

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.

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/SANE Programs within each of the county prosecutors' offices. The office also supports the Statewide VINE Program.

In addition to victim services and program administration, SOVWA administers funding for victim services to enable state, county, local and non-profit agencies to provide services to victims of crime.

Contact Numbers

County Offices of Victim Witness Advocacy

Atlantic 609-909-7860	Middlesex 732-745-3394
Bergen 201-646-2057	Monmouth 732-431-6459
Burlington 609-265-5048	Morris 973-285-6200
Camden 856-225-8440	Ocean 732-929-2195
Cape May 609-463-6480	Passaic 973-881-4887
Cumberland 856-453-0486 x11158	Salem 856-935-7510 x8364
Essex 973-621-4689	Somerset 908-575-3359
Gloucester 856-384-5587	Sussex 973-383-1570
Hudson 201-795-6508	Union 908-527-4596
Hunterdon 908-788-1403	Warren 908-475-6284
Mercer 609-989-6428	State 609-633-7097

Victims of Crime Compensation Office 877-658-2221

NJ State Police Victim Services 609-882-2000

NJ Department of Corrections Victim Services 800-996-2029

NJ Parole Board Victim Services 609-292-4582

NJ Coalition for Battered Women 800-572-SAFE

NJ Coalition Against Sexual Assault 800-601-7200

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State Office of
**Victim Witness
Advocacy**



New Jersey Office of
the Attorney General
Division of Criminal Justice
PO Box 085
Trenton, NJ 08625-0085

www.njvw.org
609-292-6766 (o)
609-292-5553 (f)



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

(Constitutional Amendment, Article 1, Paragraph 22)

www.njvw.org
609-292-6766

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 Information and Impact Statements
- 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)

Victim Information and Notification Everyday provides crime victims with information about custody status of offenders. Through the automated notification feature of VINE, an individual will be telephoned when an offender is arrested or released from custody. With one toll-free telephone call – the custody status of an offender housed in any of New Jersey’s county jails or other county or state correctional facilities is available 24-hours a day.

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

Statewide Sexual Assault Response Team Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program

The Statewide Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Programs serve victims of sexual assault who are 13 years of age or older. The program provides prompt, coordinated supportive,

nursing and police services to victims by confidential sexual violence advocates, Forensic Nurses or Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) and specially trained law enforcement.

In NJ, no victim of sexual assault is charged for forensic medical examination.

SOVWA works with the county prosecutors’ offices, local law enforcement, the county sexual violence program and local hospitals.

Funding for Victim Assistance

Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)

SOVWA awards funds through a competitive subgrant program and discretionary subgrants to public and

nonprofit agencies to provide direct services to victims of crime. The County Offices of Victim Witness Advocacy, the Statewide SART/SANE Program and VINE are funded under VOCA.

Federal Stop Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

SOVWA awards funds to combat violence against women and to enhance services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. Funds are allocated under federal guidelines to prosecution, law enforcement, courts and other public and private nonprofit victim services agencies. The County Domestic Violence Response Teams (DVRT) are funded under VAWA.

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