ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE...

Child Abuse Care Line (24 hr.)
1-800-842-2288

CONNSACS- Sexual Assault (24 hr.)
1-888-999-5545
En Espanol (24 hr.)
1-888-568-8332

CT Bar Association
1-860-223-4400

DOC—Victim Services Unit (24 hr.)
1-888-869-7057

Domestic Violence– CCADV (24 hr.)
1-888-774-2900

Elder Abuse (24 hr.)
1-888-385-4225

INFO-Line (24 hour service)
211

Mothers Against Drunk Driving - MADD(24 hr.)
1-800-544-3690

Office of the Child Advocate
1-800-994-0939

Office of Victim Services (OVS)
1-800-822-8428
(OVS for information, court advocacy, counseling, notification and victim compensation)

Safe at Home
Contact the Secretary of the State's Office
860-509-6200

Survivors of Homicide, Inc.
1-888-833-4764

Witness Protection Program
Contact the Office of the Chief State's Attorney
860-258-5800

Please use to obtain criminal case information.

State vs. _____
Defendant's Name

Court Location: _____

Docket #: _____

Next Court Date: _____

Prosecutor: _____
Prosecutor's Name

_____
Prosecutor's Telephone Number

Advocate: _____
Advocate's Name

_____
Advocate's Telephone Number

Police Officer: _____
Police Officer's Name

_____
Police Officer's Telephone Number

Notes: _____

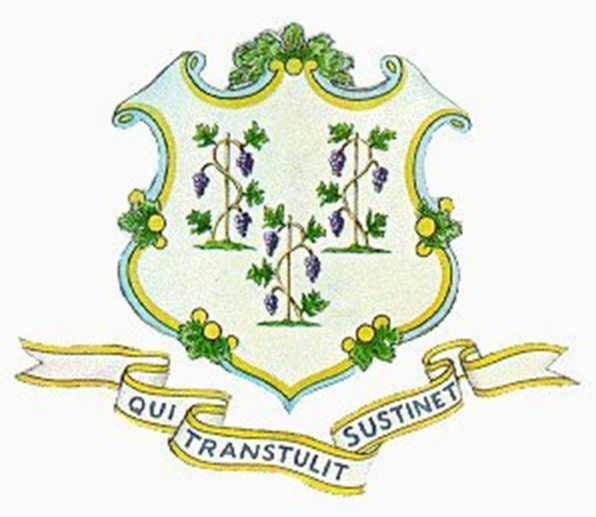
_____

Office of the Victim Advocate

505 Hudson Street, 5th Floor
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-550-6632
Fax: 860-566-3542
Website: www.ova.state.ct.us

State of Connecticut

The Office of the Victim Advocate



Protecting and Promoting the Legal Rights of Crime Victims in Connecticut

505 Hudson Street
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone (860) 550-6632
Toll Free 1-888-771-3126
Fax (860) 566-3542
www.ova.state.ct.us

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE VICTIM ADVOCATE

The Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA) was established as an independent state agency to protect and promote the legal rights of crime victims in Connecticut.

Among its many responsibilities, the OVA provides oversight and advocacy when the criminal justice system fails crime victims.

The OVA may receive and review complaints of persons concerning the actions of any state or other entity providing services to crime victims. When appropriate, the OVA, may initiate an investigation into the circumstances of a complaint.

The Victim Advocate is authorized by law to file a limited special appearance in any court proceeding for the purpose of advocating for a victim when certain rights have been violated.

In addition, the OVA conducts programs of public education, undertakes legislative advocacy and recommends changes in state policies concerning the treatment and protection of crime victims, including changes in the system of providing direct services to victims.

If You Feel Your Rights As A Crime Victim Have Been Or Are Being Violated Or If You Simply Have Questions/Concerns About Your Rights - Call....

The Office of the Victim Advocate

1-860-550-6632

Toll Free 1-888-771-3126

Who is the State Victim Advocate?

On November 5, 2007, Governor M. Jodi Rell announced the appointment of Michelle Cruz as the State Victim Advocate and she assumed her responsibilities on November 16, 2007.

In the early 1990's, Ms. Cruz began working with domestic violence victims at various stages of their journey while attending Community College in California. Inspired by the ground breaking Domestic Violence Advances by Attorney Sarah Buel in Quincy, Massachusetts, Ms. Cruz chose to relocate to Massachusetts. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA. While attending undergraduate school, she began working with the Hampshire County District Attorney's Office in various capacities, including as an intern for the Victim Witness Advocate Program and for the Education and Outreach Program. Ms. Cruz graduated from the University of Connecticut, School of Law. Ms. Cruz was a Notes and Comments Editor on the *Public Interest Law Journal* and also a participant in the Criminal Clinic at the law school. Immediately after graduating from law school, Ms. Cruz worked as an Assistant District Attorney for over six years with both Hampshire and Hampden County located in Massachusetts.

Ms. Cruz stated, "My experience have taught me that true wisdom is knowledge combined with compassion. Without compassion, knowledge is little more than well-educated ignorance."

Michelle S. Cruz, Esq.
CT State Victim Advocate

CRIME VICTIMS HAVE IMPORTANT LEGAL RIGHTS*

In Connecticut, our state constitution guarantees that crime victims and their families are entitled to:

- Be treated with fairness and respect throughout the criminal justice process;
- Receive Financial Restitution;
- Timely disposition of the case following arrest of the accused
- Be reasonably protected from the accused throughout the criminal justice process;
- Receive notification of court proceedings;
- Attend the trial and all other court proceedings;
- Communicate with the prosecution about the case;
- Object to or support any plea agreement entered into by the accused and the prosecution and to make a statement to the court prior to the court accepting a plea of guilty or nolo contender by the accused;
- Make a statement to the court at sentencing;
- Information about the arrest, conviction, sentence, imprisonment and release of the accused.

Other Connecticut laws provide victims and their families with certain additional rights and protections, including:

- Compensation for expenses incurred, including medical services, funeral expenses, and loss of earning power;
- The right to receive financial restitution from the offender, as part of the disposition for out of pocket expenses incurred relating to the crime;
- The return of personal property used to investigate crime;
- The right to access certain records and test results;
- Special rights and protections in family violence matters;
- Protection from being fired, harassed or in any manner retaliated against at work for attending court proceedings or for serving as a criminal case.

** This summary of legal rights is subject to the full text of the statutes. Victims are entitled to rights as set forth in the statutes. If you don't understand your legal rights, you may wish to talk to an attorney or contact the OVA staff.*