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# Victim Services in Canada

Research and Statistics Division  
Department of Justice Canada

2024

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## Introduction

Services for victims of crime in Canada are primarily the responsibility of the provinces and territories, as well as those federal agencies that engage with victims of crime. Across the country, the underlying goals and principles of victim services programming are largely consistent, with their development having been guided by the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *Canadian Statement of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime* that was first endorsed by Ministers responsible for Justice in 1988 and updated in 2003, and most recently, the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*. However, the specific type and focus of programs and services to meet the needs of victims of crime varies among the provinces, territories, and relevant federal agencies. These programs and services have gradually been developed in response to the specific needs, priorities, legislation, and available resources within each jurisdiction and federal agency.

In addition, depending on the structure of government and non-government organizations in each jurisdiction, the specific nature of services considered to be a “victim service” often varies. In one jurisdiction, some services important to victims of crime may be delivered by agencies that meet a wide range of human service needs (e.g. existing government departments such as social services, health, etc.), while in other jurisdictions, formal “victim services” agencies may be mandated to deliver a more comprehensive range of services to respond to victims’ needs. Due to the varying approaches to victim services and programs across the country, comparisons between and among jurisdictions is difficult.

This document focuses on the programs and services considered to be part of the formal victim services programming in each jurisdiction and related agencies that provide critical services to victims of crime. While specific programming varies, victim services across Canada can generally be described within four service-delivery models (Department of Justice Canada, 2015), although each province and territory utilizes a different combination of these models:

- **Court-based services** are provided to victims specifically during their participation in criminal proceedings and can include providing information about the criminal justice process, the victim’s role in criminal proceedings, preparing and supporting victims who are required to testify in court, arranging testimonial aids, assistance to victims with preparing and presenting victim impact statements and information on the outcomes of proceedings.
- **System-based services** are provided to victims directly by the government include a range of victim services from the time of the offence through to the conclusion of court proceedings and their aftermath. Services can include referrals for counselling, court preparation and support, and information about available compensation or financial benefits programs, and the outcome of criminal proceedings.
- **Police-based services** often focus on assisting victims in the immediate aftermath of the crime and throughout the criminal justice process. Services typically include support, information, and referrals to other specialized agencies. Police-based victim services are delivered through the RCMP or local police services, and sometimes in partnership with community agencies and non-governmental organizations.
- **Community-based services** may take many forms, including general supports for victims of crime as well as specialized services for victims of specific crimes such as sexual assault or domestic violence. Community-based services are delivered by nongovernment organizations that receive funding from various sources including federal, provincial, and territorial governments and other agencies.

In addition to variations among the provinces and the territories, the nature and availability of specific services often varies within those jurisdictions, among communities depending on their size and location (i.e. urban, rural, northern, and remote areas). As well, each province, territory and relevant federal agency has a unique set of victim-related legislation, and a variety of training programs and standards regarding the delivery of victim services.

Victim services in the provinces and territories receive funding from a variety of sources, including victim surcharges paid by offenders. Victim surcharges are imposed as an additional penalty on provincial/territorial offences, above any other penalty that is imposed on the offender. Provincial and territorial surcharge structures and rates vary among the jurisdictions. The Federal Victim Surcharge Regime was amended in 2018 to provide for greater judicial discretion where it would cause undue hardship to the offender, or where it would otherwise be disproportionate to the gravity of the offence. Additionally, sentencing courts have the judicial discretion to increase the Federal Victim Strategy (FVS) where the court, having considered all circumstances, considers the increased amount appropriate and is satisfied that the offender has the ability to pay the higher amount.

Some provinces and territories fund victim services solely from surcharge revenue, while others supplement surcharge revenue with other funding. These differences, as well as the provincial/territorial surcharge structures and rates, are described in this document in the sections about victim services in each jurisdiction.

Beyond the victim services delivered by the provinces and territories, a variety of activities are undertaken at a national level to support victims. The Federal Victim Strategy (FVS), which is led by the Department of Justice (Policy Centre for Victim Issues) is the federal government's coordinated response to ongoing and emerging victims of crime issues. The overall goal of the FVS is to improve access to justice for victims of crime. The Policy Centre for Victim Issues (PCVI) works with other federal departments and provincial/territorial governments in order to implement the Strategy, and consults with victims, victim advocates, law enforcement and other stakeholders. The Policy Centre for Victim Issues assists the Programs Branch at the Department of Justice in implementing the Victims Fund.

In addition to PCVI, several other federal departments also engage with and provide services or information to victims of crime. This includes the Public Prosecution Service of Canada through its Crown Witness Coordinator Program in the territories; Public Safety Canada's National Office for Victims; Correctional Service Canada; Parole Board of Canada; and Employment and Social Development Canada through its Canadian Benefit for Parents of Young Victims of Crime. In addition, the Federal Ombudsperson for Victims of Crime is appointed by the Government of Canada to promote access to federal victims programs and services and address complaints relating to victims issues. This document also provides an overview of the mandate of each of these federal agencies.

## Victim Services in the Provinces and Territories

### British Columbia

British Columbia's Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General funds or directly delivers a range of programs and services for victims and survivors of crime throughout the province. The Victim Services and Crime Prevention (VSCP) Division in the Community Safety and Victim Services Branch is responsible for delivering programs and services to victims and survivors of crime as well as supporting local and provincial crime prevention initiatives. In addition, some specialized services for victims and survivors receive funding from other government departments.

#### **Governing legislation:**

- *Victims of Crime Act, 1996* (Government of British Columbia, 2017)
- *Crime Victim Assistance Act, 2001* (Government of British Columbia, 2017)
- *Crime Victim Assistance Amendment Act, 2023* (Government of British Columbia, 2023)
- *Victim Surcharge Levy Regulation* (Government of British Columbia, 2017)

#### **Right and principles for victims of crime:**

British Columbia's *Victims of Crime Act, 1996*, outlines the various rights afforded to victims involved in the criminal justice system. Specifically, the Act describes the victim's right to be treated fairly with courtesy and respect by all workers in the criminal justice system, the legal representation of victims, the presentation of the victim's perception of the impact of the offence, and the types of information that must be offered to victims.

#### **Role of government:**

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Training

#### **Service-delivery models:**

- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ Court-based
- ✓ Police-based
- ✓ System-based

#### **Funding model:**

The Community Safety and Victim Services Branch funds victim services with funding from three sources:

1. Voted Appropriation: The Branch has a budget that includes annual, core funding for victim services and violence against women programs.
2. Victim Surcharges: The *Victim Surcharge Levy Regulation* sets the provincial surcharge at 15 per cent of any provincial fine. Surcharges on both federal and provincial offences are housed in the Victim Surcharge Special Account, which is established under *The Victims of Crime Act, 1996* as a special account of the consolidated revenue fund.

3. **Civil Forfeiture Grant Funding:** The Community Safety and Victim Services Branch provides one-time grants from civil forfeiture funds to support community-driven projects that complement existing services and meet the unique needs of individual communities. Civil forfeiture is carried out in accordance with the *Civil Forfeiture Act*. The Act allows the director of civil forfeiture to commence legal proceedings against property that is linked to unlawful activity, in order to remove the tools and profits of unlawful activity and reinvest them in crime prevention and victims' compensation. All recoveries from successful forfeitures are deposited to the Civil Forfeiture Special Account and then used to pay for the office's activities, predominantly legal and court fees. Any funds in excess of operating costs are used to fund crime prevention programs and compensate victims of crime through grants.

### **Programs and services:**

The following resources offer contact information and details about victim services programs throughout British Columbia:

- The Ministry's "**If You Are a Victim of a Crime**" web page provides information about services and resources available to victims of crime throughout British Columbia, as well as detailed information for victims and survivors about the criminal justice process:  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime>.
- The Ministry's **Victim Services and Violence Against Women in British Columbia Program Directory** includes contact information for victim services programs across the province that assist victims of crime and women and children impacted by violence.  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime/victim-of-crime/victim-services-directory>.
- **VictimLinkBC** is a 24-hour service that provides information on and referrals to all programs and services for victims and survivors of crime in British Columbia (see details below).
- In addition, as part of Women and Gender Equality Canada's (WAGE) National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (GBV), funding from WAGE is being used to enhance two existing crisis lines to provide province-wide and specialized GBV crisis line response including risk assessment, immediate safety planning, and addressing the unique needs of Indigenous victims of GBV:
  - **Salal Sexual Violence Support Centre** offers 24-hour immediate crisis assistance, and anti-oppressive, decolonizing and intersectional feminist support to survivors of gender-based violence, including sexualized and domestic violence, as well as workshops to increase knowledge and awareness about sexual violence in communities throughout British Columbia
  - **The Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS)** provides support to residential school survivors, students and intergenerational survivors, while also offering 24-hour crisis support and support for families affected by trauma related to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and trauma-informed cultural support to survivors of gender-based violence.

### **Victim Service Programs Contracted by VSCP:**

- **VictimLinkBC** is a toll-free, confidential, multilingual service available across B.C. and the Yukon 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It provides information and referral services to all victims of crime, and immediate crisis support to victims of family and sexual violence. Services are provided in up to 150 languages, including many North American Indigenous languages. The service can be accessed by calling or texting 1-800- 563-0808, and by email to [VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca](mailto:VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca). Additional information

is available online at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/victimlinkbc> (Model: system-based).

- **Victim Service Programs:** VSCP funds over 160 programs that provide emotional support, information, referrals and practical assistance to victims of crime:
  - **Police-Based Victim Service programs** serve victims of all types of crime and trauma, and assist police and communities in situations involving multiple injuries or deaths. There are 91 police-based victim service programs operating out of police detachments in B.C. (Model: police-based, community-based).
  - **Community-Based Victim Service programs** serve victims of family and sexual violence, ethno-specific and diverse communities, children, and Indigenous peoples. These programs operate out of non-profit organizations. There are 66 community-based victim service programs (Model: community-based).
  - **Domestic Violence Units** are an evidence-based model of co-located service delivery that pairs dedicated police officer(s), with community-based victim services and, in some communities, a child protection worker to improve case coordination and collaboration in highest risk cases of domestic violence. There are 9 domestic violence units in B.C. (Model: police-based, community-based).
- **Violence Against Women (VAW) Counselling and Outreach Programs:** VSCP funds over 300 programs:
  - **Stopping the Violence (STV) Counselling programs** provide individual and group counselling for women who have experienced childhood abuse, sexual assault and violence in their relationships. There are 91 STV Counselling programs (Model: community-based).
  - **Sexual Assault Services (SAS) Programs** provide coordinated, culturally safe, client centred and trauma informed coordination and/or counselling services to survivors of sexual assault. There are currently 70 Sexual Assault Services (SAS) programs, including Indigenous-focused programs (Model: community-based).
  - Sexual Assault Centres are being established in five urban communities across the province that provide wraparound supports to survivors of sexual assault including victim services, counselling and access to other supports as well as trauma-informed spaces for forensic examinations and police interviews if the survivor chooses to access (Model: community-based).
  - **Children and Youth Experiencing Violence program (PEACE)** provides group and individual counselling for children ages three to 18 who have witnessed abuse, threats or violence in the home. There are 84 PEACE programs (Model: community-based).
  - **Outreach Services** help women identify and access the services they need by providing information and referrals, and accompaniment and transportation to other necessary services. There are 53 outreach service programs (Model: community-based).
  - **Multicultural Outreach Services** provide services to 10 communities in up to 24 languages to ensure women from newcomer, immigrant and racialized communities receive assistance by workers who speak their own language and are familiar with their culture. There are 11 multicultural outreach service programs (Model: community-based).

### **Other victim service programs delivered by the Ministry:**

- **Crime Victim Assistance Program** provides financial benefits to eligible victims, immediate family members, and some witnesses to help offset financial losses and assist in recovery from the effects of violent crime. Benefits include counselling, protective measures, and income support. This program is administered directly by the Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division, and the application form is available on the “If You Are a Victim of a Crime” web page (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Safety Unit** provides registered higher risk victims with safety and notification services and ensures victims are aware of and have access to safety services. Once registered with the Unit, victims and protected parties receive ongoing information while an accused or offender is in the community (on bail or probation) and in custody. To register, victims should call the Unit toll-free at 1-877-315-8822 or submit an application form available on the “If You Are a Victim of a Crime” web page (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Court Support Programs** work closely with Crown counsel, justice personnel, and other victim service providers in seven locations to ensure victims, witnesses and their families are provided with information and support during court proceedings (Model: system-based; court-based).
- **Victim Travel Fund** the Victim Safety Unit provides funds up to a maximum of \$3,000 for a family or victim of a serious crime to attend and participate in justice-related proceedings in B.C., if they live more than 100 kilometers from the location of the proceedings. Eligible expenses may include meals, accommodation and the most cost-effective form of travel. Victims must contact VictimLinkBC or the Victim Safety Unit to apply (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Impact Statement Program** gives victims the option to provide a written description of how the crime has affected the victim to provide to the court for consideration at the time of sentencing. The form and guidelines for completing a victim impact statement are available on “If You Are a Victim of a Crime” web page. Local victim services programs also provide the forms and assist victims with the process (Model: system-based, court-based).
- **Restitution Program** provides assistance to victims wishing to complete a Statement of Restitution (SOR), for consideration by the court at time of an offender’s sentencing, to recoup financial damages which occurred as a direct result of a crime. The form and directions for completing a SOR are available in ten languages on the “If You Are a Victim of a Crime” web page. Once restitution has been ordered by the court, the Ministry’s Restitution Program can provide victims with information and assistance in collecting restitution. The program encourages offenders to comply with orders, liaises with probation and parole officers and others about unpaid restitution, and gives general information (not legal advice) about civil court processes (Model: system-based; court-based).

### **Specialized victim services:**

The following are examples of specialized services for victims of crime operating in British Columbia.

- **Transition Homes and Safe Houses** operate across British Columbia with funding from BC Housing. A total of 95 transition homes and safe houses provide emergency accommodation and support for women and children who are victims of interpersonal violence (Model: community-based).
- **Domestic Violence Units** (also noted above) are an evidence-based model of co-located service delivery that pairs dedicated police officer(s), with community-based victim services and, in some communities, a child protection worker to improve case coordination and collaboration in highest

risk cases of domestic violence. The centres operate in Abbotsford, Capital Region, New Westminster, North Shore (North Vancouver and West Vancouver), Surrey, Nanaimo, Kelowna, Vancouver and Prince George (Model: community-based, system-based).

- **Services for child and youth victims:**

- **Child and Youth Advocacy Centres (CYAC)** are a collaborative response which facilitates a compassionate, integrated approach to the prevention, investigation, identification, prosecution and treatment of abuse involving children and youth. The centres operate in 12 locations across British Columbia – Maple Ridge, Kamloops, Chilliwack, Prince George, Kelowna, Langley, Surrey, Vancouver, Vernon, Vancouver Island (two locations), and West Kootenay Boundary (Model: community-based; system-based).
- **Youth Against Violence Line** is a province-wide, multilingual telephone help line that offers young people one-on-one support and information to help them deal with issues of youth violence or crime. Toll-Free: 1-800-680-4264 and online at <http://www.youthagainstviolenceline.com> (Model: system-based).

- **Seniors First BC** (formerly BC Centre for Elder Advocacy and Support) works to prevent elder abuse across the province. Its Victim Services Program helps victims of abuse or a crime to access the justice system, and provides practical and emotional support. The agency also operates the Seniors Abuse Information Line (SAIL) to offer a safe place for older adults, and those who care about them, to talk about possible elder abuse and prevention. Toll-free 1-866-437-1940 and online at <https://www.seniorsfirstbc.ca> (Model: community-based).

- **Services for male victims:**

- **British Columbia Society for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse** (Vancouver) provides therapeutic services for males who have been sexually abused. Its Victim Services program assists survivors with non-clinical issues regarding sexual abuse, including providing justice system information, support, liaison with justice system personnel, and court accompaniment (Model: community-based).
- **Vancouver Island Men's Trauma Centre** supports anyone who identifies as a man who has experienced emotional, sexual or physical trauma as a child or an adult. Its Victim Services program offers short-term emotional support, information about the option of making a police report, education about the impact of trauma on victims and families, court preparation, and referrals to other services (Model: community-based).

- **Services for Indigenous victims:**

VSCP funds 38 victim service, violence against women and sexual assault programs in BC that are contracted to serve Indigenous clients and/or are delivered by Indigenous organizations. The Ministry also funds a number of other specialized victim service programs for Indigenous victims of crime. Examples include:

- **Downtown Eastside Women's Centre** provides a safe space and programming for women and children in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Its Victim Services program offers culturally-safe, trauma-informed support to female victims of crime, recognizing that Indigenous women are disproportionately represented as victims of violence (Model: community-based).
- **The BC Family Information Liaison Unit (BC FILU)** provides dedicated support to the families of missing or murdered Indigenous Women and girls to meet their information and referral needs.

With office locations in both Vancouver and Prince George, the BC FILU operates as a mobile unit and FILU staff will travel to meet families in their home communities throughout the province. Services are available to all family members (blood and non-blood relations). Families may access services directly, or through referral by service providers or Commission staff (Model: system based).

- **Victim Court Support Programs** in the New Westminster and North Vancouver First Nations Courts work closely with Crown counsel, justice personnel, and other victim service providers to ensure victims, witnesses and their families are provided with information and support during court proceedings (Model: system-based).
- VSCP provides civil forfeiture grants funding to support community-led projects focused on violence against Indigenous women and girls. Projects funded by grants have included those that support: gatherings for vulnerable Indigenous women to connect with elders and communities; healing and rebuilding from violence; raising awareness of child abuse, family violence and sexual exploitation; programs for men who abuse intimate partners; and training and education for front-line service providers.

- **Services for victims and survivors from newcomer, immigrant and racialized communities:**

Through the Multicultural Outreach Program, VSCP provides services to 10 communities in 24 languages to ensure women from newcomer, immigrant and racialized communities receive assistance by workers who speak their own language and are familiar with their culture. In addition, the Ministry funds a number of other programs for women and children from immigrant and racialized communities. Examples include:

- **Chinese Community Policing Centre** works to foster and strengthen positive relationships and facilitate communication between the Vancouver Police Department and Chinese speaking people. Its Victim Services program assists Chinese speaking victims of crime by offering assistance, counselling, support and referral to other agencies (Model: community-based).
- **MOSAIC** (Multi-lingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities) is a registered charity serving immigrant, newcomer, and refugee communities in Greater Vancouver. Its Victim Services program provides emotional support, information about rights, legal information and referrals, to meet the specific needs of multicultural and immigrant peoples in Vancouver (Model: community-based).
- **Vancouver and Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society** operates the Community-Based Victim Assistance Program for women and children from newcomer and racialized communities who are victims and survivors of crime. The program offers assistance and orientation to the justice system, emotional support, and liaison with and referrals to other services (Model: community-based).
- **DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society** provides Gender-Based Violence Services for women and children experiencing domestic violence or other forms of gender-based violence. Programs include Stop the Violence counselling program and PEACE. Services are free, compassionate, culturally informed, confidential and available in people's first language (Model: community-based).

#### **Training initiatives:**

VSCP offers a variety of online training and other resources for service providers working with victims of crime and women and children impacted by violence. This includes training and resources on court

support, domestic violence safety planning, child and youth safety planning, elder abuse, victim services, and human trafficking. Details about all available training programs as well as publicly available webinars can be accessed on the “Victim Services Service Providers Training” web page at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/service-providers/training>.

## Alberta

The Alberta Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services (PSES) funds and oversees programs and services for victims of crime throughout the province. PSES Victim Services provides grant funding for Police Based Victim Services (PBVS), specialized community-based (Specialized) organizations, and Integrated organizations that offer services to victims of crime as they navigate the criminal justice system. PBVS personnel provide information, support, and referrals to victims of crime and/or tragedy throughout the province and are primarily co-located in police agency facilities. Specialized and Integrated victim serving programs are responsible for providing support to victims of specific crime types (i.e., family violence, sexual violence, etc.) or victims who may require additional supports (i.e., victims of human trafficking, child victims, etc.)

### **Governing legislation:**

- *Victims of Crime and Public Safety Act, 2000* (Government of Alberta, 2022)
- *Victims of Crime Regulation* (Government of Alberta, 2022)

### **Rights and principles for victims of crime:**

The *Victims of Crime and Public Safety Act*, sets out several principles that apply to the treatment of victims, including those related to safety, dignity, access to information, treatment during the criminal justice process, privacy, etc. In addition, the Victims of Crime Protocol (linked below) outlines the standards of service that victims can expect in their contact with the criminal justice system in Alberta.

### **Role of government:**

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Standards and competencies
- ✓ Training

### **Service-delivery models:**

- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ Police-based
- ✓ System-based

### **Sources of Revenue:**

The *Victims of Crime and Public Safety Act* establishes the Victims of Crime and Public Safety Fund (VOCPSF) and outlines how the Fund should be utilized. Surcharges on both federal and provincial offences are housed in the VOCPSF. The *Victims of Crime and Public Safety Regulation* sets the provincial surcharge at 20 per cent of any provincial fine and is collected in the same manner as the fine. The VOCPSF funds are used to administer the Act, to provide direct supports, services, financial benefits, and funeral expense reimbursements to victims of crime, and to provide grant funding to victim serving organizations.

### **Programs and services:**

The Ministry's "**Help for victims of crime**" web page provides information about programs and services available to victims of crime throughout Alberta: <https://www.alberta.ca/help-for-victims-of-crime.aspx>.

- **Police Based Victim Services (PBVS)** refers to victim services providers, co-located in RCMP detachments or in municipal and Indigenous police facilities, that work collaboratively with justice and community partners to assist victims of crime throughout the criminal justice process. Referrals to PBVS are made by the Police, the Crown, Specialized Community-based partners, or are self-referred. PBVS personnel can provide direct support and mitigation efforts in the immediate aftermath of a criminal event, including referrals to other appropriate supports such as medical, legal, social services, and other community and professional agencies, and will assist victims of violent crime in accessing Alberta's new Victims of crime Assistance Program (VAP). PBVS personnel also provide information to victims about their rights during the criminal justice process, including the right to submit a Victim Impact Statement and Statement on Restitution, and information about their case and criminal proceedings. They are trained and experienced in coordinating access to justice system personnel, and in court orientation and accompaniment.

Additionally, PBVSs support communities by providing practical emotional support and conducting needs assessments to make appropriate community referrals for victims of tragic circumstance (Model: police-based).

- **Victims of Crime Assistance Program** (September 2022) facilitates direct supports and services to victims of serious and violent crime. Victims can seek immediate financial assistance for urgently required needs such as basic necessities for living, emergency accommodation, medical aids, and travel expenses. There is a category for extended medical benefit coverage for serious injuries (direct billing for specialized counselling supports and other treatment services), and a severe injury benefit (monetary) for victims who are impacted by a significant and permanent loss or impairment. Victims can also apply to the program for court attendance expense reimbursement, funeral expense reimbursement, grief counselling for families of deceased victims, and crisis counselling for minors who witness violence.

Program details and the new application forms are available on the Ministry's website (Model: system-based).

- **Restitution Recovery Program** helps collect unpaid portions of an order for restitution granted during the court process. When a victim makes an application for restitution, they may 'opt in' to the program at no cost. If the ordered restitution amount is not paid, the program will initiate collection activities on behalf of the victim (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Impact Statements (VIS)/Community Impact Statements (CIS)** give the victim or a community the chance to describe how they have been affected by a crime. If a person is found guilty, the statement will be considered by the judge at the time of sentencing. The form and instructions for completion are available on the Ministry website, and police-based and community-based programs are available to assist victims with this process (Model: system-based).

### **Specialized and Integrated Victim Services Programs:**

Specialized and Integrated victim-serving organizations in Alberta receive grant funding from the VOCPSPF to deliver services to victims during their involvement in the criminal justice process. They may also receive funding from other government ministries.

Specialized and Integrated organizations deliver in-depth services that focus on victims based on specific types of crime, including but not limited to:

- Victims of **intimate partner violence**. Alberta supports several specialized intimate partner violence programs, including those offering a Domestic Violence Justice Response (DVJR) service delivery

model. The DVJR service delivery model is a recognized best-practice that is community led and formalizes integrated partnerships and processes among community and justice partners including: prosecutors, correctional services, police, victim case managers and community partners. The model supports enhanced supports for victims and more efficient court processes.

- Victims of **sexual violence**. Sexual assault services are provided by community-based organizations that receive funding from the Government of Alberta, including VOCPSF funding to support Specialized Criminal Justice Navigator positions.
- Victims of **human trafficking**. In addition to funding organizations that directly assist victims of human trafficking, Government of Alberta is working to implement recommendations from Human Trafficking Task Force final report and 9-Point Action Plan. For more information go to <https://www.alberta.ca/human-trafficking-task-force.aspx>.

Specialized and Integrated organizations may also support victims from specific demographics groups, including:

- **Child victims**. The Government of Alberta supports a network of Child Advocacy Centres (CACs)/ Child and Youth Advocacy Centres (CYACs) that deliver an integrated response to child abuse. CACs/CYACs are child-friendly facilities with multi-disciplinary teams that provide an individualized response for children and youth who have experienced mal-treatment and for their non-offending family members. Services include prevention, intervention, and access to prosecution services, treatment, and support services.
- Victims of **elder abuse**.
- Victims who are members of **ethnic and cultural minority communities**.
- Alberta also has several government programs and services that deliver specialized supports to victims of crime, including:
  - The **Family Violence Info Line** (310-1818) provides information, support, and referral services 24/7 in more than 170 languages. More information can be found at <https://www.alberta.ca/family-violence-find-supports.aspx>.
  - Alberta's **One Line for Sexual Violence** (1-866-403-8000) provides province-wide access by professional responders who listen, offer support, and connect callers to resources. One Line can be access by phone or text/chat. For more information, go to <https://www.alberta.ca/sexual-violence-get-help.aspx>.
  - Financial assistance is available to help pay for **costs associated with fleeing family violence**. For more information go to <https://www.alberta.ca/family-violence-costs-leave.aspx>.
  - Victims fleeing family violence can end a lease without financial penalty with a **Safer Spaces Certificate**. For more information, go to <https://www.alberta.ca/safer-spaces-certificate.aspx>.
  - Victims of intimate partner violence may be eligible for 10 days unpaid **leave from work** per calendar year. For more information go to <https://www.alberta.ca/domestic-violence-leave.aspx>.
  - Victims of intimate partner violence can seek an **Emergency Protection Order** and can receive free assistance from the Emergency Protection Order Program. For more information, go to <https://www.alberta.ca/get-emergency-protection-order.aspx>.

- The ***Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence (Clare’s Law) Act*** gives people who feel at risk of intimate partner violence a way to get information about their partner so they can make informed choices about their safety. For more information go to <https://www.alberta.ca/claress-law.aspx>.
- **The Victims of Homicide Support Society of Edmonton** provides a self-help/support group designed to offer emotional support and information about surviving the loss of a loved one to murder. <http://www.victimsofhomicide.org/>
- **Services for Indigenous victims:**
  - **Indigenous Victims of Crime** can access services through both community-based and police-based programs located in Indigenous communities throughout Alberta. Programs provide culturally safe victim services response including information, support and referral (Model: police-based, community-based).
  - **Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)** is a federally funded initiative to address the information and support needs of families with missing and/or murdered Indigenous women and girls. This two-year initiative initially ran parallel to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and has now been extended until March 31, 2025 (Model: system-based).

#### Special resources for victims:

- **Victims of Crime Protocol** is intended to help victims of crime navigate and be fully engaged in the criminal justice system in Alberta, as well as to enhance their personal safety. It outlines what can be expected from the criminal justice process. Online at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/3969471>.
- **Victims of Crime Handbook: Information for Immigrants and Refugees on Services for Victims of Crime** this handbook is meant to help immigrants and refugees in Alberta who are victims of crime, as well as those who seek to assist them. It describes programs, services and opportunities to assist victims of crime and is available in 12 languages. Online at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/victim-of-crime-handbook-english>.
- **Language Translation Services** all victim serving organizations that receive funding through the Victims of Crime and Public Safety Fund have access to CanTalk Inc. for immediate, phone based interpretation and translation services. This allows programs the ability to communicate with victims when language is a challenge. CanTalk provides these services in over 110 languages, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

#### Training initiatives:

Alberta’s PSES Victim Services provides a diverse suite of training initiatives for both victim serving organizations and internal government areas in a variety of modes, including:

- eLearning
- Video Resource Library
- Presentations, both in person and remote

Topics and areas include:

- A suite of training designed to prepare victim serving team members in preparation for their roles
- eLearning in the areas of Human Trafficking, Hate Crimes, Ambiguous Loss, and other relevant subjects

- Videos and resources exploring services offered to groups and victims
- Board Governance Training is provided to all police-based non-profit governance boards
- Indigenous Awareness Training is offered annually to help participants develop their understanding about the culture, history, and contemporary issues of Indigenous people so that they can provide a more culturally appropriate service to Indigenous victims of crime

All training is developed in consultation with stakeholders and in cooperation with victim serving organizations across the province.

## Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice funds or directly delivers a range of services for victims of crime and traumatic events throughout the province. The Ministry's mandate for victim services falls under Victims Services of the Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Branch. Some specialized programs and services for victims are also funded and supported by CSWB's Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Unit. Community-based organizations are funded to deliver many of the services for victims in Saskatchewan.

### **Governing legislation:**

- *Victims of Crime Act, 1995* (Government of Saskatchewan, 2017)
- *Victims of Crime Regulations, 1997* (Government of Saskatchewan, 2017)
- *The Victims of Interpersonal Violence Act* (Government of Saskatchewan, 2023)

### **Rights and principles for victims of crime:**

*The Victims of Crime Act, 1995*, includes *The Declaration of Principles Respecting the Treatment of Victims of Crime*. This declaration sets out a number of principles to guide persons working within the justice system in relation to the treatment of victims.

### **Role of government:**

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Training

### **Service-delivery models:**

- ✓ Court-based
- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ Police-based
- ✓ System-based

### **Funding model:**

The Victims Services Program in Saskatchewan is funded primarily from surcharges paid by offenders. Surcharges on both federal and provincial offences are housed in the Victims' Fund, a special purpose fund created under *The Victims of Crime Act, 1995* and separate from general revenues. The Regulations set the provincial surcharge rates as follows: \$40 if the fine imposed is \$99 or less; \$50 for fines over \$99 and up to \$200; \$60 for fines over \$200 and up to \$350; \$80 for fines over \$350 and up to \$500; 40 per cent of the amount of the fine if the fine is over \$500; and \$50 if no fine is imposed. Provincial and federal surcharges can be satisfied by participation in a fine option program, and provincial surcharges are excluded from being satisfied by default jail time. A small portion of revenue to the Victims' Fund also comes from the Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund (Civil Forfeiture); when grants are made to various police forces in the province through the Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund, the Victims' Fund receives a matching amount.

### **Programs and services:**

Contact information for all victim services programs in Saskatchewan are available on the Ministry's website at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/victimsservices>.

- **Police-based victim services** assist victims in the immediate aftermath of a crime or tragedy and throughout the criminal justice process. Services offered include crisis intervention, information, support, advocacy, court related services and referrals to other specialized programs and services. Programs are funded through municipal police services and community-based organizations that partner with RCMP detachments. Services are available province-wide (Model: police-based).
  - **A Facility Dog** is currently available in one police-based victim services program in Saskatchewan. The dog may be brought in immediately after individuals are impacted by a crime, used during interviews by police with a child victim, or used to provide support to a victim testifying in court.
- **Victim/Witness Services Program** provides court orientation and support to children and other vulnerable witnesses who are required to testify in court. Programs are based in regional Prosecutions offices, and services are available province-wide (Model: court-based).
- **Victims Compensation Program** reimburses victims for reasonable expenses resulting from criminal acts of personal violence. Victims may apply for compensation for harm resulting from a *Criminal Code* offence of personal violence, listed in the *Victims of Crime Regulations, 1997*, that occurred in Saskatchewan and was reported to the police. The program is administered by the Victims Services Branch (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Impact Statement Program** makes it possible for victims to complete a victim impact statement (VIS) to be considered by the Judge at the time of an offender's sentencing. The form and guidelines for completing a VIS as well as a Community Impact Statement are available on the Ministry's website. Local victim services programs also provide the forms and assist victims with the process (Model: system-based).

#### **Specialized victim services:**

A variety of specialized services for victims of crime are available in Saskatchewan.

- **Domestic violence:**
  - **Domestic Violence Victim Services** programs are funded in North Battleford, Saskatoon, and Regina to provide specialized supports to victims of domestic violence after a report, including for those victims involved in the specialized Domestic Violence Court processes that operate in those cities (Models: community-based; police-based).
  - **Transition House** services provide emergency accommodation and support for women who are victims of interpersonal violence and abuse and their children. There are 12 programs funded in the province (Model: community-based).
  - **Second Stage Housing** services provide long-term, safe, and affordable independent housing for women and their children leaving violence and abuse. There are 6 programs funded in the province and in addition to housing, clients receive counselling, connection to education and employment, and supports for their children (Model: community-based).
  - **Family Violence Intervention** services assist women who may not use a shelter or need help in accessing a shelter or other services. There are 16 funded programs with services including supporting women, children and families in violent or potentially violent circumstances, and education on abuse and information about services available in the community (Model: community-based).

- **Family Intervention Rapid Support Teams (FIRST)** aim to intervene earlier with families at risk of violence to positively impact family circumstances, preventing potentially serious situations. The Teams use an intensive outreach approach to build a relationship with clients and build trust before focusing on the behavioural health of a family. FIRST is operating in 4 communities (Model: community-based).
- **Enhanced Residential Services** are available in 2 communities (3 programs) to provide short-term accommodations to individuals who are experiencing violence and other challenges related to substance use, mental health, or homelessness (Model: community-based).
- **Transportation Initiatives** are funded to address transportation barriers for individuals and families leaving violence. The Northern Transportation and Support Initiative increases access to safety and provides transitional support for residents in the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District who need to leave their homes due to interpersonal violence. The Transportation Reimbursement Policy provides existing programs that deliver interpersonal violence and abuse services with reimbursement when they support clients with emergency transportation (Model: community-based).
- **211 Saskatchewan – Interpersonal Violence and Abuse** is a 24/7 service referral platform for situations of interpersonal violence and abuse (Model: community-based).
- **Children Exposed to Violence** programs are funded in nine communities. These programs assist children and youth who have witnessed or experienced interpersonal violence or abuse, with a goal of preventing them from becoming future victims or perpetrators of violence and abuse (Model: community-based).
- **Independent Legal Advice: The Listen Project** provides up to four hours per case of legal advice and/or information through an independent roster of private bar lawyers who have received the appropriate trauma informed training and are qualified to give advice related to domestic or sexual violence (Model: community-based).
- **Sexual assault:**
  - **Sexual assault services** are funded in 6 communities and may include a 24-hour crisis telephone line, direct supports, and counseling for victims (Model: community-based).
  - **Victim Advocate Case Reviews** are collaborative processes, allowing outside sexual assault advocates and experts to work with police agencies to review unfounded sexual assault cases. The model is intended to improve police responses to sexual assault. Community involvement and oversight can result in improved transparency, accountability, and outcomes for victims of sexual assault (Model: community-based).
  - **Independent Legal Counsel**, as per Sections 276 and 278 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*, is available for victims of sexual assault to exercise their right to be informed and represented by legal counsel at third party record hearings or when required to provide evidence on their sexual history (Model: system-based).
- **Child and Youth Advocacy Centres** are child-friendly facilities that support integrated investigations of child abuse. There are two in Saskatchewan: the Regina Children’s Justice Centre and the Saskatoon Centre for Children’s Justice. Each centre is operated, managed, and funded jointly by staff of the local police service and the Ministry of Social Services. Each centre has one Victim Services Responder assigned to it from the local police-based victim services program to provide specialized, on-site support to victims and their families (Models: police-based; system-based).

- **Services for Indigenous victims:**
  - **Indigenous Resource Officer** positions are funded within six police-based victim services programs to support Indigenous victims of crime and their families (Model: police-based).
  - **Indigenous Family Violence Programs** are funded in five communities (six programs) to help Indigenous families living in urban areas deal with violence and abuse (Model: community-based).
  - **The Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)** assists families with finding the information they seek about their murdered or missing loved ones. The FILU collaborates with Indigenous and non-Indigenous to support families in a trauma-informed way. (Model: system-based; community-based).
- **Missing Persons Liaisons** are funded as part of the police-based victim services programs in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert. These positions support families of missing persons in their respective cities, and provide advice, guidance, and training to police-based victim services throughout the province on supporting families of missing person (Model: police-based).
- **A Homicide Loss Support Group** is funded by Victims Services and provided by Caring Hearts. The monthly support group brings together adults who have experienced a loss due to homicide (Model: community-based).
- **Supports for Families of Missing Persons** includes specialized counselling and support groups to address the unique needs of families of missing persons, including the uncertainty of ambiguous loss (Model: community-based).
- **Restitution** the Ministry assists victims in preparing a Statement on Restitution (SOR) to be considered by the Judge at the time of an offender's sentencing. The form and guidelines for completing a SOR are available on the Ministry's website. Local victim services programs also provide the forms and assist victims with the process. Once restitution has been ordered by the court, victims are assisted in collecting restitution by two programs operated by Victims Services (model: system-based):
  - **The Adult Restitution Program (ARP)** working within criminal justice processes, provides information to victims about restitution, monitors payments, works with offenders to help ensure payments are made, and works with probation officers and prosecutors to enforce restitution orders.
  - **The Restitution Civil Enforcement Program (RCEP)** assists victims with enforcing restitution orders through civil processes. Victims can authorize the program to use civil measures to collect the restitution on their behalf.
- **Language Translation Services** Victims Services holds an agreement with CanTalk Inc. to provide immediate, phone-based interpretation and translation services in over 20 languages for police-based victim services, domestic violence victim services, and victim/witnesses services programs. This provides programs the ability to communicate with victims when language is a challenge.

#### **Training initiatives:**

The Victims Services Branch, in partnership with Saskatchewan Polytechnic, has developed an Applied Certificate Program in Victim Services Coordination. This standardized training program is delivered jointly by the two organizations to all new service-delivery staff of police-based and domestic violence

victim services programs in the province. The Applied Certificate Program is also offered on Saskatchewan Polytechnic’s calendar for registrations from the public as students of the institution.

**Program evaluation:**

- A survey of clients served by police-based victim services programs in 2023-24 indicated that 94 per cent of clients who responded said their needs were met (56 per cent said that programs “more than met” their needs), and 93 per cent reported that they were satisfied with the services and supports they had received (69 per cent were “very satisfied”). This ongoing client survey shows that client satisfaction rates have remained consistent at between 90 and 99 per cent since 2006-07.
- In 2020-21, the survey of clients by police-based victim services programs was expanded to capture clients’ self-reported feedback on other specific outcomes as a result of the services received. The table illustrates the percentage of those survey respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed that the services contributed to positive outcomes for each measure:

	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Validated	94.1%	94.0%	92.7%	89.4%
Safe	87.2%	90.0%	88.5%	89.7%
Supported	86.8%	87.3%	86.4%	86.8%
Informed	72.9%	81.8%	79.7%	83.4%
Connected	88.2%	81.6%	77.4%	80.0%
Empowered	71.9%	74.1%	71.3%	72.6%
Prepared	77.6	71.1%	68.1%	69.6%
<b>Overall*</b>	<b>82.7%</b>	<b>82.8%</b>	<b>80.6%</b>	<b>81.6%</b>

\*10.7 per cent remained neutral, and only 5.7 per cent either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

- Saskatchewan’s two restitution programs were evaluated by the Department of Justice Canada in partnership with the province’s Ministry of Justice:
  - Key learnings of the 2008-09 ARP evaluation included: the ARP should be continued; the program is unique to Saskatchewan and should be duplicated in other provinces; support for victims is also needed through the civil process of enforcing restitution; and victims need improved information and assistance with all aspects of restitution. The Ministry responded by developing the RCEP to assist victims with civil enforcement, and by adding a second full-time position in the ARP program to allow staff time to address other key learnings.
  - The report on the RCEP pilot project evaluation was completed in 2010, and recommendations were made regarding program documentation, administration, and public awareness. The Ministry addressed these recommendations, most notably by moving the RCEP from the Fine Collections Branch to Victims Services in order to share resources and operate more seamlessly with the ARP.

**Protocols and Legislative Provisions for Victims:**

- Saskatchewan’s domestic violence disclosure protocol (Clare’s Law) provides a process for police to disclose information to intimate partners for the purpose of informing and protecting individuals who may be at risk from a partner in their personal relationships.

- *The Children’s Law Act* was amended to align with the federal *Divorce Act* amendments, which came into effect on March 1, 2021. Amendments to both Acts require family violence and its effects to be considered when making parenting arrangements.
- Amendments to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* provide survivors of interpersonal violence with five days paid leave and a further five days’ unpaid leave which allows survivors more financial security as they leave violent relationships.
- Legislation has been amended requiring family law service providers, such as mediators and collaborative lawyers, to have 14 hours of family violence training. The ministry’s partner, the Provincial Association of Transition Houses (PATHS), agreed to provide a 14-hour family violence training program designed for family law service providers, which has been promoted to fulfill this requirement.
- Amendments to *The Victims of Interpersonal Violence Amendment Act* allows renters to end fixed-term tenancy agreements with 28 days’ notice without penalty if they are IPV victims or victims of sexual violence and continue to be at risk.
- Amendments to *The Privacy Act* allows a person whose intimate image has been distributed without their consent to sue the person who distributed the image. It also shifts the onus of proof to the person that circulated the image, requiring them to show that they had a reasonable basis to conclude consent had been granted to do so.
- *The Protection From Human Trafficking Act* provides civil remedies for victims and survivors of human trafficking, including a dedicated human trafficking protection order, provisions for search warrants to locate a victim, and a tort of human trafficking.

## Manitoba

The Manitoba Department of Justice delivers services for victims of crime throughout the province. The Department's mandate for victim services falls under its Victim Services Branch (VSB) and includes support to victims of domestic violence, child victims and witnesses, victims of the most serious crimes as outlined under Manitoba's *Victims' Bill of Rights*, and families of murdered and missing Indigenous persons. Victim Services offers support to all individuals under the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights. Non-government organizations also receive funding through the Branch to provide specialized services to victims of domestic violence, and sexual assault, vulnerable victims including children, and Indigenous persons. Additional specialized services for victims are funded by other government departments and agencies.

### Governing legislation:

- *The Victims' Bill of Rights* (Government of Manitoba, 2023)

The *Victims' Bill of Rights* in Manitoba was amended in 2022 to enable the director to pay compensation to the family members of a victim despite the victim's conviction for certain offences. An amendment was also made to allow a victim in a sexual assault case to receive, at no cost, independent legal representation if the victim's personal information is sought to be used as evidence by the accused – bringing the legislation in line with recent Canadian Criminal Code changes around this procedure. These amendments came into force in June of 2023.

- *Victims' Rights Regulations* (Government of Manitoba, 2023)
- *Designated Offences Regulation* (Government of Manitoba, 2018)
- *The Domestic Violence and Stalking Act* (Government of Manitoba, 2023)
- *The Residential Tenancies Act* (Government of Manitoba, 2023)
- *The Intimate Image Protection Act* (Government of Manitoba, 2023)

### Rights and principles for victims of crime:

*The Victim's Bill of Rights, 2001*, describes the rights for victims of crime in Manitoba. Victims have the right to be treated with respect throughout the criminal justice process including the right to information concerning their case.

### Role of government:

- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Training

### Service-delivery models:

- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ Court-based
- ✓ Police-based
- ✓ System-based

### Funding model:

Manitoba Justice Victim Services is generally funded solely from victim surcharges paid by offenders, with the exception of benefits under the Compensation for Victims of Crime program, which are funded from the government's general revenue. The *Victims' Rights Regulation* sets the provincial surcharge rate at 25 per cent of the fine imposed. If there is no fine, the justice shall impose a surcharge of not more than

\$100. Surcharges on both federal and provincial offences are deposited as revenue into the Consolidated Fund of Manitoba. The revenue is specifically earmarked for use by Victim Services to fund programs or initiatives that support the promotion, delivery and administration of service for victims of crime. Provincial and federal surcharges can be satisfied through serving default jail time, while federal surcharges can be satisfied through participation in the Fine Option Program.

### **Programs and services:**

Details about all victim services programs in Manitoba, including contact information, are available on the Department's website at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/justice/vs>. Updated legislation is available on the Manitoba Laws website at [Manitoba Laws \(gov.mb.ca\)](http://Manitoba Laws (gov.mb.ca)).

- **Manitoba Justice Victim Services** helps victims of the most serious crimes as listed *Manitoba's Victims' Bill of Rights*; victims of domestic violence; child victims and witnesses; and victims of all crimes under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*. In Winnipeg, services are divided into specialty units based on the nature of the crime. From seven offices in rural Manitoba, victim services workers provide services to victims for all of the above categories of crime. In general, Victim Services helps people access their rights, understand their responsibilities, and connects them to other services or agencies (Model: court-based; system-based).
- **Victims' Rights Support Service** deals with criminal court cases involving victims of serious crimes as defined under Manitoba's *Victims' Bill of Rights*. Victim service workers guide victims through the process of dealing with police, prosecutions, courts and corrections officials, and advise about victims' options, rights and responsibilities under the bill (Model: court-based).
- **Victim/Witness Assistance Program** provides support services to crime victims and individuals who are subpoenaed as Crown witnesses in Provincial Court and Court of King's Bench in Winnipeg (Model: court-based).
- **Child Victim Support Service** helps victims and witnesses of abuse under age 18, adult survivors of sexual abuse, and other vulnerable victims who are involved in the criminal court process in Winnipeg. Services provided include explaining the court process and procedures, court preparation and support, and referrals to other relevant community agencies. (Model: court-based).
- **Domestic Violence Support Service (DVSS)** helps victims of domestic violence when criminal charges have been laid, or may be laid against their partners. Victim Services Workers explain the cycle of violence, how the cycle may affect victims and their families and how to escape from it. They also help victims to develop protection plans to increase their personal safety. The DVSS also provides support to families whose matters are proceeding through the restorative justice process, and families who receive police services for domestic violence incidents that do not result in charges or arrests (Winnipeg only). (Model: court –based; system-based).
- **Family Guide - Domestic Violence Specialist (FGDVS)** - the service, which works in tandem with the Family Resolution Service in Courts Division, provides trauma informed supports to families going through separation and divorce. The service includes family guides/domestic violence specialists, who provide enhanced services such as support, navigation and referrals, to families experiencing intimate partner violence. These specialists work with mediators who can proactively intervene early in a family's breakdown to support healthier behaviours. They also provide ongoing safety planning to victims. (Model: system-based).
- **Protection Order Designates Service** - *The Domestic Violence and Stalking Act* allows victims of stalking or domestic violence to apply for protection orders. Victim Services provides training to

community service agencies so that their staff may become Protection Order Designates (PODS) to assist individuals with their applications for orders. There are currently 135 PODs from 44 agencies and 15 communities across the province.

- **Cellphone Emergency Limited Link-Up Program and SafeTracks** - the Cellphone Emergency Limited Link-Up Program (CELL) is a co-operative effort between social services agencies, police services and Manitoba Justice. A victim services provincial coordinator manages the CELL program. This program provides cell phones on a short-term basis to victims of domestic violence and stalking who are deemed to be at very high risk of violence. Recognizing that many clients have their own cell phones, the CELL Program was expanded to include the use of clients' personal cell phones within the program. In 2016, VSB launched SafeTracks for victims at extreme risk for domestic violence. SafeTracks is a technologically advanced, GPS monitored device that when activated by the user goes directly to a company called Northern 911 who then dispatch police to the user's location. VSB has four SafeTracks devices.
- **Victim Services Accredited Facility Dog Gloucester (Glossy)** is an Accredited Intervention Dog with Manitoba Justice Victim Services. She helps victim services workers support child victims in meetings and interviews, and sits alongside victims as they testify in court. (Model: court-based).
- **Canadian Victims Bill of Rights** In addition to the services noted above, the branch also assists victims of crime who request services under the Canadian Victim Bill of Rights (CVBR). The CVBR came into force in 2015 and established four areas of statutory rights for victims of crime (information, participation, protection and restitution) as well as a complaints process. The CVBR defines "victim" as someone who has suffered physical or emotional harm, property damage or financial loss as a result of crime. (Model: court-based).
- **Manitoba Justice Victim Services' Family Liaison Contact (FLC)** provides support and information to families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The FLC assists family members throughout Manitoba to access services and information, link families to police and other agencies, support families through court processes, build open lines of communication with police and prosecutors to keep families up to date on developments in their case, and connect families with counselling agencies and services that offer culturally safe programs. (Model: system-based).
- **Compensation for Victims of Crime Program** provides compensation to victims who suffer personal injury, hardships or expenses as a result of certain crimes. These crimes are outlined in the *Victims' Rights Regulation*. The program is also available to specific relatives and dependants of victims of homicide in Manitoba. Program details and application forms are available on the Department's website. (Model: system-based).
- **Restitution** can be applied for by victims for monetary losses incurred as a direct result of a crime; the court will consider the amount of restitution to be ordered if an offender is convicted. The SOR and guidelines are available on the Department's website, along with tips on how to collect restitution that has been ordered by the court. (Model: court-based).
- **Victim Impact Statements (VIS)** apply to victims of all crimes. These statements allow victims to tell the court how they have been affected by crimes. The statements include a description of the emotional, physical and financial harm caused. The VIS forms and guidelines are available on the Department's website, and victim services workers provide information and guidance on how to prepare Victim Impact Statements. (Model: court-based).
- **Independent Counsel** - When sexual assault cases proceed through the criminal justice system, Manitoba Justice pays for independent lawyers to represent the interests of sexual assault survivors

if defence counsel applies to the court for access to the victim's counselling records or other information. (Model: court-based).

- **Lease Termination Certificates** - Manitoba Justice, Victim Services is currently the only designated authority under section 92.4(1) of the *Residential Tenancies Act* to issue a certificate to a tenant for the purpose of terminating a tenancy because of household, domestic or sexual violence or stalking. An applicant may request a lease termination if they believe there is a risk to themselves, and/or to their children's safety should they remain in their rental unit. (Model: system-based).
- **Fact Sheets** – The Victim Services website includes fact sheets on safety planning, the dynamics of domestic violence, orders of protections, and options for survivors of sexual assault. It also features links to other resources. (Model: system-based).

#### **Other government departments:**

- **Family Violence Prevention Program:** the Government of Manitoba offers information on family violence and available resources online at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/msw/fvpp>.
  - **Women's shelters** are funded through the Family Violence Prevention Program. The program funds ten women's shelters that provide safe, emergency accommodations for women and their children who have experienced family violence. Some shelters also provide men with counselling and accommodation in a hotel as necessary. The program also funds four residential second-stage programs that offer safe, protective and affordable interim housing and services for women leaving abusive relationships. These programs also provide individual and group counselling, parenting support and information.
- **Tracia's Trust:** In 2002, Manitoba launched Canada's first provincial strategy to prevent sexual exploitation. This strategy is now known as Tracia's Trust. The strategy is Manitoba's response to children, youth and adults who are at risk of, or survivors of, sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. Manitoba Families is the lead department responsible for coordinating the implementation of the strategy via its Sexual Exploitation Unit. The Sexual Exploitation Unit works with government departments, agencies, the community and non-governmental organizations leading specific initiatives under the strategy.

#### **Specialized victim services:**

- **Manitoba's Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU):** With the assistance of funding from Justice Canada, the Victim Services branch employs two Family Liaison Contact (FLC) workers to assist the families of missing and murdered Indigenous persons. One FLC works alongside members of the RCMP, and the second FLC works alongside the Winnipeg Police Service. The Justice Canada funding also supports two Community Family Liaison Contact workers, which are located in Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak in the north and Ka Ni Kanichihk in the south. They offer one-stop information services for families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) by coordinating their access to appropriate agencies, justice partners and culturally safe resources, healing programs and annual healing gathering events. (Model: system-based).
- **Police-based victim services** operate in three regions: Winnipeg Police Service, Brandon Police Service, and Pembina Valley Victim Services, which is based in Morden and serves four communities. The two latter agencies receive grant funding from Victim Services, while the Winnipeg program is funded as part of the police service budget. These programs assist victims by providing support, information, and referrals to appropriate agencies. (Model: police-based).

- **The Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P)** - In 2016, *The Intimate Image Protection Act (IIPA)* came into force and designated **C3P**, through its Cybertip.ca program, to be the first contact for Manitobans of any age whose intimate images have been shared without consent. C3P receives funding through Victim Services. (Model: system-based).
- **Toba Center for Children and Youth** is a **Child Advocacy Centre (CAC)**, which focuses on the needs of children and youth who have experienced abuse. The centre is designed to facilitate multi-system collaboration and foster best practices in child abuse investigations, to ensure that child victims receive sensitive and immediate support in child friendly settings that put their needs first. The multi-disciplinary team is able to engage with the child victim and their non-offending caregivers at Toba where interviews are conducted, case planning and meetings occur, and supportive services are provided. The Centre is funded by the Department of Families, the Department of Health and the Department of Justice Canada. (Model: Police-based, community-based, system-based).
- **Sexual Assault services** are delivered by community-based organizations and health providers, with funding from a variety of sources including health authorities and others. Services include a provincial 24-hour crisis telephone line, counselling, emotional support, medical support, legal advocacy, and referrals to other relevant community agencies. (Model: Community-based). The Government of Manitoba also maintains a website with information about sexual violence: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/youarenotalone>.

#### Community-based programs:

- **Age and Opportunity (A&O) Support Services for Older Adults** assists older victims of crime in Winnipeg with information, practical assistance and the emotional support needed to participate in the criminal justice system in Manitoba. A&O receives funding from several government departments, including from Victim Services.
- **Aurora Family Therapy Centre (Aurora)** offers a Family Bereavement Support program for family members of homicide victims and missing persons. Aurora receives funding from Victim Services.
- **Family Dynamics** fast tracks referrals from Manitoba Justice Victim Services so that families who have experienced domestic abuse receive direct access to appropriate counselling services in a timely way. Families are assisted to move toward achieving greater stability for themselves and their children by receiving support and enhancing their communication and problem resolution skills. The agency receives funding from Victim Services.
- **Heartwood Healing Centre** provides individual and group therapy to Manitobans who are victims of child or adolescent sexual abuse. They offer a variety of pre-therapy supports such as programming and short term counselling. The program receives funding from Victim Services.
- **Ka Ni Kanichihk – Medicine Bear Program** provides culturally-specific therapeutic approaches and counselling to both individuals and families of missing and murdered women. With grant funding from Victim Services, the program engages community Elders and Traditional Healers ensuring families have access to a broad range of medicines, teachings and ceremonies.
- **Ka Ni Kanichihk – Heart Medicine Lodge (Sexual Assault Program)** offers support to Indigenous women and girls who have been subjected to sexual abuse. The program receives grant funding from Victim Services.
- **Klinic Community Health Centre -Trafficked Persons Hotline** provides ongoing training and support to counsellors answering the 24/7 crisis line and provides a referral network and response protocol

for trafficked persons in partnership with police and community partners. The program receives grant funding from Victim Services.

- **Manitoba Organization of Victim Advocates (MOVA)** supports family survivors of homicide by providing information about the criminal justice system and their options in relation to these processes and services. MOVA provides one-on-one telephone support or visitation, as needed, immediately after the crime, as well as emotional support, monthly meetings with a therapists and/or referral services to victims. MOVA receives grant funding from Victim Services.
- **Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad Inc. (Ndinawe)** operates the Child and Youth Care Certificate Program, a one-year course accredited by Red River College. The program provides experiential persons, who were exploited in the sex trade as youth, the opportunity for accredited training in a community setting. The program receives grant funding from Victim Services.
- **The Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) Family and Community Wellness Centre Inc.** runs a bereavement support group (Osihtoskamakewewin) for families of missing and murdered persons in the Thompson area. The program receives funding from Victim Services.
- **The North End Women's Centre** provides services to women and gender-diverse people over the age of 18 and their children. It uses culturally driven teachings to help women move beyond the trauma state. The Centre receives funding from Victim Services.
- **Sage House (Sisters Offering Support)** employs an outreach worker to proactively engage and connect with women involved in the survival sex trade. The program offers early intervention through non-judgemental first response and provision of basic needs. Given the disproportionate number of Indigenous women involved, traditional healing approaches are utilized with the assistance of an Indigenous Elder. The program also provides referral and transition to other services including Victim Services, mentorship and volunteer opportunities and life and employment skill development. The program receives funding from Victim Services.
- **Survivor's Hope Crisis Centre (SARAH)** - the Sexual Assault Response and Healing program (SARAH) of Survivor's Hope Crisis Centre provides sexual assault crisis support services for victims of sexual assault in the Interlake Eastern area of Manitoba. SARAH also offers educational and training opportunities to address the myths surrounding sexual assault trauma to hospitals, RCMP, local organizations and service providers. The program receives funding from Victim Services.

## Ontario

The Ministry of Attorney General (MAG)'s mandate for victim services includes overseeing and delivering court-based and legal support programs for victims of crime. This work falls under Ontario Victim Services (OVS) in the Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division (VVPD). OVS provides direct services to victims of crime across the province and funds a range of specialized court-based and legal supports. The Attorney General receives advice on victims' issues from the Office for Victims of Crime, an independent advisory agency established under the *Victims' Bill of Rights, 1995*. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) supports the delivery of a range of services that assist victims. A variety of specialized services for victims of crime are funded by other provincial government ministries.

### **Governing Provincial legislation:**

- *Victims' Bill of Rights, 1995*, including Ontario Regulation 456/96
- *Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act, 2017*
- *Provincial Offences Act, Ontario Regulation 161/00*
- *Highway Traffic Act, Ontario Regulation 355/22*
- *Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy Act, 2021*

### **Rights and principles for victims of crime:**

Ontario's *Victims' Bill of Rights, 1995* (VBR) supports and recognizes the needs of victims of crime. The VBR includes a set of principles that guide how justice system officials should treat victims at different stages of the criminal justice process and the information that victims are entitled to receive. It outlines that, victims should be treated with courtesy, compassion, and respect for their personal dignity and privacy.

The VBR also contains provisions that a victim of sexual assault should, if the victim so requests, be interviewed during the investigation of the crime only by police officers and officials of the same gender as the victim, and that a victim's property that is in the custody of justice system officials should be returned promptly to the victim, where the property is no longer needed for the purposes of the justice system.

The VBR also states that a person convicted of certain prescribed crimes listed in Ontario Regulation 456/96 is liable for damages to the victim for emotional distress, and bodily harm resulting from the distress. Certain victims of crime are presumed to have experienced emotional distress under the VBR. The list of victims presumed to have experienced emotional distress, which was expanded by the *Enhancing Access to Justice Act, 2024*, includes: a victim of an assault by a spouse, sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, a victim of a crime of a sexual nature or a crime that is for or involves a sexual purpose, a victim of human trafficking, a victim of the publication or distribution of a voyeuristic recording or an intimate image without consent, or a victim of an assault if the victim was under the age of 18 or was a person with a disability at the time of the assault where the assailant was in a position of trust or authority over the victim and/or the victim was in a relationship of dependency with the assailant.

### **Role of government:**

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Service delivery

- ✓ Training

**Service-delivery models:**

- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ Court-based
- ✓ Police-based
- ✓ System-based

**Funding model:**

Victim services programming in Ontario is funded through both surcharges paid by offenders and the Consolidated Revenue Fund. *Ontario Regulation 161/00* under the *Provincial Offences Act* and *Ontario Regulation 355/22* under the *Highway Traffic Act* establishes that the provincial victim fine surcharge rates are based on the amount of the fine imposed or administrative penalty collected, as outlined in the following table:

Fine Range (\$)	Surcharge (\$)
0 to 50	10
51 to 75	15
76 to 100	20
101 to 150	25
151 to 200	35
201 to 250	50
251 to 300	60
301 to 350	75
351 to 400	85
401 to 450	95
451 to 500	110
501 to 1000	125
Over 1000	25% of actual fine

Surcharges on both provincial and federal offences are deposited into the Victims’ Justice Fund, which is established under the VBR as a special purpose account within the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Surcharges cannot be satisfied through participation in a Fine Option Program in Ontario.

**Programs and services:**

- **Contacting victim services in Ontario:**
  - Contact information for programs and services for victims of crime are available on Ontario’s website: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/victim-services-ontario>.
  - The **Victim Services Directory** can identify nearby services to assist victims: <https://ovss.findhelp.ca>.

- **Victim Support Line (VSL)** is a multilingual telephone service that provides information for victims of crime about services available throughout Ontario. The support line is available 24 hours daily at 1-888-579-2888 and 416-314-2447 in the Greater Toronto Area or [chat online with 211](#) Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Time. The VSL also connects victims who wish to receive release notifications about provincially incarcerated offenders to the Victim Notification Service for registration.
- **Victim Crisis Assistance Ontario (VCAO)** is funded by MCCSS to provide crisis intervention services to victims of crime and tragic circumstances in the immediate aftermath of a crime, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Additionally, this program provides safety planning, needs assessments, customized services plans, and referrals to other community supports. (Model: community-based).
- **Police-based victim services** The Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General has a guideline which recommends that all police services work in partnership with community-based victim assistance providers to promote the development of an integrated service delivery framework. (Model: police-based).
- **The Victim/Witness Assistance Program (VWAP)** is delivered directly by MAG. The program provides information, assistance, and support to victims and witnesses to increase their understanding of, and participation in, the criminal court process, including specialized Domestic Violence Courts. Services include court preparation and orientation, the provision of case specific information, emotional support and crisis intervention, needs assessment and referrals to community agencies. Services are provided on a priority basis to the most vulnerable victims and witnesses of violent crime, including intimate partner violence, human trafficking, child abuse, sexual assault, elder abuse, hate crimes, serious crimes involving persons with a disability and the families of victims of homicide and motor vehicle fatalities. Services begin once a criminal charge has been laid and end upon the disposition of the court case. (Model: system-based; court-based).
- **Victim Impact Statements (VIS)** provide victims the opportunity to submit a written statement to the court detailing how they have been impacted by a crime for consideration at the time of an offender's sentencing. Victims can obtain a copy of the VIS form from police, the Crown Attorney, or VWAP. Victims can also access the forms online at the Ontario Court Forms website: <https://ontariocourtforms.on.ca/en/victim-impact-forms>. (Model: system-based; court-based).
- **Financial assistance programs:**
  - **Victim Quick Response Program+ (VQRP+)** provides assistance to eligible victims of violent crime. Victims who have no other financial means and meet other eligibility requirements can access support to offset the cost of emergency accommodations, personal care items, cell phones, transportation, funeral expenses and counselling services. This program can be accessed through service providers (e.g. VCAOs) across the province; however, some police-based victim services and Indigenous service providers also provide these services. In addition to the VQRP+ benefits that are available to victims of violent crime, victims of human trafficking have access to enhanced VQRP+ benefits including such things as tattoo removal, replacement of government documents, and treatment at a recovery facility. (Model: system-based).
  - **The Vulnerable Victims and Families Fund (VVFF)**, funded by MAG, supports victims of violent crime, families of homicide victims, and families of motor vehicle fatalities resulting in *Criminal Code* offences to participate more fully in the criminal court process. This program provides financial and court-based supports for travel to attend key court proceedings, language interpretation services to observe a criminal proceeding, special accommodations for persons

with disabilities, and basic necessities for victims of human trafficking while attending court. The VVFF is available province-wide to eligible individuals and is administered by VWAP. (Model: court-based; system-based).

- **Restitution:** Victims of crime can ask the court to order restitution be paid by an offender as part of their sentence. Restitution is intended to reimburse victims for actual expenses resulting from the crime. VWAP and victim services programs can provide the form and assist with its completion. Victims can also access the form online at the Ontario Court Forms website: <https://ontariocourtforms.on.ca/en/victim-impact-forms> (Model: system-based; court-based).

### Specialized victim services:

#### ● **Intimate Partner Violence:**

- **Family Law Support Program (FLSP)**, funded by MAG, provides legal services to support victims of intimate partner violence who are involved in the family court process.
  - **The Family Law Support Program**, delivered by Luke's Place, provides enhanced legal supports to women and non-binary persons in Durham Region. Examples of legal supports include free summary legal advice to clients on family law matters, assistance with the preparation of Emergency Motions in partnership with Family Law Information Centre / duty counsel, family law information workshops, as well as other enhanced legal supports.
  - **Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes (AOcVF)**, offers summary legal advice on family law matters to Francophone victims/survivors of intimate partner violence.
- **Family Court Support Worker Program (FCSWP)**, funded by MCCSS, provides direct support to victims of intimate partner violence who are involved in the family court process. Family Court Support Workers update the victim on the court process, assist in court preparation, provide safety planning, and accompany the victim to court proceedings. (Model: community-based).
- **Partner Assault Response (PAR) programs**, funded by MAG, is a specialized community-based group education program for individuals who have been mandated by the court to attend the PAR program in response to a criminal charge involving intimate partner violence. The 12-session program provides clients with an opportunity to examine their beliefs and attitudes towards intimate partner violence, and to learn non-abusive ways of resolving conflict. Some PAR clients are ordered to attend PAR by Ontario's Domestic Violence Courts. Partners/survivors of PAR clients are offered help with safety planning, referrals to community resources, and information about the client's progress in the program. (Model: court-based; community-based).
- **Indigenous-specific Intimate Partner Violence Prevention (IPVP) programs**, also funded by MAG, are culturally appropriate alternatives to the PAR program. These programs are designed using Indigenous legal principles and processes with the aim of reconnecting participants with their roles and responsibilities to their families and communities. (Model: court-based; community-based).
- **Specialized Legal Services for Assaulted Women (SLSAW) Program**, funded by MAG, is delivered by Toronto's Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic. The SLSAW Program provides specialized legal services related to family, immigration, criminal injuries, housing, and social assistance issues to assist those who identify as women and those with non-binary gender identity who wish to leave abusive relationships and who are not able to access legal services and/or have multiple complex legal needs. Services include summary legal advice and

representation; risk assessments and safety planning; legal services coordination; continuing legal education for lawyers and other service providers. (Model: community-based).

- **Indigenous-specific Sexual and Domestic Violence Services:** MAG supports the only Indigenous-specific community based Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centre in Ontario. The centre opened in January 2021 in the District of Manitoulin Island. (Model: Community-Based).
- **Legal Aid for victims of intimate partner violence:** individuals experiencing intimate partner violence and in need of legal assistance can call Legal Aid Ontario toll-free at 1-800-668-8258 to speak to a family lawyer for summary legal advice, or directions to a shelter or community legal clinic for a free two-hour consultation voucher with a private lawyer about legal rights. Also, those who are financially eligible and are experiencing **intimate** partner violence may qualify for a Legal Aid Ontario certificate, which can be taken to any family lawyer for representation in certain situations. Program details are available online at <https://www.legalaid.on.ca/services/domestic-abuse/> (Model: system-based).
- **Provincial Crisis Help Lines:** MCCSS funds provincial crisis phone lines that provide 24/7 telephone assistance, information (e.g. rights, safety, violence prevention strategies) and referrals to appropriate services for women and their dependents who have experienced, or are at risk of experiencing gender-based violence or abuse. They are: the Assaulted Women's Help Line; Fem'aide (for Francophone women and families); Findhelp's Victim Support Line (Victims of crime and their families) and Talk4Healing (for Indigenous women living in urban, rural and remote communities, both on and off reserve). Contact information is available online at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-help-if-you-are-experiencing-violence> (Model: community-based).
- **Emergency Shelters,** primarily funded by MCCSS, are widely available across Ontario to provide emergency shelter and crisis support services for women and their children who have experienced abuse. Services include 24/7 crisis support, assistance with safety planning, providing information on rights, options and available services, referrals, etc. A listing of all emergency shelters is available online at <https://sheltersafe.ca/ontario>
  - Another site that provides a list of organizations for GBV services and supports such as shelters, transitional housing and women's centre is <https://www.mulberryfinder.ca/organization/> (Model: community-based).
- **Counselling programs,** funded by MCCSS, offer community-based counselling, support and referral services for women and their dependents who have experienced abuse and/or sexual assault, including historic sexual abuse in childhood so that they may live free of violence. Services include crisis/support counselling; short-term, medium and long-term clinical counselling; and sexual assault counselling. (Model: community based)
- **Transitional and Housing Support programs,** funded by MCCSS, help women who have experienced or are experiencing abuse connect with community supports and find and maintain housing to assist them in living free of violence. Based on the principles of person-centred planning, self-determination and choice, women are supported in the development of safety and transition plans, which includes short and long-term goals. Services referrals, advocacy, and support in areas such as: health, safety, well-being, housing, job training and educational upgrades, parenting support, applying for income support, immigration process, and legal process (Model: community based).

- **Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres** are hospital-based centres that provide 24/7 emergency care and comprehensive support to women, children, men and trans persons who are survivors of sexual assault and/or domestic violence. Services include emergency medical care and follow-up; collection of forensic evidence; crisis intervention; counselling; and referral to community resources. Information for the 37 centres, funded by the Ministry of Health, is online at <https://www.sadvtreatmentcentres.ca/>.
- **Specialized anti-human trafficking services:**
  - **Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund and Indigenous-Led Initiatives Fund**, funded through MCCSS, provides community-based direct services, such as trauma-informed counselling and peer supports, and wraparound and referrals to adults who have been human trafficked and children and youth who have been sexually exploited. Services are available across Ontario. More information is online at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/anti-human-trafficking-services-and-supports>.
  - **Free Legal Support Program for Human Trafficking Survivors**, delivered by MAG, provides confidential, province-wide free legal support to human trafficking survivors, those at risk of being trafficked and their parents/guardians to assist in acquiring restraining orders against their traffickers. This program can be accessed by calling the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-833-900-1010. Program details are available online at [Free legal support for survivors of human trafficking | ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/page/free-legal-support-for-survivors-of-human-trafficking). (Model: system-based)
- **Sexual assault:**
  - **Sexual Assault Centres (SAC)**, funded through MCCSS, provide support and services to survivors of sexual violence who are sixteen (16) years and older, as well as to their family members, non-offending partners and friends. SAC are a safe place in the community where those who identify as women, non-binary, Two Spirit, genderqueer and intersex who have experienced sexual violence (“survivors”) can get free, confidential and immediate support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Services include counselling, information, a 24-hour telephone crisis line, accompaniment (e.g. to court, hospital, police station, etc.) peer counselling, and referrals to other relevant community services. (Model: community-based).
  - **Support Services for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse**, funded through MCCSS, provides services and supports for male survivors of sexual abuse, both recent and historical. The program is delivered by agencies across the province. Services include individual and group counselling, peer support, referrals to other community support agencies, and a 24-hour, multilingual, toll-free phone line for immediate crisis and referral services.(Model: community-based).
  - **Independent Legal Advice for Survivors of Sexual Assault Program**, funded by MAG, is available province-wide for survivors of sexual assault who are sixteen years of age or older and living in Ontario. The program provides up to four (4) hours of free independent legal advice by phone or video chat to all eligible women, men, trans and gender-diverse people, any time after the incident occurs. There is no financial eligibility or restriction on when the incident occurred, other than that it must have taken place in Ontario. For more information, see: [Independent legal advice for survivors of sexual assault | ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/page/independent-legal-advice-for-survivors-of-sexual-assault) (Model: system-based; community-based).
  - **Funding for Independent Legal Representation:** Funding to retain legal representation for third party records applications, applications to adduce evidence regarding the prior sexual activity of

the complainant, and applications to use private records of the complainant in the possession of the accused, is available to victims/survivors through MAG. (Model: system-based, court-based).

- **Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres** see details under “Intimate Partner Violence.”
- **Services for child and youth victims:**
  - **Child Witness programs**, funded by MCCSS, provide early intervention services to children who have witnessed violence and mothers who have experienced violence to help them heal from the harmful effects of witnessing/experiencing violence and mitigate the need for more intensive supports later. Supports include assessment, development of safety strategies, individual and group counselling for women and their children as well as referral and short-term follow-up supports for children and their mothers. (Model: community based).
  - **The Child Victim Witness (CVW) Program**, funded by MAG, provides victims and witnesses under the age of 18 with services to support them through the criminal court process. The CVW Program is offered in select jurisdictions across the province. Where a CVW Program is not available, support and trial preparation for children and their parent(s)/guardian(s) is provided by VWAP. (Model: community based; court-based).
  - **Child and Youth Advocacy Centres (CYACs)**, funded by MCCSS, are a partnership among agencies that provides a multidisciplinary team approach to the investigation, intervention, treatment and prevention of child abuse. Multidisciplinary team members can include law enforcement, child protection, health and counselling services, and advocacy. A CYAC is a comfortable, child-friendly setting that is both physically and psychologically safe where services are coordinated to support diverse populations of children, youth and families. CYACs receive funding from various sources, which may include MAG, MCCSS, the Department of Justice Canada, and private fundraising. In Ontario, there are currently six CYACs in operation, and eight in development. (Model: community-based, police-based, system-based).
  - **The Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) Counselling Program**, funded by MCCSS, provides referrals to short-term counselling for child and youth victims of Internet exploitation and to their impacted family members. It will help find local counsellors, and provide payment towards counselling for child or youth victims, and for immediate family members. The program is administered by a community agency (Victim Services of Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry and Akwesasne (VS S.D.G.&A) which coordinates counselling referrals for ICE clients across the province. (Model: community-based).
  - **Children at Risk of Exploitation (CARE) Units** are specialized intervention teams that pair police officers and child protection workers (including Indigenous child protection workers) to identify, investigate, locate and engage children and youth who are victims of child sex trafficking, connect them to services and investigate offenders. CARE Units are currently operating in the City of Toronto and Durham Region. A third CARE Unit in Kenora is being implemented in Fall 2024.
  - **Specialized licensed out-of-home care settings for trafficked youth** provide community-based care and access to wraparound trauma-informed, non-stigmatizing services and supports for children and youth who have been trafficked for sexual exploitation. Settings are located in the City of Toronto and north of Durham Region. Each setting can accommodate up to six children and youth ages 12-17 at time of admission.

- **Human Trafficking Youth-in -Transition Worker program** provides human trafficking specific supports and referrals to youth in and leaving the care of Children’s Aid Societies, who are experiencing risk of being targeted and/or trafficked, or are survivors of human trafficking. Youth-In-Transition Workers connect youth to services and resources in their communities, such as employment services, life skills training and housing supports.
- **Services for Indigenous victims:**
  - **Indigenous healing and wellness services:** The Indigenous Healing & Wellness Strategy (IHWS) (formerly the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy) was co-developed in 1994 between Indigenous partners and Ontario as a comprehensive and Indigenous-led strategy to reduce family violence, violence against Indigenous women and children, and improve Indigenous health, healing and wellness through culturally responsive programs, and ongoing collaboration between Ontario ministries and Indigenous partners. The Indigenous Healing and Wellness Strategy is providing annualized funding (\$120M in 24-25) to support a continuum of 17 programs that are designed and delivered by and for Indigenous people. Programs include but are not limited to Shelter and Family Healing, Mental Health and Addictions Treatment and Healing Centres, Anti-Human Trafficking Liaisons, Community Wellness Workers, and Crisis Teams. (Model: community-based)
  - **The Ontario Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)** operated by MAG with funding from the Department of Justice Canada, offers culturally relevant, trauma-informed services to family members of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls. The service delivery model is carefully tailored to meet the needs of affected family members. Ontario’s FILU staff are housed in Indigenous organizations that provide health and cultural services to communities and are staffed by Indigenous community members who have years of experience working with Indigenous women and girls. FILU staff are located in satellite offices in Thunder Bay, Sudbury and Sioux Lookout and Ottawa. The FILU in Ontario facilitates “Family Circles” which connect families directly with investigating coroners, investigating police officers, and crown prosecutors where relevant, so that families can ask questions and gather and understand information relating to their loved one’s case. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/family-information-liaison-units> (Model: community-based, system-based).
  - **Enhancing existing Indigenous-specific victim services:** Ontario announced a provincial strategy to end violence against Indigenous women (*Walking Together*) in 2016. The long-term strategy sought to achieve an overall decline in the prevalence of violence against Indigenous women, and collaboratively develop, design and deliver responsive, effective and culturally relevant services for Indigenous communities. As part of this strategy, MAG secured stable funding to support Indigenous victim services previously funded under the Ending Violence Against Aboriginal Women (EVAAW) Fund grants and other short term funding streams to existing victim service providers). Beginning in 2020, MAG’s Indigenous Justice Division enhanced funding for existing Indigenous-specific Victims Services offered by 11 Indigenous communities and organizations to better support the unique needs of human trafficking survivors, victims, their families, and communities. (Model: community-based)
  - **Creation of new Indigenous-specific victim services:** MAG funds the creation and/or expansion of 27 Indigenous-specific victim services programs across the province. These programs are developed, designed and delivered by Indigenous communities and organizations to take into consideration factors such as language barriers, remote geographic locations of communities, and the legacy of systemic discrimination within the justice system. (Model: community-based).

- **Gang Intervention and Exit Program for Indigenous Women:** this program is part of Phase Two of Ontario’s Guns, Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy. This program provides wrap-around support to Indigenous women who have been exploited or are exiting gangs through a community-led, culturally appropriate and gender-based approach to respond to the complex needs of those who may be victims of human trafficking. (Model: community-based).
- **The Senior’s Safety Line (SSL)** is operated by The Assaulted Women's Helpline (AWHL) and funded through the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility to provide a 24/7 crisis and support line in Ontario to support seniors (or persons acting on their behalf) who are experiencing or at risk of abuse. The line provides supportive emotional counselling, safety planning, information and referrals to service providers and concerned people, in addition to seniors calling about themselves. Toll-free 1-866-299-1011. (Model: community-based).
- **The Language Interpreter Services (LIS) program** provides funding for interpreter services to enable service providers to communicate with clients who have limited English or French language skills, or are deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, who are victims of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, as well as those who have been exploited through human trafficking. LIS are available at no cost for eligible service providers in communities across Ontario 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in over 70 spoken languages as well as American Sign Language – English (ASL), or Langue des signes Québécoise – French (LSQ). Program details are online at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/interpreters-domestic-violence-sexual-violence-and-human-trafficking-victims> (Model: system-based).

#### Training initiatives:

- MCCSS funds a free online training program in English and French for service providers who support victims of human trafficking across Ontario. These include people in the victim services, legal and law enforcement communities, as well as the labour, licensing enforcement, child support, health, welfare, and social sectors.
- MCCSS also funds a specialized, intensive, six-day training targeted to select frontline professionals working directly with children and youth at heightened risk of being trafficked and/or child and youth victims of human trafficking. The training includes a full day of Indigenous Cultural Competency training and participant sub-licencing to use a risk assessment tool.
- MCCSS also funds an online training module which supports victim service providers in MCCSS-funded organizations who are providing services and supports to older victims of crime. Although the targeted audience for the training is volunteers and staff within these organizations, as with the human trafficking training, any individual can register and access this training on both English and French.
- MCCSS funds Luke’s Place and Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes to provide ongoing training and support in English and French for the delivery of consistent, specialized services by Family Court Support Workers across the province.
- The former Ministry of Children and Youth Services (now part of MCCSS) funded the development of **a Sexual Violence and Harassment Toolkit for the Child Welfare Sector** which provides youth, child protection workers, and caregivers with resources and information about addressing issues related to the experiences of children and youth in and leaving care with sexual violence and harassment. The toolkit was disseminated to the child welfare sector (e.g. child welfare societies, representative organizations, and residential services providers) including a webinar to review the toolkit in March 2018. The toolkit can be accessed online: <https://www.leap21.ca/>.

- MCCSS provides funding to the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OAITH) and Aboriginal Shelters of Ontario (ASOO) to deliver training and capacity building support for Indigenous and non-Indigenous service providers who support women victims/survivors of violence and their families. For more information on OAITH training, see <https://www.oaith.ca/about-oaith/about-oaith.html>. For more information on the ASOO, see <https://aboriginalshelters.ca/>

## Quebec

The Quebec Ministry of Justice provides financial assistance through the Crime Victims Assistance Fund (FAVAC) to ensure the implementation of programs and services for victims of criminal offences. It also offers an annual grant program aimed at information, awareness and training for victims. Through the BAVAC (Bureau d'aide aux victimes d'actes criminels), the Department helps establish and support crime victim assistance centres (CAVAC) throughout Quebec. It also funds other organizations that help victims, such as the domestic violence and sexual violence resource lines, as well as the Marie Vincent and SIAM child support centres in the Québec City. In addition, some community organizations also receive funding from other ministries to offer specialized services to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, etc.

### **Governing legislation:**

- *Act to assist persons who are victims of criminal offences and to facilitate their recovery* (Government of Quebec, 2021)
- *An Act to create a court specialized in sexual violence and domestic violence* (Government of Quebec, 2021)
- *Code of Penal Procedure* (Government of Quebec, 2017)

### **Rights and principles of victim protection:**

The *Act to assist persons who are victims of criminal offences and to facilitate their recovery* recognizes the rights of persons who are victims of a criminal offence and to put in place measures to meet their needs with a view to promoting their recovery. To this end, it establishes a system of assistance that enables them to obtain adequate support consistent with other systems that meet their needs, in particular by entitling them to effective, fair and impartial services and financial assistance.

For the purposes of this *Act*, a victim is any natural person who, as a result of the commission of a criminal offence against him or herself or another person, suffers physical or psychological harm or material loss, whether or not the perpetrator of the offence has been identified, arrested, prosecuted or convicted.

The rights recognized in this law include recognition, information, participation, protection and financial assistance.

This *Act* also provides that a victimized person has a responsibility to cooperate, as far as possible, with law enforcement authorities in relation to the criminal offence of which he or she has been a victim.

### **Role of government:**

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Organization and coordination of activities

### **Service delivery models:**

- ✓ Community
- ✓ Systemic

### **Funding model:**

Some victim services programs in Quebec, mainly justice-related, are financed by revenues from surcharges paid by offenders, as well as from the proceeds of crime. In addition, Quebec's *Code of Penal*

*Procedure* sets a provincial surcharge for any offence under Quebec laws, except those governed by municipal by-laws. Since 2015, the rates for these surcharges have been set as follows: \$20 if the total amount of the fine imposed is \$100 or less; \$40 if the total amount of the fine is greater than \$100, but less than \$500 and; 25 percent of the amount of the fine if it is greater than \$500.

The above-mentioned revenues are paid from the Fund dedicated to helping victims of crime, which was established under the 1988 *Crime Victims Assistance Act*.

Other services, such as shelters for women victims of domestic violence, sexual assault centers such as CALACS (les centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel) and youth protection resources, are financed by the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services via the Quebec Consolidated Fund.

### **Programs and services:**

- **The Ministry of Justice** provides information for victims on a Web page dedicated to assistance and information services for victims: <https://www.quebec.ca/justice-et-etat-civil/accompagnement-victimes-crime/ressources>.

This page includes contact details for local and specialized service providers, the complaint process in the event of dissatisfaction, and references to the criminal justice system in Quebec.

In addition, the Ministry of Justice website (<https://www.quebec.ca/justice-et-etat-civil/transition-mjq>) offers a range of specialized information and forms relating to the judicial process: <https://www.justice.gouv.qc.ca/centre-de-documentation/formulaires-et-modeles/>.

- **Victim Impact Statements and Community Impact Statements** describe to the court the impact of the offence on an individual or a community. They are considered by the judge when sentencing. CAVAC can also distribute forms and offer assistance in completing them (Model: systemic).
- **Criminal Restitution:** Victims of a criminal offence can apply to the court for a restitution order requiring the offender to pay an amount to the victim. Restitution compensates a victim for actual expenses incurred as a result of the crime. CAVAC offices can distribute forms and offer assistance in filling them out.
- **The Specialized Court Pilot Project related to sexual and domestic violence** aims to provide better support for victims of domestic and sexual violence during the legal process. This large-scale project is currently being rolled out in 20 judicial districts across Quebec, and involves the addition of specialized and dedicated workers from the CAVAC network to coordinate support for victims, the addition of criminal and penal prosecutors to encourage vertical prosecution, rental improvements in courthouses to better meet the needs of victims, and the fitting-out of courtrooms with various testimonial aids including legal assistance dogs. This vast project is also accompanied by a training component on sexual and domestic violence for all those involved.
- **The National Service Integration Standards Model** aims to improve service integration practices for victims of domestic and sexual violence in Quebec. This model, inspired by best practices in Canada and internationally, is currently being disseminated throughout Quebec, and will support local organizations in mobilizing expertise and knowledge around victims.
- **The Grant Program to Promote Research, Information, Awareness and Training** (<https://www.quebec.ca/justice-et-etat-civil/aide-financiere/fonds-aide-personnes-victimes-infractions-criminelles>), financed by the Crime Victims Assistance Fund, or FAVAC (Fonds dédié à l'aide aux personnes victimes d'infractions criminelles), enables the Quebec government to fund

various one-off and local initiatives to provide better support for victims. Each year, this program issues a call for applications, enabling dozens of new initiatives to be funded.

- **Crime Victim Assistance Centres (CAVAC)** are the leading provider of services to victims in Quebec. CAVACs provide information on the criminal justice system, inform victims about the progress of their case and court dates, assist victims during legal proceedings and provide specialized services, including testimony preparation. Sixteen not-for-profit organizations receive funding from the Crime Victims Assistance Fund, or the FAVAC to provide services across the country, at more than 250 points of service. Contact details for each CAVAC and the many resources available to victims are available at [www.cavac.qc.ca](http://www.cavac.qc.ca). The CAVAC network is actively involved in the court specializing in sexual violence and domestic violence. (Model: Community)
- **Compensation for victims of crime:** Victims may apply for reimbursement of eligible expenses in the event of material damages and injuries directly attributable to an offence committed in or outside Quebec (see conditions). The types of offences and injuries eligible for compensation are described in the *Act to assist persons who are victims of criminal offences and to facilitate their recovery* (Government of Quebec, 2021). The Directorate General for Compensation for Victims of Crime, or Direction générale de l'indemnisation des victimes d'actes criminels (DGIVAC) administers the program. This branch reports to the Commission for Standards, Equity, Health and Safety at Work, or Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et sécurité au travail (CNESST). The Ministry of Justice is responsible for analyzing, implementing and monitoring the compensation system and the interpretation of the Act. Details of the program and application forms are available on the IVAC (indemnisation des victimes d'actes criminels) website at [www.ivac.qc.ca](http://www.ivac.qc.ca), and CAVACs can also offer assistance in completing an application. (Model: systemic)
- **Police-assisted victim services** in Quebec are financed primarily by budgets allocated to local police departments. The Quebec Provincial Police (Sûreté du Québec) has an office dedicated to victims, called the Victim Assistance Module, or Module d'assistance aux personnes victimes (MAV). This office provides information and coordination for victims during Sûreté du Québec investigations. Victims are referred to the local CAVAC office for psychological assistance. Some municipal police forces have a specialized unit that works with CAVAC to provide direct services to victims. In addition, the majority have signed agreements with local police organizations to provide referral services, and more than 50 CAVAC agents are stationed at police stations to offer direct services to victims within hours or days of a crime being reported to the police. (Model: community and police)

#### Some specialized services for victims:

- **Domestic violence:**
  - **SOS Domestic Violence (SOS violence conjugale)** is a toll-free, confidential resource line offering information, awareness, support and referrals to victims of domestic violence and their loved ones, as well as to various interveners. Available 24/7, these services are offered by telephone, e-mail or chat, and are financed by the Crime Victims Fund. (<https://sosviolenceconjugale.ca/en>) (Model: community)
  - **Emergency financial assistance** (<https://www.quebec.ca/en/justice-et-etat-civil/systeme-judiciaire/processus-judiciaire/processus-judiciaire-au-criminel/accompagnement-victimes-crime/aide-financiere-personnes-victimes/quickly-leave-dangerous-environment>): Emergency financial assistance for victims of sexual or domestic violence enables victims to quickly leave a dangerous environment when their life or safety, or that of their dependents, is compromised. Emergency financial assistance is financed in part by the FAVAC.

- **Shelters for women victims of domestic violence** are widely available and accessible in Quebec. Women and children who have run away from home have access to emergency shelter, information on the cycle of violence, emotional support and referral to other community organizations. Shelter services are funded by the Ministry of Health and Social Services, or Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) and the Secretariat for Women's Affairs, or Secrétariat à la condition féminine. (Model: community-based)
- **The Centre for Lesbian Solidarity (Le Centre de solidarité lesbienne)** offers support to lesbians who have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, bereavement, gender identity issues or other wellness-related problems. Services are provided by women trained in various areas of social intervention. The Center is funded by the MSSS. (Model: community)
- **SIVA (Services intégrés pour les victimes de violence conjugale et d'agression sexuelle) in Québec City.** SIVA is a group of services for people who are victims of domestic and sexual violence. It offers a continuum of services that are integrated and personalized for victims. The services will soon be offered in a single location.
- **Sexual violence:**
  - **The Sexual Violence Helpline (La ligne-ressource Info-Aide violence sexuelle)** (<https://infoaideviolencesexuelle.ca/>) offers free, confidential services to victims of sexual violence, their families and support workers. Available 24/7, these services are offered by telephone, e-mail, or text and are financed by the FAVAC. (Model: community-based) (Model: systemic)
  - **Emergency financial assistance** (<https://www.quebec.ca/justice-et-etat-civil/accompagnement-victimes-crime/aide-financiere-personnes-victimes/quitter-rapidement-milieu-dangereux#:~:text=L%27aide%20financi%C3%A8re%20d%27urgence,%C3%A0%20leur%20charge%2C%20est%20compromise>): Emergency financial assistance for victims of sexual or domestic violence enables victims of to quickly leave a dangerous environment when their life or safety, or that of their dependents, is compromised. Emergency financial assistance is financed by the FAVAC.
  - **Sexual Assault Help Centres (Centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel (CALACS))** offer services to women and girls who have survived sexual assault in Quebec. These services are funded by the MSSS; for contact details, please visit [www.rqcalacs.qc.ca](http://www.rqcalacs.qc.ca). (Model: community)
  - **Marie Vincent Centre for Expertise in Sexual Assault (Centre d'expertise en agression sexuelle Marie Vincent)** helps children and teenagers who have suffered sexual assault or violence, as well as their families, through specialized treatment services in the Greater Montreal area and Montérégie. The center also mobilizes victims, their parents, the government, financial partners and those who help victims of sexual violence, and invites them to join forces to combat and eliminate this type of crime. The center is financed, in part, by the FAVAC. (Model: community)
  - **Quebec City Abuse and Maltreatment Services (Services en abus et maltraitance de la Ville de Québec (SIAM))** enables child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse, abuse and neglect to obtain the full range of services needed for their recovery, all under one roof. SIAM offers medical, psychosocial, socio-judicial and police expertise. The organization is funded by the MSSS and the FAVAC.

- **Le Centre de services intégrés en violence sexuelle (CIViS)** The CIViS is a physical location where victims of sexual violence can obtain a personalized plan of services according to their needs. It helps to simplify the psycho-socio-legal journey of victims of sexual violence, regardless of their age and gender. It is located in Saint-Lambert.
- **SIVA (Services intégrés pour les victimes de violence conjugale et d'agression sexuelle) in Québec City.** SIVA is a group of services for people who are victims of domestic and sexual violence. It offers a continuum of services that are integrated and personalized for victims. The services will soon be offered in a single location.
- **Other Services**
  - **The Association of Families of Murdered or Missing Persons (L'Association des familles de personnes assassinées ou disparues),** financed in part by the Fonds dédié à l'aide aux personnes victimes d'actes criminels, is a non-profit organization whose primary mission is to break the isolation of families of murdered or missing persons, to establish bonds of solidarity between them, and to facilitate their ability to obtain the resources to access the information and tools they need to rebuild their lives. (Model: community)
  - **The Restorative Justice Service Centre (Le Centre de services de justice réparatrice (CSJR)),** located in Montreal, provides restorative justice services to help people affected by criminal offences regain control of their lives. It offers meetings between inmates and victims, art therapy workshops, memory healing workshops, as well as awareness and training activities. The CSJR is financed in part by the Fonds dédié à l'aide aux personnes victimes d'actes criminels. (Model: community)
  - **Éducaloi - The law explained in one place** (<https://educaloi.qc.ca>) plays a leading role in the dissemination of legal information in Quebec. On its website, the organization provides a wealth of information on the law, as well as on the rights and remedies available to Quebecers, including victims. (Model: community)
  - **The Quebec Association for Victim Advocacy (L'Association québécoise Plaidoyer-Victimes)** is an association that defends and promotes the rights and collective interests of victims. The Association works with victims, their families, professionals and decision-makers through a variety of mechanisms, including information and referral, training, awareness-raising and knowledge development.

## New Brunswick

In New Brunswick, the Department of Justice and Public Safety Victim Services delivers system-based services for victims of crime from 11 offices around the province. The Victim Services program is responsible for delivering programs and services to victims and survivors of crime as well as supporting local and provincial crime prevention initiatives. In addition, some specialized services for victims and survivors receive funding from other government departments and Community agencies.

### Governing legislation:

- *Victims Services Act* (Government of New Brunswick, 2017)
- *New Brunswick Regulation 91-67* (Government of New Brunswick, 2017)
- *New Brunswick Regulation 96-81* (Government of New Brunswick, 2017)

### Rights and principles for victims of crime:

The *Victims Services Act* sets out a number of principles that apply to the treatment of victims of crime in New Brunswick, including those related to safety, dignity, access to information, treatment during the criminal justice process, privacy, etc.

### Role of government:

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Training

### Service-delivery models:

- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ Police-based
- ✓ System-based

### Funding model:

The New Brunswick Department of Justice and Public Safety's Victim Services programming is funded from surcharges paid by offenders and in part by general revenue funds. The *Victims Services Act*, Regulation 91-67, establishes the provincial fine surcharge to be 20 per cent on all provincial statute violations where a fine is levied. Surcharges on both provincial and federal offences are housed in the Victims Services Fund which is established under the Act as a separate account in the Consolidated Fund. Youth offenders can satisfy the victim surcharge through participation in the Fine Option Program.

### Programs and services:

- **Department of Justice and Public Safety Victim Services** Contact information and program details are available on the Department's website at [https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/public-safety/community\\_safety/content/victim\\_services.html](https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/public-safety/community_safety/content/victim_services.html).
  - **Victim Services Program** offices are located in 11 New Brunswick communities and are the primary provider of victim services in the province. Staff and volunteers provide support and information throughout the criminal justice process, as well as referrals for counselling and other services, court preparation and support, assistance in completing documents, and details on the court outcome and correctional systems. (Model: system-based).

- **Professional Counseling Services** are funded by Victim Services to meet the needs of eligible clients who have been assessed by Victim Services staff as requiring therapeutic counselling intervention in a timely manner. Eligible clients are referred to therapists who have met the 'Professional Services' qualifications. Professional counselling services are provided for court support and short-term counselling is available to victims through the 'Compensation for Victims of Crime Program' (Model: system-based).
- **Compensation for Victims of Crime** provides benefits to victims of violent crime to assist with expenses incurred as a direct result of the crime which are not covered by other means. The provision for victim compensation is outlined in the *New Brunswick Victim Services Act*. Victim Services assists victims in determining whether they qualify for benefits and helping them complete the applicable forms. (Model: system-based).
- **Restitution** to reimburse victims for expenses resulting from a crime can be requested by victims to be included in the sentence if someone is found guilty. Police inform victims of their right to apply for restitution, and information on how to request restitution is available on the Department's website. Victim Services offices can also assist. (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Impact Statements (VIS)** can be submitted by victims to tell the court how a crime has affected them. Information about VIS is available on the Department's website, and Victim Services offices can assist with the process. (Model: system-based).
- **Police-based victim services** are based in three locations: Fredericton Police Force, Saint John Police Force, and the Codiac RCMP (Moncton), and are funded primarily by the respective police force/city. Program staff and volunteers respond to victims of crime and provide assistance throughout the criminal justice process and liaise with the provincial Victim Services Program offices to provide a continuum of service. Services offered include information on the court process, emotional support, and referrals to other relevant community agencies. (Model: police-based).

#### **Specialized victim services:**

- **Domestic violence:**
  - **The Domestic Violence Outreach Program** improves women's access to community services and service providers, provides help and information to women in need as well as increased awareness of the issue of domestic violence in the community. Funded by Women's Equality, the program is an important resource for family violence services, and guides victims to the services they need. There are 14 domestic violence outreach workers funded by the New Brunswick government across the province, and contact information is available online at [https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/women/Violence\\_Prevention\\_and\\_Community\\_Partnerships/content/Domestic\\_Violence\\_Outreach\\_Program.html](https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/women/Violence_Prevention_and_Community_Partnerships/content/Domestic_Violence_Outreach_Program.html). (Model: community-based).
  - **Transition House** services provide emergency accommodation and support to women and children fleeing violence. With funding from the Women's Equality there are 13 transition houses across New Brunswick. [https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/women/Violence\\_Prevention\\_and\\_Community\\_Partnerships/content/Transition\\_Houses.html](https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/women/Violence_Prevention_and_Community_Partnerships/content/Transition_Houses.html). (Model: community-based).
  - **Accredited Justice Facility Dog NB** has two accredited Justice facility dogs who are trained to help victims of crime navigate the criminal justice system Located in Moncton and Saint John.

The dogs provide support and calming companionship to child and adult victims of family violence and sexual assault navigating the courts process. (Model: community-based).

- **Child Advocacy Centre (CAC) NB** has two Child Advocacy Centres, the Boreal Child Advocacy Program that operates in Moncton and Kits Place that operates in Saint John. CACs support children and adolescents who are victims of sexual violence, as well as their families, by providing specialized treatment. To assess, intervene, and provide therapy and support for child victims of sexual abuse and the most severe and complex cases of physical abuse and neglect. The CAC emphasizes the co-operative integration of processes when providing services which address the needs of the child/youth and their families/caregivers. (Model: community-based).
- **Services for Indigenous victims:**
  - **The Aboriginal Domestic Violence Outreach Program** serves 11 First Nations communities across the Province. With project funding from the Department of Justice Canada in partnership with Women's Equality, the program provides community-based resources and services for victims of intimate partner violence. An outreach co-ordinator also assists Indigenous women living off First Nations. (Model: community-based).
  - The **Gignoo Transition House** provides emergency accommodation and support to First Nation women and children from across New Brunswick who are experiencing domestic violence. This is one of the 13 transition houses operating in New Brunswick with funding from the Women's Equality Branch. (Model: community-based).
  - **The Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)** funded by the Department of Justice Canada, supports, and assists families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls by acting as a liaison to gather information they are seeking from system agencies and ensuring that this information is provided to them in a trauma-informed and culturally sensitive manner. Services are available to all family members (blood and non-blood relations) whether or not they are participating in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. (Model: system-based).
- **Sexual Violence New Brunswick (SVNB)** As the only sexual assault Centre of its kind in New Brunswick, Sexual Violence New Brunswick works provincially to help other New Brunswick communities to enhance and establish sexual assault services. In partnership with the [Women's Equality](#), Sexual Violence New Brunswick is working to implement the Government of New Brunswick's [Framework for Action: Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence in New Brunswick](#). SVNB responds to adult victims of sexual assault and offers a wide variety of programming including accompaniment to the police station/hospital/court, 24-hour telephone crisis line, individual counselling, group supports, school-based sexual violence prevention programs, and public education initiatives. While the Centre does not receive core funding from one source, it receives funds from the Women's Equality of the Executive Council Office related to the establishment of the Provincial Strategy on Sexual Assault Services. Information is available online at <https://www.svnb.ca>. (Model: community-based).

#### **Training initiatives:**

New Brunswick Victim Services offers an E-Learning Program through the Justice Institute of BC for Victim Services program staff and volunteers

The Victim Services program manages and delivers various training initiatives throughout the year to front line Victim Services Coordinators depending upon provincial priorities.

## Nova Scotia

The Department of Justice (DOJ) is responsible for the delivery of Victim Services in Nova Scotia in relation to the criminal justice process/court system. DOJ Victim Services' Head Office is based from a head office in Halifax with four regional offices and four sub-offices located across the province. Some police-based Victim Services also offer supports for victims during the investigation stage, in coordination with DOJ Victim Services.

### Governing legislation:

- *Victims' Rights and Services Act* (Province of Nova Scotia, 2001)
- *Criminal Injuries Compensation Regulations* (Province of Nova Scotia, 2009)
- *Regulations Amending the Schedule to the Act Listing Criminal Offences* (Province of Nova Scotia, 2009)
- *Victim Fine Surcharge Rate Regulations* (Province of Nova Scotia, 2009)
- *Labour Standards Code* (Province of Nova Scotia 2022)
- *Residential Tenancies Act* (Province of Nova Scotia 2021)
- *Canadian Victim's Bill of Rights (2015)*
- *Domestic Violence Leave Legislation* (Province of Nova Scotia, 2019)

### Rights and principles for victims of crime:

The Nova Scotia *Victims' Rights and Services Act, amended 1992*, outlines a list of rights to be accorded to all victims navigating the criminal justice system. This includes rights related to appropriate treatment during the criminal justice process, access to services, access to information about their case and the criminal justice system, safety, etc.

### Role of government:

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Training

### Service-delivery models:

- ✓ Police-based
- ✓ System-based

### Funding model:

The Nova Scotia Department of Justice's Victim Services programming is funded in part from Victim Fine Surcharges, general revenue funds, and federal funding agreements with Justice Canada.

### Programs and services:

- **Department of Justice Victim Services Programs** Contact information and program details are available on the Department's website at [https://www.novascotia.ca/just/victim\\_Services/programs.asp](https://www.novascotia.ca/just/victim_Services/programs.asp).
  - **Provincial Victim Services Program** assists victims and their families in the aftermath of a crime. Delivered from four regional offices and four sub-offices around the province, this program provides information about the criminal justice system, case specific information, court orientation, including testimonial aids, court accompaniment, safety planning and danger

assessment, emotional support, and information on other relevant community services. Enhanced services include: Specialized Courts support and navigation: Domestic Violence, Drug Treatment, Mental Health, Wellness; high risk domestic violence provincial protocol; culturally relevant services. (Model: system-based).

- **Child Victim/Witness Program** provides support to child victims and other vulnerable witnesses who are involved in the criminal justice system. Services provided include court orientation, arranging meetings with the Crown Attorney, and attending court with the victim/witness. (Model: system-based).
- **The Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)** supports and assists families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls by acting as a liaison to gather information they are seeking from system agencies and connecting them to help in the community. Services are available to family members whether they are participating in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Funded by the Department of Justice Canada, this is a partnership between Victim Services and the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association. (Model: system-based; community-based). [Family Information Liaison Unit | Nova Scotia Native Women's Association \(nswa.ca\)](#) and [FILU Fact Sheet.pdf \(novascotia.ca\)](#)
- **Human Trafficking & Sexual Exploitation** Victim Services Navigators work closely with specialized units within Policing, Department of Education, Department of Community Services/Family and Child Wellbeing, Community Corrections and community agencies including Association of Black Social Workers, YWCA- TESS (Trafficking & Exploitation Services System program), Public Prosecution Services, Health, NS Advisory Council of the Status of Women, and community advocates including housing support to provide a coordinated approach to supporting those victims impacted by Human Trafficking and sexual exploitation. [Nova Scotia Trafficking & Exploitation Services System \(tessns.ca\)](#)
- **Criminal Injuries Counselling Program** can provide financial assistance to pay for counselling services to help victims and survivors deal with trauma resulting from a violent crime. The application form and guidelines are available on the DOJ's website. Program staff in the Victim Services head office in Halifax, as well as Provincial Victim Services program staff, can also provide auto-filled forms to assist with their completion and simplify the process for victims. (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Impact Statement Program (VIS)** offers victims of crime the opportunity to complete and present a statement to the court (for consideration in sentencing) outlining the financial, physical, and psychological/emotional impact of the crime. VIS forms and guidelines are available from any DOJ Victim Services office, and staff can assist victims in completing the statement and submitting it to the court. Impact statement forms and guidelines are also available and supported for Community Impact and Criminal Code Review Board. The Victim's Voice VIS is used in many specialized courts. The **Victim Services Travel Fund** provides funding to enable a victim (and in some cases a support person) to read their VIS in court. (Model: system-based).
- **Restitution** can be ordered by the court for offenders to reimburse victims for a monetary loss as the direct result of a crime. Victim Services can assist victims in preparing a Request for Restitution form to be considered at the time of the offender's sentencing. The form and guidelines are available on the Department's website, along with information to help victims collect restitution that has been ordered. A Restitution Coordinator is available to assist after restitution has been ordered. (Model: system-based).

- **Sexual Offence Legal Representation (SOLR)** is a DOJ program replacing the Production of Records in Sexual Offences (PRISO) program that provided legal representation to complainants in sexual offences where the defence was seeking the production of medical, counseling or therapeutic records (S.278). This program has been expanded to provide legal representation for S.276 applications seeking to introduce evidence about sexual activity. Victim Services manages this program. (Model: system-based)
- **Independent Legal Advice Program** is funded by Justice Canada. DOJ Victim Services, in partnership with 211 Nova Scotia provides adult victims and survivors of sexual assault with up to four hours of free independent legal advice. The assault must have occurred in Nova Scotia and the client must be 16 years + to be eligible to access the program. The program can be accessed at any time after the incident has occurred. Intake is done through an independent agency, 211 Nova Scotia, available 24/7. Participants do not have to report to police or take legal action if they use this service. Upon completing intake, 211 will issue a certificate and the client can choose from a roster of specifically trained lawyers, to obtain legal advice. The pilot was launched in November of 2017 and became a program April 2018. (Model: system-based; community-based). (Model: system-based) [Independent legal advice for adult survivors of sexual assault - Government of Nova Scotia, Canada](#)
- **Department of Justice Domestic Violence Initiatives Unit** bridges Domestic Violence topics/themes across DOJ. They facilitate DV/IPV training, Highest Risk Table, and policy/program development for DV/IPV and co-chair the IPV working group with Victim Services. For more information contact John.Joyce-Robinson@novascotia.ca (902) 233-1138 (Model: system-based)
- **Police-based Victim Services** operate in some communities with funding from the respective police agency's budget, and services are coordinated with the Provincial Victim Service Program:
  - **Halifax Regional Police Service** has a Victim Services Unit is comprised of civilian employees and volunteers who work collaboratively with police officers. This unit provides support services to victims of crime, with proactive outreach to victims of domestic violence, sexualized violence, and serious crime. (Model: police-based).
  - **RCMP** detachments in some communities across Nova Scotia operate victim services programs to provide victims with information, emotional support, and referrals. Services are delivered by volunteers as well as one paid employee in the Halifax region, with training support from a Program Manager for RCMP "H" Division. (Model: police-based).
  - **Intimate Partner Violence Case Coordinators (IPVCC)** provide services throughout the province via 4 regions- RCMP (3 + manager) and Cape Breton Regional Police has a Domestic Violence Coordinator (DVCC). The Coordinators chair regional High Risk Domestic Violence Protocol Partner meetings and provide supports and services in collaboration with DOJ and other partners. IPVCC & DVCC positions are funded in part by DOJ Victim Services. Note some IPVCCs provide support services for Community Indigenous & Diversity Policing. (Model: police-based).

#### **Specialized victim services:**

- **Transition House Services and Second Stage Housing** for women and children fleeing violence are available in 13 communities across the province, including two Mi'kmaw Family Healing Centres. Funded by the Department of Community Services, the services include emergency housing, safety planning information, access to support groups, information on community services and support for community independent living. (Model: community-based). [Our Shelters - THANS](#)

- **Sexual Assault Centres** operate in three communities across Nova Scotia (Antigonish, Halifax, and Truro). A 24-hour telephone crisis line, counselling, support groups, and referrals to other relevant community agencies are the primary services delivered by these agencies. Contact information at <https://www.novascotia.ca/coms/svs/sexual-assault-centres>. The centres are funded by the Department of Community Services. (Model: community-based).
- **The SeaStar Child and Youth Advocacy Centre** operates in Halifax. A collaborative project between the IWK Health Centre, government, and community partners, the SeaStar Child and Youth Advocacy Centre delivers a full range of coordinated services for children and youth in the Halifax area who have experienced abuse, all in one comfortable, child- and youth-friendly setting. (Model: community-based). [Welcome to SeaStar - SeaStar Child & Youth Advocacy Centre \(seastarcyac.ca\)](http://seastarcyac.ca)
- **Occupational Health & Safety Workplace Fatalities Counselling and Victim Services Navigation** is funded by the Dept of Labour Skills and Immigration, managed and delivered by DOJ Victim Services. Immediate family members of victims of workplace fatalities under the OH&S Act can access services including hearing updates and navigation, assistance with OH&S Victim Impact Statement and counselling. (Model: system-based)
- **Domestic Violence Leave** through the Labour Standards Code can be taken by an employee who is experiencing domestic violence or whose child (under 18) is experiencing domestic violence. Parameters outlined in the application. [Leaves from Work | novascotia.ca](http://novascotia.ca/leaves-from-work)
- **Residential Tenancy Act** allows victims of IPV to work with the DOJ's Victim Services program to end a year-to-year or a fixed-term lease with one month's notice and without paying a penalty. [Tenants Facing Domestic Violence | novascotia.ca](http://novascotia.ca/tenants-facing-domestic-violence)
- **Services for Indigenous victims:**
  - **The Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)** (see above)
  - **The Mi'kmaw Legal Support Network Victim Support Service (VSS)** is a project that is funded by DOJ Victim Services through a funding agreement with the Department of Justice Canada. The VSS project provides direct in-person support to Indigenous victims of crime to encourage their participation in the criminal justice process. The Mi'kmaw Legal Support Network (MLSN) exists as a justice support system for Indigenous people who are involved in the criminal justice system in Nova Scotia. This project works closely with DOJ Victim Services. (Model: community-based). [Mi'kmaw Legal Support Network \(mlsn.ca\)](http://mlsn.ca)
  - **Mi'kmaw Family Healing Centres / Transition House Association of Nova Scotia (THANS)** members provide transitional services to women and their children who are experiencing violence and abuse. Two Healing Centres provide culturally relevant services to Mi'kmaq People. (Model: community-based).

#### Training initiatives:

- **Domestic Violence Educator Training** has been provided since 2003, based on the train-the-trainer model, at an in-person annual event to approximately 100 Justice partners including trainers from Police, Crown Attorneys, Victim Services, Court Services, Correctional Services, Nova Scotia Legal Aid, 911, 211, Transition Houses, Men's Intervention Services, Family and Child Wellbeing and other community agencies. Post COVID, Regional virtual training was held in 2022 hosted by the Domestic Violence Initiatives Unit (DVI) in collaboration with DOJ Victim Services and Public Prosecution Services committee. The DVI Unit developed online modules to support the High Risk Domestic Protocol.

- **Domestic Violence Training** is available for service providers online. Contact the DVI Unit for information.
- **Canadian Victims Bill of Rights Training** for services providers is available online. Contact the DVI Unit for information.

## Newfoundland & Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador's Department of Justice and Public Safety operates Victim Services to assist victims of crime any time after an offence has occurred. In the event that charges are laid, services can be provided to victims throughout their involvement in the criminal justice system and after with release information as needed. Additionally, specialized services for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence are provided by community-based organizations with funding from other provincial government departments and agencies.

### Governing legislation:

- *Victims of Crime Services Act*, RSNL 1990 Chapter V-5

### Rights and principles for victims of crime:

Newfoundland and Labrador's *Victims of Crime Services Act* supports and recognizes the needs of victims of crime. The Act includes a set of principles that guide how justice system officials should treat victims during the criminal justice process, including treating victims with courtesy, compassion, and respect for their personal dignity and privacy.

### Role of government:

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Program delivery
- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Training

### Service-delivery models:

- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ System-based

### Funding model:

Newfoundland and Labrador's Victim Services programming is partially funded from surcharges paid by offenders, as well as funding allocated by the Province for this purpose. The *Victims of Crime Services Act* establishes the provincial fine surcharge rate at 30% of any fine ordered on offences under Provincial Acts and Regulations, excluding parking offences and offences contrary to a municipal or city by-law or regulation. Surcharges on both provincial and federal offences are housed in the Province's General Revenue Account for the purpose of funding programs and services for victims of crime. While the Province does not currently have a Fine Option Program, our legislation does make allowances for a Fine Option program.

### Programs and services:

Contact information for Victim Services in Newfoundland and Labrador, along with numerous resources to assist victims of crime, are available on the Department's website at

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/victimservices>.

- **Victim Services Newfoundland and Labrador** is a free and confidential justice service for victims of crime. Services include information about safety planning, the criminal justice system, court preparation and support, case specific details about a victim's case, and referrals to other community supports. Eleven regional offices serve specific regions of the province. Outside of these 11 communities, Regional Coordinators provide services by travelling when possible, or via virtual

means (i.e. telephone, video web conferencing). The program offers services depending on the age of the individual:

- **Adults** – Victim Services provides services to victims who are 16 years or older. Victims of violent crimes receive priority for services. Services are available to those who feel they have been victimized, regardless of whether a complaint has been made to the police or a charge has been laid. (Model: system-based).
- **Children/Youth** – Services are available to child/youth victims under the age of 16 as well as child witnesses who may be required to testify in criminal proceedings. Charges must be laid and caregiver consent is required. Caregivers of the child receiving services are also eligible for services. (Model: system-based).
- **Professional Counseling Services** are funded by Victim Services to meet the needs of eligible clients who have been assessed by Regional Victim Services staff as requiring therapeutic counselling intervention in a consistent and timely manner. Eligible clients are referred to therapists who have met the program’s Professional Counseling Services’ qualifications. (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Impact Statements (VIS) and Community Impact Statements (CIS)** are voluntary statements, prepared by a victim and/or community, for consideration by a judge at the time of the sentencing of an offender in a criminal matter. Forms and guidelines for the VIS and CIS are available on the Victim Services’ website. Specialized VIS Guidelines for children and youth are also available on that website. Local Victim Services staff can provide the statement forms and assist with their completion. (Model: system-based).
- **Restitution** allows the victim to describe the financial losses they suffered as part of the crime for consideration by the judge at time of sentencing of an offender in a criminal matter. A court may order restitution for the offender to reimburse the victim. Statement of Restitution (SOR) forms can be obtained from the police, Crown Attorney, and Victim Services, and the SOR and instructions on completion are available on the Victim Services’ website. (Model: system-based).
- **Financial assistance for victims**, supported by the Department of Justice Canada, is provided by Victim Services related to travel for three specific purposes; victims should contact a Victim Services Regional Coordinator to discuss eligibility:
  - **Presenting VIS/CIS:** funding is provided for travel and associated expenses for eligible victims who wish to present their VIS/CIS at a sentencing hearing.
  - **Attending counseling sessions:** funding is provided for travel and associated expenses for eligible victims to attend counseling sessions, which have been approved through Victim Services’ Professional Counseling Services.
  - **Court Preparation:** funding is provided for travel and associated expenses for eligible victims to enable them to attend a court orientation/case meeting with the Victim Services Regional Coordinator and Crown Attorney.

#### **Specialized victim services:**

- **Emergency Supports for Victims of Violence** provides emergency supports for any victim of violence and includes transportation to a safe location and accommodations. Persons or families in need of support are instructed to contact the nearest shelter. This service is funded by the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour. Online at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/cssd/income-support/victimsofviolence>. (Model: system-based).

- **Services for Indigenous victims:** A Victim Services Community Worker is available in the community of Sheshatshiu to victims who are members of Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation (SIFN). This worker speaks both Innu-Aimun and English and is able to act as a liaison between victims in that community and the regional Victim Services staff, as well as assist with interpretation for the purpose of service provision.
- **The Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU):** Family Support Workers help families of missing and murdered Indigenous people to obtain information about their lost loved ones and support them as they continue their wellness journey. FILU services are available both, when charges are laid or when no charges have or will occur. Further, FILU services are available, no matter how much time has passed since losing your loved one.

**Training initiatives:**

With funding from the Department of Justice Canada, Victim Services holds a three-day in-service training session each year for all Regional Coordinators from across the province. The training focusses on professional and personal development of staff to enhance the provision of quality services to victims of crime, their families and the community. Additionally, other justice partners are invited to attend specific, relevant sessions. These joint sessions build awareness and capacity regarding victims' issues and needs and enhance relationships between Victim Services employees and other stakeholders.

## Prince Edward Island

Prince Edward Island's Department of Justice and Public Safety operates Victim Services to assist victims of crime throughout their involvement in the criminal justice system. In addition, some specialized programs and services for victims are delivered by non-government organizations with government funding.

### Governing legislation:

- *Victims of Crime Act* (Government of Prince Edward Island, 2023)
  - *Victims of Crime Act Regulations* (Government of Prince Edward Island, 2023)
  - *Victims of Family Violence Act and Regulations* (Government of Prince Edward Island, 2019)

### Rights and principles for victims of crime:

A Statement of Principles contained in the Act sets out a number of principles to guide persons in providing justice for victims of crime.

### Role of government:

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Training

### Service-delivery models:

- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ System-based

### Funding model:

The Victim Services Program in PEI is funded both from surcharges paid by offenders and from general revenue. In 2021-22, approximately 51 per cent of program expenses were funded from general revenue, 2 per cent from provincial surcharge revenue, 9 per cent from federal surcharge revenue, and 38 per cent from the Department of Justice Canada for special projects. Federal and provincial surcharges are deposited in PEI's consolidated revenue fund, but earmarked for Victim Services in the Victim Assistance Fund that was created under the Act.

### Programs and services:

Under the Department of Justice and Public Safety, Victim Services delivers the following programs and services to victims of crime:

- **Victim Services** from two offices on PEI, staff assist victims throughout their involvement in the criminal justice system. Services include: information, emotional support, assistance if their matter goes to court including preparing witnesses, information and assistance with victim impact statements and community impact statements, information and assistance with applications for orders under the *Victims of Family Violence Act*, information to help victims recover financial losses resulting from the crime, and referrals and links to other services and criminal justice system agencies. Contact information for Victim Services offices is available on the Department's website at <http://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/justice-and-public-safety/victim-services>. (Model: system-based).

- **Criminal Injuries Compensation** victims can apply to be reimbursed for eligible expenses if they are injured because of a crime that has been reported to the police. The types of crimes and injuries eligible for compensation are defined in the *Victims of Crime Act* and Regulations. Local Victim Services staff can assist with applications, and program information is available on the Department's website. (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Impact Statements and Community Impact Statements** local Victim Services staff can assist with the preparation of victim impact statements (VIS) and Community Impact Statements to be considered by the Judge at the time of an offender's sentencing. Information about both processes are available on the Ministry's website. (Model: system-based).
- **Emergency Protection Orders** are civil protection orders intended to provide an immediate response to a high-risk family violence situation. Victim Service Workers and police are able to apply for an Emergency Protection Order on behalf of a victim.
- **Clinical Mental Health Counselling** is provided to victims of crime with a primary focus of supporting victims who are actively engaged in a court process or who have limited access to mental health supports. Supports are short-term and specific. Clients are supported in accessing appropriate long-term mental health supports as needed.
- **Independent Legal Representation** is offered to victims of sexual assault who are subject of a s. 276 or s. 278 application.
- **Safety circles** are offered to victims of family violence in high-risk situations. Circles bring together formal and informal support systems to develop a comprehensive safety plan. Trained facilitators lead the discussion, but the victim retains autonomy and decision-making about steps taken.

#### **Other Victim Service Programs delivered by the Ministry:**

- **Restitution** forms and guidelines for requesting restitution are available from Police. Victim Services can also assist victims in the process. (Model: system-based). Programs to improve collection include a simplified process for filing Section 738 orders, waiving of filing fees, and a Deputy Sheriff position focussed on collection and enforcement of standalone restitution orders.
- **Specialized services for victims:**
  - **Emergency Shelters:** two shelters operate on PEI for women experiencing violence and their children. Anderson House is the provincial emergency shelter located in Charlottetown, and the Chief Mary Bernard Memorial Women's Shelter, located on Lennox Island First Nation, provides on-reserve, region-wide emergency housing to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women and their children. Victims may also access temporary shelter and housing options through provincial and community resources. (Model: community-based).
  - **Outreach Services** PEI Family Violence Prevention Services Inc. delivers outreach services from four locations on PEI. Outreach coordinators provide one-on-one and group support, referrals, safety assessment and planning, advocacy, accompaniment to court and meetings, information, and public education to abused women and possible victims of abuse. (Model: community-based).
  - **The PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre** provides services to adult and youth survivors of recent or historic childhood sexual abuse or sexual assault across PEI. Services include individual and group therapy, public education, support, and information. (Model: community-based).

- **The Island Help Line** is a 24-hour bilingual, confidential service for all Islanders providing information, support, active listening, and crisis counselling on matters including family issues, child abuse, addictions, suicide, and others. Toll-free 1-800-218-2885. (Model: system-based).
- **Services for Indigenous victims:**
  - **The Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)** supports and assists families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls by acting as a liaison to gather information they are seeking from system agencies, and connecting them to help in the community. Services are available to family members whether or not they are participating in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

**Training initiatives:**

- Training for new and existing staff is available through a number of formats including orientation to Policy and Procedures, job shadowing, specific training regarding the Victim of Family Violence Act and Emergency Protection Order Applications, access to online modules, and ongoing professional development opportunities.
- Recent training opportunities include:
  - Understanding the Neurobiological and Psychological Effects of Sexual Violence and Abuse by Dr. Lori Haskell
  - Human Trafficking awareness
  - Building Resilience and Trauma Informed Responses with Dr. Michael Ungar
- Spousal Assault Risk Assessment tool

## Yukon

The Victim Services Branch, Department of Justice, Government of Yukon delivers a range of services for victims of crime throughout the territory. The Government of Yukon also provides public education, prevention activities and support to community agencies through the Department of Justice, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, Department of Health and Social Services, and other departments. In addition to the services provided by the territorial government, women's organizations, non-governmental agencies, First Nations and community groups also provide supports for victims of crime.

The Victim Services Branch administers the Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust on behalf of a Board of Trustees. The Trust provides funding for projects facilitated by Yukon community organizations, First Nations, municipalities and School Boards and Councils for a wide range of short-term grassroots projects aimed at preventing crime and supporting victims of crime.

### **Governing legislation:**

- *Victims of Crime Act (Government of Yukon SY 2010, c. 7; amended by SY 2023, c.14)*
- *Victims' Rights Regulation (Government of Yukon, 2011)*
- *Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Act (Government of Yukon, 2019)*

### **Rights and principles for victims of crime:**

*The Victims of Crime Act*, passed in 2011, includes *The Victims' Bill of Rights*. The rights for victims of crime outlined in the Bill relate to receiving information, being able to express their views, privacy, treatment during the criminal justice process, etc.

### **Role of government:**

- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Project funding
- ✓ Training

### **Service-delivery models:**

- ✓ System-based
- ✓ Community-based

### **Funding model:**

The Victim Services Branch is a Government of Yukon program, and the annual budget is appropriated by the Yukon Legislative Assembly. Surcharges paid by offenders of both federal and territorial offences are credited to the Victim Services Fund account of the Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust, which was created under the *Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Act*. This Act also sets the territorial surcharge at 15 per cent of the fine imposed for every conviction on a territorial offence. If no fine is imposed, the Court will determine and

order the surcharge amount. Offenders can be imprisoned should they fail to pay a territorial surcharge. Short-term community projects are funded from the Trust, following application to and decision by the Board of Trustees. In addition to victim surcharges, there are a number of sources of revenue for the Trust, with the most significant being from the Klondike Visitor's Association.

## Programs and services:

The Victims Services Branch delivers the following programs and services for victims of crime, with contact information available on the Government of Yukon's website.

- **Victim Services** Staff are based in three communities, and services are provided in all other Yukon communities and two northern BC communities (via an agreement with the Government of BC) on an itinerant basis. Victims can access services whether or not a report has been made to police or a charge has been laid. Services include support and safety planning at the time of crisis and throughout the criminal justice process; support at court including the Domestic Violence Treatment Option court process and the Community Wellness Court, referrals to other agencies; and assistance to apply for protective court orders, prepare Victim Impact Statements and learn more about Community Impact Statements, and apply for support through the Victims of Crime Emergency Fund. Victim Services staff work closely with the Public Prosecutions Service of Canada Crown Witness Coordinator Program and the RCMP to offer support from the time the offence is reported through to conclusion in the criminal justice system. (Model: system-based).
- **Victims of Crime Emergency Fund (VCEF)** The VCEF can provide emergency or practical assistance to victims of crime. The fund is designed to address immediate safety and practical needs of victims of crime who are not able to get support from other sources. Eligible victims may be able to access funding for expenses such as short-term counselling, emergency accommodation and childcare, certain transportation costs, home repairs related to safety, etc. Details are available on the Government of Yukon's website. (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Impact Statements and Community Impact Statements** Victim Services staff can assist with the preparation of victim impact statements (VIS) to be considered by the Judge at the time of an offender's sentencing. Forms and information about both Victim Impact Statements and Community Impact Statement processes are available on the Government of Yukon's website. (Model: system-based).
- **Independent Legal Advice Program:** Victim Services supports access to up to four hours of independent legal advice for victims of intimate partner violence and sexualized violence. Victims of all genders and ages can access advice through Victim Services, whether the crime happened recently or historically. This program works with a roster of lawyers in a number of areas of law, including criminal, family, immigration and civil.

## Specialized victim services:

- **Transition Houses** for women who are victims of domestic violence and their children operate in three communities: Dawson City, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse. These services are funded by the Department of Health and Social Services. (Model: community-based).
- **Services for Indigenous victims:**
  - **The Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)** has been established within the Victim Services Branch to provide dedicated, family-centered, culturally-safe assistance by gathering requested information on behalf of family members of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls. FILU can assist families who are searching for information related to their loved-one's case. For matters under investigation or before the courts, FILU can connect with the RCMP to provide updates, provide support and assistance during the court process, and connect families to other agencies and resources. (Model: system-based; community-based).

- **Sexualized Assault Response Team (SART):** The Yukon's Sexualized Assault Response Team (SART) provides a safe and confidential network of services that focus on victims needs and choices across three components of service: medical supports, social support and legal supports. SART agencies are committed to providing service in a trauma and culturally informed manner, and to coordinate services in a victim-led approach. Victims of sexualized violence across Yukon can access SART through the Sexualized Assault Support Line at 1-844-967-7275 or sartyukon.ca
- **Services for children and youth:**
  - **Yukon Child and Youth Victim Services** is a **Child Advocacy Centre** initiative in Yukon that coordinates multi-disciplinary interagency partners in the delivery of services to children/youth. The goal of this service is to facilitate a child-focused collaborative and integrated consent-based services for child/youth victims, and/or witnesses of crime, which is aligned with current national best practices for Child Advocacy Centres. (Models: system-based; community-based).
  - **Child, Youth, and Family Treatment Team (CYFTT)**, Health and Social Services, Government of Yukon provides a range of counselling and support services. They help school-aged children, youth and families in Yukon. CYFTT services are free of charge and include counselling services; outreach services; and youth intensive treatment. (Model: system-based).
- **VictimLinkBC** is a confidential telephone service that provides information and referral services to all victims of crime, and immediate crisis support to victims of family and sexual violence. The services is available across B.C. and Yukon 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services are provided in more than 110 languages, including 17 North American Aboriginal languages. The service can be contacted toll-free at 1-800-563-0808, TTY at 604-875-0885, by text to 604-836-6381, and by email to [VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca](mailto:VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca). Additional information is available on the services' website at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/victimlinkbc> (Model: system-based).

**Training initiatives:**

- The Victim Services Branch manages and delivers various training initiatives throughout the year depending upon local and territorial priorities.

## Northwest Territories

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), through the Department of Justice – Community Justice and Policing Division has the responsibility to oversee the Northwest Territories (NWT) Victim Services program. Working in partnership with other GNWT departments and local Indigenous Governments to support victims of crime. Funding is provided to regional community based Victim Services programs that utilize Indigenous traditional knowledge and understanding to provide primary support to victims of crime in a culturally sensitive and respectful way. In addition, these programs work with local partnering agencies to provide community awareness, prevention and safety initiatives.

### Governing legislation:

- *Victims of Crime Act R.S.N.W.T. 1988, c.9 (Supp.)* (Territorial Printer, 2016)
  - *Victims of Crime Regulations R-013-92* (Territorial Printer, 2016)

### Rights and principles for victims of crime:

The *Victims of Crime Act* promotes a number of principles regarding victims of crime, including courteous and compassionate treatment, prompt redress, availability of information to victims, and assistance to victims in bringing their views and concerns to the criminal justice system.

### Role of government:

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program delivery
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Service delivery
- ✓ Training

### Service-delivery models:

- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ System-based

### Funding model:

Victim Services programming receives funding from the Government of Canada, the GNWT, and surcharges paid by offenders. The *Victims of Crime Regulations* establishes the territorial surcharge to be 15 per cent of the fine imposed on a territorial offence, and \$25 where no fine is imposed. A judge can waive the surcharge if the offender satisfies the judge that the surcharge would result in undue financial hardship to the offender. All or part of surcharges can be disposed of or satisfied by participation in a fine option program or can be satisfied through jail time.

Surcharges on both territorial and federal offences are housed in the Victims Assistance Fund, which is established under the *Victims of Crime Act* in an account within the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

### Programs and services:

Contact information for all victim services programs in the NWT is available on the Department's website at <http://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/victim-services>.

- **Victim Services** is provided by ten victim services community based providers from eight regional offices around the territory. Two of the funded community based service providers receive additional funding to provide 24/7 on-call Victim Services and a stipend for volunteers. The GNWT and the RCMP have a protocol in place that formalizes the referral of victims to community victim

services providers. Through in-person contact or telephone outreach, Victim Services Providers can offer:

- immediate emotional support;
  - information on safety planning, emergency shelters, and court processes;
  - accompaniment to a Court, RCMP detachment, hospital, or health center;
  - registration for victim notification programs;
  - referrals to community programs and services; and
  - assistance with victim impact statements and Victims of Crime Emergency Fund applications,
- **The Victims of Crime Emergency Fund** is designed to provide limited financial assistance to help victims of serious violent crimes with their emergency needs. Serious violent crimes include: assault, assault causing bodily harm, sexual assault, homicide, and forcible confinement. Other crimes may be approved. Funds may be used for crime scene clean-up, home repairs, transportation costs, child and/or dependent care, accommodations and meals, short-term counselling, and medical expenses. Other expenses that may be approved include cell phones for safety planning purposes. Applications are available on the Department's website, and victim service providers can assist with completion. (Model: system-based).
  - **The Victim Notification Program** allows victims to apply to receive information about an offender serving a territorial sentence convicted of a crime against them. The program is administered by the territorial Corrections Service, and all correctional facilities have Victim Notification representatives. The application form is available on the Department's website at <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/victim-impact-statements/>. (Model: system-based).
  - **Victim Impact Statements (VIS)** allow victims to provide a statement to the court explaining how they have been impacted by a crime. RCMP members in the Northwest Territories are tasked with providing VIS to victims after a crime has been reported. Local victim services workers can also provide VIS forms and assist with their completion. The form and guidelines are available on the Department's website at <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/victim-impact-statements/>. (Model: system-based).
  - **Victim Restitution** can be requested in instances where a victim has incurred financial losses and damages as a direct result of a crime. The RCMP is responsible for informing victims of their right to request restitution and the provision of the Statement on Restitution (SOR) form. Local victim services providers can also provide SOR forms and assist with their completion. The form and guidelines are available on the Department's website. (Model: system-based).
  - **The Victims Assistance Fund** is a special-purpose fund used for community-based projects and activities that directly support or benefit victims of crime, including: training, direct services that assist victims, public awareness and information, research, distribution of information, and promotion of services for victims. The Victims Assistance Fund (VAF) was established by the s.11 (1) of the *NWT Victims of Crime Act*, 1988, with revenue from victim fine surcharges. The Victims Assistance Committee is made up of NWT residents. The Committee mandate is to ensure the Victims Assistance Fund provides services and supports that benefit victims of crime across the NWT. As part of the legislative requirements under the Act. <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/victims-assistance-fund/> (Model: system-based).

### Specialized victim services:

- **The NWT Victim Services Coordinator** works with Victim Services Workers to provide training and support on the implementation of the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* and integrating information about these new rights into the training and support to victim services. (Model: system-based).
- **Transition House** services for women and children fleeing violence are available in five communities in the Northwest Territories (Hay River, Yellowknife, Fort Smith, Inuvik, and Tuktoyaktuk). These services are funded by the Department of Health and Social Services, and include emergency housing, a 24-hour telephone crisis line, information on the cycle of violence and dynamics of abuse, crisis counselling, and referrals to other community supports. Contact information is available online at <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/shelter-network>. (Model: community-based).
- **Independent Legal Advice and Representation for Survivors Program (ILAR)** The ILAR program is intended to increase the access for survivors of sexual assault and family violence to free legal advice to support safety planning and to better support survivors in navigating the justice system and Emergency Protection Order (EPO) processes. The ILAR program has an independent legal advice coordinator to receive and coordinate program referrals from a range of service providers including Victims Services, Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC), family violence, homeless shelters, other housing programs, the RCMP and government programs. Survivors may also self-refer to the program. The program also has a lawyer panel that offers referrals for survivors for up to four hours of free legal advice. Upon receipt of referral the ILAR coordinator conducts a screening and intake process and matches the survivor with a lawyer. Clients may also identify and receive counselling supports from a counsellor panel as well.
- **Emergency Protection Order (EPO)** The Victim Services program also assist survivors of family violence to apply for EPOs at any time. The Department contracts the NWT YWCA to provide a 24-hour, territorial wide program to support victims of violence to access EPOs as part of safety planning with clients, legislated under the *Protection Against Family Violence Act*. Victim Services assist survivors of family violence to contact the YWCA or RCMP to make an EPO application. EPOs are temporary court orders (up to 90 days) available under the *Protection Against Family Violence Act* to help victims of domestic/intimate partner violence create prohibitive separation from their abusers.
- **Services for Indigenous victims:**
  - **The Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)**, funded by the Department of Justice Canada, supports and assists families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls by acting as a liaison to gather information they are seeking from system agencies, and ensuring that this information is provided to them in a trauma-informed and culturally sensitive manner. In addition, FILU staff support proactive referrals, based on the needs and wishes of the client, to community programs and resources that can promote wellness and healing. Services are available to all family members (blood and non-blood relations), whether or not they are participating in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. FILU is located within Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs (Model: system-based).

### Training initiatives:

- The Department provides training to Victim Services Workers based on the NWT Victim Service Handbook. The Handbook provides guidance on safety planning, formal court preparation, accompaniment training and trauma informed practice.

- Funding is provided annually for each victim services provider to attend specialized individual personal training and capacity building events.
- The Department also provides regular one on one support and monthly calls of practices.
- All victim services providers are brought together for an annual training event to share knowledge, to develop and strengthen the NWT Victim Services program and to build capacity.

## Nunavut

The Community Justice Division of the Department of Justice administers five programs to assist victims of crime: the Victims Assistance Fund to support community-based projects and culturally relevant activities, the Victims Travel Support Program, the Victim Care Program, the Victims of Crime Emergency Fund, and specialized support for the families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls through the Family Information Liaison Unit.

### **Governing legislation:**

- *Victims of Crime Act* (Government of Nunavut, 2010)
- *Victim of Crime Bill of Rights*

### **Rights and principles for victims of crime:**

Nunavut's *Victims of Crime Act* promotes a number of principles regarding victims of crime, including courteous and compassionate treatment, prompt redress, availability of information to victims, and assistance to victims in bringing their views and concerns to the criminal justice system.

### **Role of government:**

- ✓ Policy development
- ✓ Program funding
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Service delivery

### **Service-delivery models:**

- ✓ Community-based
- ✓ System-based

### **Funding model:**

Victim Services, Community Justice Division of the territorial Department of Justice is funded by:

- Voted appropriation: some positions in the division receive annual core funding from the territorial government.
- Victims Fund, Justice Canada: financial assistance programs for victims and survivors of crime as well as some positions in the division receives funding through multi-year funding agreements from Justice Canada.
- Gender-Based Violence National Action Plan (GVP NAP), WAGE Canada: the division receives portions of GVP NAP funding for financial assistance programs for victims and survivors of crime.
- Victim Surcharges: The Victims Assistance Fund (VAF) is a special purpose fund maintained with revenue from victim fine surcharges. The *Victims of Crime Act* establishes the territorial fine surcharge to be 20 percent of the fine imposed on a territorial offence, and \$25 where no fine is imposed.

### **Programs and services:**

The Community Justice Division administers the following programs to assist victims of crime. Services can be accessed at [victimservices@gov.nu.ca](mailto:victimservices@gov.nu.ca) or toll-free 1-866-456-5216:

- **Victims Assistance Fund (VAF)** supports the development of victims' services at a community level and provides funding to community based healing projects tailored to the needs of victims and survivors that are also culturally relevant. . A call for proposals for project funding is facilitated twice a year for non profit organizations and the municipalities. Examples of projects that have been funded include Peer Victim Support Leader Training, Healthy Relationships Workshops, Youth Cultural Healing Journey programs, etc. (Model: system-based; community-based).
- **Nunavut Victim Travel Support Program** enables those impacted by homicide and other violent crimes in Nunavut to travel and participate in court proceedings that are held outside their home communities. Funding is dedicated to assist clients with travel, accommodations, food, and other costs associated with travel to court proceedings. (Model: system-based).
- **Nunavut Victim of Crime Emergency Fund** provides limited financial support toward essential expenses for survivors and, families of victims in the immediate aftermath of a violent crime. The program was established to offset the untimely financial burdens that arise due to criminal offenses, reduce the impact of the crime, and enhance safety. (Model: system-based).
- **The Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU)** supports and assists families of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls by acting as a liaison to gather the information they are seeking from system agencies and connecting them to help in the community. Services are available to family members whether or not they are participating in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The program is partly funded by the Department of Justice Canada's Victims Fund. (Model: system-based).
- **Victim Care Program**, provides victims with information, support, and referrals, and provides public education and awareness resources on victims' issues. (Model: system-based). Direct services victims include assistance with the following:
  - **Victim Impact Statements (VIS)** allow victims to provide a statement to the court explaining how they have been impacted by a crime. They can be considered by a judge at the time of the sentencing of an offender in a criminal matter.
  - **Restitution** can be requested to be paid by an offender in instances where a victim has incurred financial losses and damages as a direct result of a crime. This will be considered by the judge at time of sentencing of an offender in a criminal matter.
  - **Victim Registration** for victims of federal offenders to receive information and services from Correctional Service Canada and Parole Board of Canada.
  - **Court Orientation & Accompaniment** support for victims in navigating the justice system, including explanations of the court process and outcomes, and assisting the victim to participate.
  - **Information** on the Family Abuse Intervention Act, Emergency Protection Orders, Community Intervention Order, and diversion processes.
- **Domestic Violence:**
  - **The Spousal Abuse Counseling Program** offered by the Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre in Rankin Inlet is an innovative alternative measures to the criminal justice program which has been designed by community members to address root causes of family violence. Funded by the Community Justice Division, this program offers counselling for both victims and offenders in intimate partner violence situations. Online at <http://pulaarvik.ca/>. (Model: community-based).

- **Transition House Services** for women and children fleeing domestic violence are available in six communities in Nunavut. Services provided include emergency accommodations, information on the cycle of violence, and referrals to other community support agencies. These services are generally funded by the Department of Family Services, and can be contacted through local Family Services offices or victim services programs. (Model: community-based).
- **Family Abuse Intervention Program** provides resources for victims and families experiencing family abuse. Community Justice Outreach Workers in the territory assist victims with applications for Emergency Protection Orders and Community Intervention Orders under the civil Family Abuse Intervention Act. (Model: community-based) Family Abuse Intervention Program Emergency On-Call (AFTER HOURS): 1-844-534-1038
- **Services for Children and Youth:**
  - Umingmak Child and Youth Advocacy Centre in Iqaluit provides trauma informed, wrap around services for children and youth victims of crime. The location provides a child-friendly space for mandated services to come to and coordinate around the child or youth to ensure that all legal and forensic evidence is gathered. Interdisciplinary team including Victim Services, RCMP, Social Workers, Mental Health and Umingmak Centre staff, provides assistance to the children and the families. (Model: system-based/ community-based) <https://www.umingmakcentre.ca/>

#### **Training Initiatives:**

- **Essential Skills Training** Victim Services provides free essential skills training to frontline service providers and volunteers who work with victims of a crime. The purpose of this training is to reduce revictimization, as well as inform front line service providers of victims needs. Specialized trainings such as traumatic brain injuries related to intimate partner violence victims or age-appropriate sexual health and consent workshops are also facilitated upon request.
- **The Northern Institute of Social Justice (Yukon University)** worked with the Department of Justice in the governments of Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut to develop a training designed for victim services providers in the territories. Training modules were developed and Nunavut Victim Services uses the modules to train staff.
- **Our Life's Journey: the Inuit Counsellors' Training & Peer Support Program** is delivered through Ilisaqsivik Society in Clyde River. This program provides certificate training in Self- Actualization Therapy, Traditional Inuit Therapy, Individual and Group Therapy and Client- Centered Therapy to counsellors, providing them with the knowledge, skills and abilities to counsel clients suffering from addictions, trauma, loss and grief, abuse and violence and suicide ideation. Funding sources have included the Victims Assistance Fund.

## Victim Services in Federal Departments and Agencies

A number of federal government departments and agencies deliver services and provide information to victims of crime:

### Crown Witness Coordinator Program, Public Prosecution Service of Canada

As part of its mandate, the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC) is responsible for the prosecution of all *Criminal Code* offences in the three territories. The PPSC's Crown Witness Coordinator Program is intended to bridge the cultural gap between the court system and First Nations and Inuit victims and witnesses engaged in the court process in the North.

Based in the PPSC's regional offices in each of the territorial capitals, 20 Crown Witness Coordinators (CWCs) and three CWC Supervisors work closely with PPSC prosecutors and travel to communities during court circuits to address the needs of victims and witnesses. The CWCs work closely with the territorial victim services programs to coordinate services to victims and witnesses.

The main role of CWCs is to help victims and witnesses understand the court process, their rights and responsibilities in the process, and the roles of the court participants. They provide court updates, accompany witnesses to court, provide support during and after testimony, and assist with trial preparation. CWCs also act as liaisons between Crown counsel and victims and witnesses, to ensure that their concerns are considered during the justice process. Their work includes identifying victims' support needs and ensuring victims are referred to appropriate territorial support agencies to address those needs.

The CWCs in each territory can be contacted through the respective PPSC Regional Offices, with contact information online at: <http://www.ppsc-sppc.gc.ca/eng/cct>.

## National Victim Services Program, Correctional Service Canada

The Correctional Service Canada (CSC), governed by the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA), is the federal government agency responsible for the custody and community supervision of offenders who are serving a sentence of two years or more. Victims of federal offenders have a right to receive certain information from CSC about the offender who harmed them, and CSC's National Victim Services Program supports victims in exercising their rights under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* (CVBR) within the corrections and conditional release process.

The CVBR and the CCRA define a victim as any individual who has suffered physical or emotional harm, property damage or economic loss as the result of an offence. Legally, other people can act on behalf of victims who are unable to act for themselves, or who are responsible for the care or support of the victim's dependant(s).

To receive information from CSC about the offender who harmed them, victims are asked to register with either CSC or the Parole Board of Canada (PBC) (victim services are offered jointly between the two organizations). The registration process allows CSC to confirm that the applicant meets the definition of victim, which is required under the law before CSC can share certain information with victims about the offender. Victims can register by submitting a [Request for Registration](#) form by mail, fax, or online by creating an account on the secure [Victims Portal](#). Victims can choose someone to act as their representative and receive information on their behalf if they would prefer not to receive it directly. Once registered, victims (or their representative) can choose to receive information by **telephone, mail, fax, and/or electronically** through the Victims Portal, which is available 24/7.

Located in each of CSC's five regional offices, dedicated Victim Services Officers are available to:

- register victims to receive information about the offender who harmed them and explain the information/services available to them, including CSC's victim-offender mediation services;
- notify victims about offender-related information, based on their choice of what information they want to receive, when and how;
- work with victims to submit Victim Statements at any time during the offender's sentence to express how the offender's crime has impacted their lives and any safety concerns they may have (request no contact or geographics restrictions upon an offender's conditional release);
- process and share Victim Statements with the offender's Case Management Team for consideration in decisions made by CSC and PBC about the offender. (shared with the offender as part of the decision process);
- engage victims on voluntary supported transfers, encourage victims to submit their safety concerns and share these concerns back to the offender's Case Management Team;
- explain to victims the federal corrections and conditional release system and answer questions about corrections and parole supervision; and
- refer victims to other appropriate services and victim-serving agencies.

Victim Services Officers can be contacted by phone toll-free at 1-866-806-2275, or by email at [victims-victimes@csc-scc.gc.ca](mailto:victims-victimes@csc-scc.gc.ca).

Information and services can also be accessed by victims and/or their named representative on the Victims Portal, which is administered jointly by CSC and PBC, at:

<https://victimsportal-portailvictimes.csc-scc.gc.ca/Main/Home>

CSC also offers information on its Victim Services Program online at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/correctional-service/services/you-csc/victims.html> .

Victims can learn more about how to submit a complaint if they believe that CSC has infringed or denied their rights under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* by visiting:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/correctional-service/services/you-csc/victims/making-complaint.html>

## Parole Board of Canada

Parole is a bridge between incarceration and return to the community. It is a form of conditional release, and contributes to the protection of society by allowing some offenders to continue serving part of their sentence outside of the institution in the community. Parole is under the supervision of a Correctional Service of Canada Parole Officer, and subject to conditions.

The Parole Board of Canada (PBC) is an independent administrative tribunal which reports to Parliament through the Minister of Public Safety. It has exclusive authority, under the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA), to grant, deny, cancel, terminate or revoke day parole, full parole, and authorize or approve temporary absences for offenders serving sentences of two years or more. The PBC also makes parole decisions for offenders serving sentences of less than two years in all provinces and territories except Ontario, Quebec, and Alberta, which have their own parole boards.

The Board takes the concerns of victims seriously and is committed to respecting victims' rights under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* (CVBR). The PBC recognizes the important role that victims play in the conditional release process, and strives to be sensitive and accommodating to their needs within the scope of its mandate and the laws that govern it. Victim services at the PBC are provided by Regional Communications Officers (RCO), specialized staff who work at PBC regional offices across the country.

Under the CCRA, the PBC considers a person to be a victim of crime if:

- they have been harmed as a result of a criminal offence
- they are a spouse, conjugal partner, relative of, or person responsible for a victim who has died or is not able to act for themselves (e.g. the victim is ill or a child)
- they have custody for, or are responsible for, dependants of a victim who is deceased or is unable to act for themselves
- the person who harmed them has not been prosecuted or convicted, but they have made a complaint to the police or Crown Attorney

As outlined in the CVBR, victims of crime have a right to information, participation and protection as part of the conditional release process. This includes victims of all offenders who have received a sentence of two years or more, as well as victims of offenders who have received a sentence of less than two years who have submitted a parole application to the PBC.

To register as a victim, individuals can submit a Victim Registration Form to the PBC and/or the CSC. Because the PBC and CSC jointly coordinate their victim services, victims may register with either organization. As part of the registration, victims can indicate what information and services they would like to receive. Victims may choose to receive information directly or can authorize someone else to act as their representative. Representatives can be individuals or agencies. Victim services can be accessed by registered victims on the secure, online [Victims Portal](#).

Once registered, victims can request information about the offender and their sentence, including but not limited to review dates and any special conditions imposed on the offender's release. Victims may also request copies of decisions contained in PBC's Registry of Decision.

Victims also have a right to participate in the conditional release process of the offender who harmed them. In accordance with the CCRA, the PBC facilitates participation in the conditional release process in the following ways:

- Victims may submit information to the PBC at any time for consideration in conditional release decision-making. Victim statements may include information related to safety concerns and/or the effect the crime has had on them, their family, or the community. A victim can also request that special conditions be imposed on the offender's release for the PBC to consider. The PBC provides guidelines on what to include in a victim statement on its website at [Canada.ca/victims-and-parole](https://Canada.ca/victims-and-parole).
- Victims may request to attend PBC hearings and may choose to present their statement at the hearing. Victims may also submit an audio or video recording of their written statement. Victims are accompanied to parole hearings, either virtually or in-person, by an RCO who helps explain the hearing process and decision and answer any questions the victim may have.
- Registered victims can access financial assistance for them and their support person to attend PBC hearings. See below to learn more about the Department of Justice Canada's Victims Fund.
- Victims can also request to listen to an audio recording of parole hearings.

Victims have the right to have their security and privacy considered at all stages of the criminal justice process. The PBC considers information from victims during conditional release reviews. When a victim statement has been provided to the Board, conditions that are considered reasonable and necessary to protect the victim may be imposed on an offender's release. If the Board members decide not to impose any conditions to protect the victim, written reasons must be provided. The PBC must take reasonable steps to inform the victim and consider their concerns before removing or varying any of these conditions.

The PBC is committed to including victims in the conditional release process and ensuring that their rights are respected, in keeping with the CCRA and the CVBR. A victim who believes their rights have not been respected under the CVBR can submit a formal complaint to the PBC by completing the [PBC Victim Complaint form](#). Before doing so, victims are encouraged to first speak with an RCO, as they are there to assist victims, and may be able to address the issue or concern quickly and informally.

For additional information, contact a RCO through the PBC's toll-free Victim Information Line at 1-866-789-4636 or visit [Canada.ca/victims-and-parole](https://Canada.ca/victims-and-parole).

## National Office for Victims, Public Safety Canada

Public Safety Canada's (PS) National Office for Victims (NOV) is a central resource working to improve victims' experience with the federal corrections and conditional release system. To do this it:

- provides a "victim lens" on correctional policy development to assist victims in exercising their rights to information, participation and protection;
- develops information products, as resources permit, for dissemination to victims and the general public aimed at increasing awareness so victims can better understand and navigate federal corrections and conditional release;
- complements the work of the Justice Canada's Policy Centre for Victim Issues through PS Portfolio coordination and engagement with victims, their advocates, and other stakeholders in order to ensure the NOV's services and supports are informed by multi-sectoral coordination; and
- considers the unique needs of victims in vulnerable communities, including Indigenous peoples when it undertakes the work outlined above.

NOV makes its information products available online and in hard copy at no cost. Examples of information products available in hard copy free of charge are:

- [\*Helping Victims Prepare for the Release of a Federal Offender\*](#) pamphlet;
- [\*An Information Guide to Assist Victims\*](#); and
- [\*Sentence Calculation – An Explanation of the Basics of Sentence Calculation with Examples\*](#) booklet.

More information products are available online at <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crrctns/ntnl-ffc-vctms-en.aspx>.

Victims may learn more about how to make a complaint about any infringement or denial of their rights by the NOV by visiting <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crrctns/ntnl-ffc-vctms-mk-cmplnt-en.aspx>.

## Policy Centre for Victim Issues, the Department of Justice Canada

The Department of Justice Canada's Policy Centre for Victim Issues (PCVI) is mandated under the Federal Victims Strategy to give victims of crime an effective voice in the criminal justice system. It works to do this by helping victims and their families understand their role in the criminal justice system and the laws, services and assistance available to support them; ensuring that the perspectives of victims will be fully considered in the development of relevant federal laws and policies; and increasing awareness about the needs of victims of crime and effective approaches to respond to those needs. The PCVI maintains a close working relationship with the provinces and territories, which have primary responsibility for the delivery of victim services in Canada. While the PCVI's primary mandate does not specifically include the direct delivery of services to victims, it supports victims by:

- providing public legal education and information about the role of victims in the criminal justice system and related legislation, through fact sheets, pamphlets, handbooks, and on its website at <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/victims-victimes/>;
- helping victims and service providers locate services across Canada by offering the national Victim Services Directory online <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/victims-victimes/vsd-rsv/index.html>; and
- administering the Victims Fund, a grants and contributions fund that supports projects that raise awareness and enhance services and assistance to victims of crime across Canada. The Victims Fund includes two direct financial support programs for victims delivered by the Department of Justice Canada:
  - **Financial assistance to attend a parole hearing:** victims who have been approved by PBC to attend a hearing of the offender who harmed them, either to observe or to present a victim statement, can apply to the Victims Fund for travel funding assistance. Financial assistance is also available for a support person to accompany a victim or to provide child or dependant care to enable a victim to attend hearings. Program details and application forms are available online at <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fund-fina/cj-jp/fund-fond/attend-audience.html>.
  - **Financial assistance for Canadians victimized abroad:** Canadians who have been the victim of a serious violent crime in a foreign country may be eligible for financial assistance, where they face serious situations of undue hardship where no other source of financial assistance is available. After reporting the crime to the Canadian Embassy or Consulate as well as local police, victims should then apply to the Department of Justice Canada. Program details and application forms are available online at <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fund-fina/cj-jp/fund-fond/abroad-etranger.html>, and the Victims Fund Manager can be contacted toll-free at 1-888-606-5111 or by email at [Victims-Abroad-Fund-Manager@justice.gc.ca](mailto:Victims-Abroad-Fund-Manager@justice.gc.ca).

## Canadian Benefit for Parents of Young Victims of Crime, Employment and Social Development Canada

The Canadian Benefit for Parents of Young Victims of Crime is an income support grant available to applicants who have suffered a loss of income from taking time away from work to cope with the death or disappearance of their child or children, as a result of a probable *Criminal Code* offence. Administered by Employment and Social Development Canada, program details and application forms are available online at <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/parents-young-victims-crime.html>

## Office of the Federal Ombudsperson for Victims of Crime

The Office of the Federal Ombudsperson for Victims of Crime (OFOVC) operates at arm's length from the federal government, with a mandate of ensuring that the federal government meets its responsibilities to victims of crime. The OFOVC helps victims of crime and their families in Canada by:

- promoting access to federal programs and services for victims and survivors that exist to help them;
- addressing and/or reviewing complaints made by victims about federal departments, agencies, employees, laws or policies;
- referring victims to programs and services that may be able to assist them;
- identifying issues that have a negative impact on victims and their families and making recommendations for improvement; and
- Promoting awareness of victims' rights and the federal laws that benefit them.

Victims can contact the OFOVC and/or make a complaint about federal agencies and legislation by telephone at toll-free 1-866-481-8429; by email at [victimfirst@ombudsman.gc.ca](mailto:victimfirst@ombudsman.gc.ca); or by mail to:

Office of the Federal Ombudsperson for Victims of Crime  
P.O. Box 55037  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1A1

The OFOVC also provides information on its mandate and services, victim services available across Canada, and the criminal justice system on its website at <https://www.victimfirst.gc.ca>.