

**MINUTES**  
**Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime**  
**February 14, 2023**

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

**Members in Attendance:** Co-Chair Yvette Young, Linda Blozie on behalf of Gerrie Wild, Lisa D'Angelo, Bob Garguilo, Beth Hamilton, Amy Lupoli, Irene Mikol, Marc Pelka, Susan Omilian, Jessica Pizzano, Deborah Witkin

**Members Excused or Absent:** Co-Chair Judge Laura F. Baldini, Lee Ross, Ebonie Suggs, Andrew Woods

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

**Guest in Attendance:** Michael Snyder

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome and Announcements

Co-Chair, Yvette Young, opened the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Yvette stated that the meeting is being recorded and will be available for viewing on the Judicial Branch YouTube Channel.

Council Members and OVS Staff introduced themselves.

2. Approval of November 15, 2022, Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved as amended. Deborah Witkin abstained.

3. Overview of Klingberg Family Centers

Council members received a PowerPoint presentation via email prior to the meeting.

Amy Lupoli, LMFT, Senior Director of Clinical Services, provided an overview of the services available to victims of crime which include Klingberg Children's Advocacy Center, Child and Adolescent Trauma Services, Outpatient Clinic Services, and the Klingberg Family Food Pantry, Program Contacts, location, and referral information.

Council members discussed the increase in crimes against children during the Covid 19 pandemic and suicide ideation among children following the pandemic. Amy provided information about the crisis services provided to families and children by Klingberg Family Centers during and post pandemic.

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Amy discussed staffing shortages during the pandemic and how it impacted services. She reported on the efforts to maintain a consistent level of services to children despite there being fewer clinicians available to assist.

4. Report on Commission on Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention  
No report provided.

5. Victimization Study Update

Linda Cimino reported on Phase 2 and the information gathered via an in-depth interview of 43 survey respondents.

Key findings include:

- 26 respondents experienced violent crimes and 14 experienced non-violent crimes
- Violent crime victims were more likely to reach out for help or services but were unsatisfied with law enforcement vs victims of non-violent crimes which reported a more pleasant experience with law enforcement
- 37% of the respondents didn't know how to access help after the crime experience
- Advocacy, mental health services, financial assistance, and law enforcement were the most common needs among victims of crime
- Emotional support and being assured that the service provider believed that their crime experience was true was extremely important
- The most common feedback from participants was for service providers to continue reaching out to victims following their crime experience
- Guilt, shame, stigma, embarrassment, and fear of others not believing their experience were the most common reasons that violent crime victims do not reach out for services
- Both victims of violent and non-violent crimes mentioned that they wanted or needed financial assistance or struggled with the cost of services
- Participants strongly agree that information about available services should be shared through social media platforms, radio, and television.

Linda reported that a Strategic Planning Committee has been created to analyze this information and that a survey was created by OVS and distributed to 45 local service provider agencies. When the findings from the survey have been summarized it will be presented in a fact sheet to the Shareholder Group.

6. Victim of Crime Act Funding Update

James Morgan reported:

- The Director for the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) provided a monthly update on the Federal Crime Victims Fund (the Fund)

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- The federal fiscal year started on October 1, 2022. Deposits into the Fund for the first quarter through December 31, 2022, are \$465 million compared to \$822 million for the entire 2022 federal fiscal year
- For FFY 2023, Congress authorized \$1.9 billion in spending from the Fund for OVC programs including Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance and VOCA Victim Compensations Grants. This was an increase over the President's request of \$1.75 billion
- OVC expects that of this amount, \$1.5 billion will be distributed to the states for the FFY 2023 victim compensation and victim assistance formula grants. This is less than the \$1.6 billion that was distributed for FFY 2022
- The Governor's proposed budget for SFY 24 and SFY 25 was released on February 8, 2023. Included in the Governor's budget was a request for \$13.1 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) relief funds for victim service providers in SFY 24 to offset decreased VOCA funding. There did not appear to be state funds allocated for SFY 25.

7. New Business

Beth Hamilton reported that the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, Connecticut Coalition to End Domestic Violence and the Connecticut Children's Alliance partnered to bring together current VOCA grantees to engage in collective advocacy to support the Governor's inclusion of \$13.175 million in the state budget to keep VOCA level funded in FY 24. The group will meet again in March, and throughout the year, with the goal to generate ideas for future funding for victim services, track statewide trends, learn about services available to victims across the state, and strengthen collaborations.

Susan Omilian announced that because of a referral from a counselor at the Klingberg Family Centers and a recording of an Advisory Council meeting on the Judicial Branch YouTube page that 2 victims of domestic violence were made aware of the *Avenging Angels* workshops.

April agenda items:

- Legislative Updates
- Krystal Rich, Connecticut Children's Alliance, Executive Director, and Sharmese Walcott, Hartford State's Attorney, will provide a presentation on *Regionalized Human Trafficking Recovery Task Force*.

8. Adjournment

Yvette adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Jean M. Weisbrod, Recorder