

**MINUTES**  
**Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime**  
**April 16, 2019**

The Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime met at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, Fourth Floor, Conference Room 4B, from 2:10 p.m. to 3:50 p.m.

**Members in Attendance:**

Co-Chair Judge Danaher, Co-Chair Susan Omilian, Brian Austin Jr., Joseph W. Bibisi, Melissa Farley, Bob Garguilo, Jessica Pizzano, Gerrie Wild, Deborah Witkin, Andrew Woods

**Members Excused or Absent:**

Beth Hamilton, David Lawrence-Hawley, Kristan Mangiafico, Josie Robles, Yvette Young

**OVS Staff Present:**

Koren Butler-Kurth, Valina Carpenter, Linda J. Cimino, Mary Kozicki, James Morgan, Jean M. Weisbrod

**Guest Present:**

Kate Frank

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome

Susan Omilian called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. Council members introduced themselves.

Judge Danaher asked for a motion to accept the minutes of February 5, 2019. The motion was moved and seconded; the minutes were accepted as presented. Deb Witkin abstained because she was not present for the February meeting.

2. Legislative Updates and Review

Jessica Pizzano reported on Special Act No. 18-18, *An Act Establishing a Task Force to Promote Efficiencies in the Filing of Habeas Corpus Matters*. Jessica stated that a habeas corpus committee would be formed to look at the application process.

Deb Witkin reported on Senate Bill No. 691, *An Act Concerning Erasure of Criminal Records*. Deb stated this bill would provide for the automatic erasure of criminal records in the case of misdemeanor offenses after three years following the completion of the sentence for the person's most recent misdemeanor offense, and in the case of certain felony offenses after five years following the completion of the sentence for the person's most recent felony offense.

Deb reported on Senate Bill No. 689, *An Act Concerning the Issuance of Ex Parte Restraining Orders*. Deb stated this bill would allow the court to issue ex-parte restraining orders when the respondent could pose a physical danger to the applicant prior to the opportunity for a hearing.

Susan Omilian reported on Senate Bill No. 653, *An Act Concerning Open File Disclosure in Criminal Cases*. This bill would require a more open form of disclosure to defendants in the criminal justice system. Gerrie Wild discussed concern for victim safety because this new legislation could allow information provided by a domestic violence advocate to the Family Relations office to be disclosed to a criminal defendant.

3. Overview of the Victim Services Unit

Mary Kozicki and Koren Butler-Kurth introduced themselves to council members and distributed the *Court-Based Victim Services Advocate Program* list and the *Notification of Victim's Rights* (JD-VS-18) form. Mary reviewed *Chapter 968, Victim Services, Sec. 54-220. Victim advocates. Responsibilities and duties. Access to police reports.*

Mary and Koren provided an overview of the role of the victim services advocates and the ways they assist victims of crime by providing support and advocacy throughout the criminal justice process. Examples of this support and advocacy include providing information about CT SAVIN, the Sex Offender Registry, trial preparation, victim impact statements, the post-conviction notification program, the civil protection order application process, counseling referrals, and the OVS Compensation Program.

4. Overview of the Legal Services Programs in Connecticut

Deb Witkin distributed a PowerPoint presentation to council members and provided an overview of the mission and programs of Connecticut Legal Services (CLS). Deb explained CLS' mission statement and reviewed the priority work areas. Deb also reviewed the structure, staff, and resources of CLS.

Kate Frank distributed a PowerPoint presentation to council members and provided an overview of <https://ctlawhelp.org> which provides free legal information to mobile dependent individuals. Following the presentation, Kate offered council members informational posters, business cards, and pens from CTLawHelp.org.

5. OVS Report

a) Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund Report

James Morgan distributed and reviewed the *Office of Victim Services Criminal Injuries Compensation Program Budget statement for month ending 03/31/2019, FY 07/01/18 – 06/30/19*. Jim reported the total disbursements to date are \$1.9 million. He stated expenditures are the same level as 3/31/18, and funds are sufficient to meet current obligations.

Jim distributed and reviewed the *Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF) Contributions (P.A. 06-152) FY 2018 – 2019*. Jim reported that infractions revenue collected through the Centralized Infractions Bureau on motor vehicle infractions 9.9% lower than the previous year. Jim stated that court collections through February 2019 are 5.8% lower than collections through February 2018. In addition, the number of court contributions is 8.9% lower for the same time period.

b) OVS Update

Valina Carpenter reported:

The CT SAVIN program will convert to the Enhanced VINE platform which will be available at the end of August 2019. The new system will include an app for smartphones which will allow registrants to better manage their notifications. In addition, registrants will be able to search for service providers through the app on their smartphone.

Linda Cimino reported:

This month, the SAFE Program completed a 42-hour training session that met 2 days per week for 3 weeks. Fourteen students attended the training session. The SAFE Training Program is approved by the International Association of Forensic Nurses for 42 hours of continuing education.

As of today, 429 applications for compensation have been processed which is 4% lower than last year at this time.

Throughout National Crime Victims Rights Week, April 7-12, OVS participated in the Office of the Victim Advocate Victim Rights Symposium, the Melanie Ilene Rieger Foundation Victims' Rights Symposium, and an event at Hartford Behavioral Health.

6. New Business

Andrew Woods will provide an overview of the Hartford Communities That Care at the June 11, 2019, meeting.

Valina Carpenter will provide an overview of Enhanced SAVIN program at the September 10, 2019, meeting.

7. Adjournment

Susan adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

Jean M. Weisbrod, Recorder