, and a Confidential Sexual Violence Advocate (CSVA), provides victims with supportive and specialized services. In New Jersey, no victim is charged for the completion of a medical Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence (SAFE) Kit or a Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault (DFSA)/Toxicology Kit. To ensure continuity of services for sexual assault victims, the SART works with local law enforcement agencies, SART-participating hospitals, the county sexual violence programs, as well as SOVWA.

Crime Victims Bill of Rights (For full statute see N.J.S.A. 52:4B-36)

Without the participation and cooperation of crime victims and witnesses, the criminal justice system would cease to function. The rights of these individuals should be given full recognition and protection. Crime victims and witnesses are entitled to the following rights:

- A.** To be treated with dignity and compassion by the criminal justice system
- B.** To be informed about the criminal justice process
- C.** To be free from intimidation
- D.** To have inconveniences associated with participation in the criminal justice process minimized to the fullest extent possible
- E.** To make at least one telephone call provided the call is reasonable in both length and location called
- F.** To medical assistance if, in the judgment of the law enforcement agency, medical assistance appears necessary
- G.** To be notified if presence in court is not needed
- H.** To be informed about available remedies, financial assistance and social services
- I.** To be compensated for their loss whenever possible
- J.** To be provided a secure, but not necessarily separate, waiting area during court proceedings
- K.** To be advised of case progress and final disposition
- L.** To the prompt return of property when no longer needed as evidence
- M.** To submit a written statement about the impact of the crime to a representative of the county prosecutor's office which shall be considered prior to the prosecutor's final decision concerning whether formal criminal charges will be filed
- N.** To make, prior to sentencing, an in-person statement directly to the sentencing court concerning the impact of the crime. This statement is to be made in addition to the statement permitted for inclusion in the presentence report by N.J.S.A. 2C:44-6
- O.** To have the opportunity to consult with the prosecuting authority prior to the conclusion of any plea negotiations, and to have the prosecutor advise the court of the consultation
- P.** To be present at any judicial proceeding involving a crime or any juvenile proceeding involving a criminal offense
- Q.** To be notified of any release or escape of the defendant
- R.** To appear in any court before which a proceeding implicating the rights of the victim is being held, with standing to file a motion or present argument on a motion file to enforce any right conferred herein

Domestic Violence Response Teams (DVRT)

The Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) is available 24-hours a day, 7-days a week to assist and empower victims of domestic violence. DVRT members are called upon by the local police department to offer domestic violence victims comfort, support, and information at the police station. The goals of the DVRT are to ease the emotional trauma experienced by victims, explain protective order options that may be available, and provide referrals to community and legal resources. DVRT members are volunteers who have undergone a 40-hour training program to equip them with the skills to provide compassionate and confidential crisis intervention.