

## Available Resources

**Child Abuse Care Line (24 hr.)**

1-800-999-5545

**CONNACS- Sexual Assault (24 hr.)**

1-888-999-5545/En Espanol 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)**

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**MADD Mothers Against Drunk Driving - (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

*If you feel your rights as a crime victim have been  
violated or you have questions or concerns  
regarding victim rights please contact our office :*

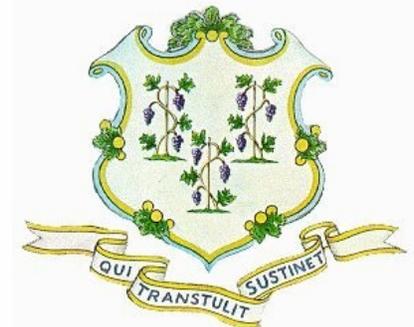
***The Office  
Of The Victim Advocate***  
1-860-550-6632  
Toll Free 1-888-771-3126

## Office Of The Victim Advocate

505 Hudson Street  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Phone: 860-550-6632  
Fax: 860-560-7065  
E-mail: ova.info@ct.gov

## State of Connecticut

### *Office of The Victim Advocate*



## Property Crime Information



## About the OVA

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.

## A Message from the State Victim Advocate?



*Michelle S. Cruz, Esq.*  
CT State Victim Advocate

The Office of the Victim Advocate, is the state of Connecticut's crime victim's rights agency. The OVA assists crime victims in protection of their state Constitutional and statutory rights.

This brochure is meant to provide useful information and help crime victims affected by property crime. Please feel free to contact the OVA office if you need assistance or are concerned

or confused with the progress of your case. We are here to assist crime victims and their families. The criminal justice system can be confusing and complex, especially if you are a victim of a crime. Crime victims have rights and the OVA can assist through this difficult and often frightening process.

As a victim of a crime you may feel lost or confused, which is understandable. This brochure will hopefully clarify the services available to you and help you understand the limits of the crime justice system. This brochure will hopefully provide a road map to how to be successful in seeking justice in the Criminal Justice System.

**The Connecticut Crime Justice System:** In Connecticut, once the offender involved in the crime committed against you has been arrested, you must take certain steps to be included in the Criminal Justice System and to ensure that you receive information regarding the criminal case where you are a victim. The first step is to write a letter to the States' Attorney's Office involved in your case. This letter should provide the State's Attorney with your contact information, address and phone number, as well as a clear statement indicating your interest in the criminal case. The letter should include what information you will be seeking. Here are some examples: you may seek: to be consulted prior to the State's Attorney communicating any plea or sentence recommendation to the offender, including updated offers or pleas made to the offender; restitution (see Restitution for further information), an order from the Court that the offender stay away from you, your family and/or residence; and/or court dates and status of the criminal case.

**Victim Advocate:** As a crime victim you may hear the term "victim advocate". In Connecticut there are several types of victim advocates. There are advocate provided to victims in Court who have suffered a physical injury. There are victim advocates for victims of domestic violence to assist victims of domestic violence. There are victim advocates for victims of sexual assault (CONNSACS) and victim advocate for victims of drunk drivers (MADD) who can accompany these victims to court. It may be frustrating to know there are, at this time, not specific advocates for property crime victims, whoever, you can ask a victim advocate in Court for assistance and if they are available they can assist you. You also have a right, through our state Constitution, to speak with the prosecutor handling your case. Although there may be more than one prosecutor handling your case, you still have a right to speak with the prosecutor who in handling your case on the next court date. The OVA is also always available to assist a crime victim regardless of the type of crime the victim has endured.

**What else do I need to know as a crime victim to be successful:** When you meet with the prosecutor, make sure you understand what is being said, and ask questions if you don't. Take notes and read back the information you have to ensure your are correct in your understanding of what will happen in the case. Follow up each meeting with a letter, types or hand written, with a summary of what was said by the prosecutor or individual you spoke. When you speak with professionals within the Courts, make sure you take names and ask with whom the individual works for. The criminal justice system can be intimidating, if you have a friend or relative who can go with you, bring them. And keep asking questions until you are clear as to what is happening with your case.

## Services Available

**Restitution:** As a crime victim you have the right to ask for and receive restitution. Restitution is, generally speaking, the out of pocket expenses associated with the crime you have suffered. In CT restitution can be ordered through both 1) a *condition of probation* and 2) a *written order* of restitution. The Written Order of Restitution is similar to a Civil Judgment but without the hassle of hiring an attorney and going through the Civil Court process. The written order of restitution can be requested by the prosecutor or the victim and ordered by a Judge at the end of a case. The order is good for 10 years.

**Victim Compensation:** You may hear the words "Victim Compensation" and wonder if you are eligible. In Connecticut victim compensation is limited to victims who have suffered a physical injury. To learn more about victim compensation please refer to the CT Judicial website: [www.jud.ct.gov](http://www.jud.ct.gov)

### **Plea and Sentence:**

In Connecticut as a crime victim you have the right to make an impact statement at (1) plea and (2) sentencing. You can make this statement in writing or verbally or both. The impact statement should include how the crime has affected you and your family, detail any out of pocket expenses you and your family suffered as a result of the crime and what you and your family would like to see happen to the offender. This last piece is really about more than jail or probation. This is your opportunity to inform the Court as to what you feel is the appropriate sentence and you can request any of the following: substance abuse counseling, anger management, mental health counseling, stay away or no contact orders, restitution, and the like.