

# HAS YOUR LIFE BEEN AFFECTED BY CRIME?

*There are programs to help you.*



ellabracey

# VICTIMS COMPENSATION PROGRAM



**The Victims Compensation Program** provides limited financial assistance to victims of violent crime who have experienced a financial loss as the direct result of the crime, as long as the loss is not reimbursable through other sources, such as insurance.

## **Eligibility Requirements:**

- ~ The crime has been reported to a law enforcement officer, who must conclude that a crime was committed.
- ~ The victim has suffered physical injury or emotional harm as a direct result of a violent crime.
- ~ The crime was committed in Vermont, or was committed against a Vermont resident in a state or country that does not have a Compensation Program.
- ~ The crime was committed after July 1, 1987.
- ~ The victim did not violate a criminal law of this state which caused or contributed to his or her injuries or death.
- ~ Family members of a homicide victim are also eligible.

*Where appropriate, money is available to pay for the following expenses, as long as they have not already been paid by other sources:*

- ~ Medical and dental care
- ~ Counseling for victims and family members
- ~ Funeral expenses
- ~ Lost wages due to time missed from work
- ~ Other expenses such as prescriptions, eyeglasses, and limited transportation costs
- ~ If death occurs as a result of the crime, legal dependents may receive temporary living expenses
- ~ Limited relocation assistance

*Property losses are generally not covered.*

**For more information about Victims Compensation, call:**

1-800-750-1213 (Voice – VT only) / 1-802-241-1250 (Voice)  
1-800-845-4874 (TTY – VT only) / 1-802-241-1258 (TTY)

## **Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services**

*Victims Compensation Program*

58 South Main Street, Suite 1

Waterbury VT 05676-1599

1-802-241-1253 (Fax)

<http://www.ccvs.state.vt.us>

# VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE



**Sexual Assault is a serious crime.** You have rights as a victim of this crime, and there are people who can help you:

An **advocate** is a person who can help you figure out your options, inform you of your rights, and provide support. An advocate can go with you to the hospital or to a doctor. An advocate can also help you with safety planning, going to the police if you choose to, and accessing legal and social services. You have the right to request an advocate. You can call 1-800-489-7273 to talk to an advocate before you decide to go to the hospital, or you can request an advocate once you arrive at the emergency room or health care center.

**A Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)** is trained in examining and treating injuries related to sexual violence. *You have the right to request a SANE at every hospital in Vermont.* A SANE can check for injuries that may not be obvious and can perform a medical exam, or, if you choose, a forensic exam for evidence collection. If you want to have a medical or forensic exam, it is best to do so right away. Some tests and treatments work best when done as early as possible, and some only work within a certain time period.

**NOTE:** If you are a minor (under 18), a SANE will be required to report the sexual violence to DCF, so you will not really have a say about whether or not you wish to report the sexual assault.

If you are worried about being exposed to HIV as a result of a sexual assault, a SANE can perform an HIV screening, give you medication to prevent HIV infection, and refer you to a local infectious disease specialist. Medications to prevent HIV infection work best if you take them *within 48 hours (2 days) of a sexual assault.*

**SANEs can also:**

- ~ screen for sexually transmitted diseases and provide medication to treat them (*within 72 hours after an assault*);



- ~ test for predatory drugs, such as Rohypnol, GHB, or Ecstasy. This needs to be done *as soon as possible, not to exceed 24 hours*, since many of these drugs leave your system quickly and are not detectable after 24 hours. **NOTE:** These tests are free even if you haven't been sexually assaulted, but believe that you were given predatory drugs. It's also important to note that these tests will reveal any prescription or non-prescription drugs in your system, including any that you've taken voluntarily;
- ~ perform a pregnancy test and provide emergency contraception to avoid pregnancy (*within 72 hours after an assault*);
- ~ assist you in accessing mental health counseling.

SANEs are available at every hospital emergency room in Vermont. After a sexual assault, the hospital emergency room is the best place to go to receive these specialized services.

**All of these services are free.** You do not have to have health insurance, or give any health insurance information, for any of these services. If you choose to see a private physician or go to a health care center, you can still receive these services for free. Payment for all of these services is made by the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services' Sexual Assault Program. For more information, call the Center at 1-800-750-1213 or 1-800-845-4874 (TTY).

***You do not need to report the sexual assault to the police to receive these services.***

**REMEMBER:**

- ~ You can have a friend, family member, and/or an advocate support you during your hospital exam and while you are reporting to the police.
- ~ You can exclude anyone from the hospital examining room, except medical staff.
- ~ You can ask questions.
- ~ You can stop the medical exam at any time, for any reason.
- ~ You do not have to speak to your assailant, his/her attorney, or that attorney's employees (unless you are ordered by a court to do so).

***Statewide hotline for sexual assault:  
1-800-489-7273 (1-800-489-RAPE)***

# VICTIM ASSISTANCE



## **The Vermont Victim Assistance Program**

maintains 24 advocates in the Attorney General's and State's Attorney's offices throughout Vermont's fourteen counties. Victim advocates guide victims through the criminal justice process and serve as liaisons with the State's Attorneys and other criminal justice agencies. Many counties have "specialized" advocates who focus solely on cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, or child abuse.

Victim advocates provide information on the status of court cases, notify victims of hearings, prepare victims to testify, and assist victims with applications for Victim Compensation. They also assist victims with completing Victim Impact Statements, requesting restitution, and requesting notification of their offender's release. In addition, advocates provide short-term counseling and emotional support to victims, accompany them to court, and help to ensure that they are not re-victimized by the criminal justice process.

Advocates are involved in local task forces and provide outreach and training to other agencies. Through their hard work and dedication, the advocates of Vermont's Victim Assistance Program have been instrumental in creating many positive changes impacting crime victims on a local and statewide level.

If you do not know how to contact your advocate, call the Victim Assistance Program Coordinator at the Center for Crime Victim Services:

**(802) 241-1250**





The programs of the Vermont Network support victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence across Vermont, providing:

- Confidential Advocacy
- 24/7 Hotlines
- Emergency Shelter
- Help with the Legal System
- Medical Advocacy

**Confidential Advocacy** – Advocates from Vermont Network programs provide free and confidential advocacy. An advocate will not disclose any information about a survivor without the survivor’s permission\*.

*\* Advocates have different limits to their confidentiality because they are governed by different policies and laws. While most advocates can keep your conversations confidential, some advocates may need to report child abuse or the abuse of vulnerable adults to the state if they are concerned about their safety. If you are concerned about child abuse reporting, you can ask to speak with an advocate who is not a “mandated reporter,” or you can speak anonymously with hotline advocates. Adults with disabilities and Deaf adults (“vulnerable adults”) can always speak confidentially with advocates from Network Programs, who are not required to report abuse of vulnerable adults. It is important to be sure to clarify with your advocate about their ability to keep confidentiality before you disclose anything you do not want to be shared.*

**Hotlines** – Each program staffs a free 24/7 hotline for crisis support, ongoing peer support and advocacy, and information and referral.

**Legal Advocacy and Support** – Trained peer advocates can support survivors in making informed decisions about legal concerns and/or accompany survivors in court. Advocates provide information about protection orders for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking, and about



what to expect in district, family or criminal court. Advocates may be able to provide referrals to specialized legal resources including attorneys.

**Hospital Support** – Advocates are available to meet survivors at the hospital after a sexual or physical assault to assist them in understanding their rights, to provide support and information before, during and after examinations, and to help survivors connect with other resources as needed.

**Financial and Personal Advocacy** – Peer advocates can support survivors in identifying and accessing a wide variety of public benefits and community resources for basic needs. Advocates can assist survivors in securing rights and services with social service providers, landlords, creditors and others.

**Shelters and Safehomes** – Shelters provide a home-like environment for survivors of domestic and sexual violence and their children who need a safe place to stay temporarily. An advocate can help a survivor identify and access community resources and develop a plan for leaving the shelter, while a children’s advocate can support her children. In communities without shelters, and for male survivors of domestic violence, programs can connect survivors with local safe homes, or with shelters in other regions of the state.

**Other Resources** – Most programs offer peer education and/or support groups for adult survivors, youth and/or children, creating opportunities to connect with others sharing similar experiences. Some programs provide individual advocacy with youth and children, parenting support, limited transportation and/or childcare, transitional housing, and education and support regarding substance use or abuse.



## **Programs and Hotlines by County:**

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**Addison:** WomenSafe / (800) 388-4205

**Bennington:** Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE) / (802) 442-2111

**Caledonia & Southern Essex:** The Advocacy Program at Umbrella\* / (802) 748-8645

**Caledonia, Hardwick Area:** AWARE / (802) 472-6463

**Chittenden:** Women's Rape Crisis Center / (802) 863-1236; Women Helping Battered Women\* / (802) 658-1996

**Franklin & Grand Isle:** Voices Against Violence\* / (802) 524-6575

**Lamoille:** Clarina Howard Nichols Center\* / (802) 888-5256

**Orange & Northeastern Windsor:** Safeline / (800) 639-7233

**Orleans & Northern Essex:** The Advocacy Program at Umbrella\* / (800) 228-7395

**Rutland:** Rutland County Women's Network and Shelter\* / (802) 775-3232

**Washington:** Battered Women's Services and Shelter\* / (877) 543-9498; Sexual Assault Crisis Team\* / (802) 479-5577

**Windham:** Women's Crisis Center\* / (802) 254-6954 or (800) 773-0689

**Windsor (Central):** Women's Information Service (WISE)\* / (603) 448-5525 or (866) 348-WISE

**Windsor (Southern):** New Beginnings / (802) 885-2050

**Statewide Coalition Office:** (802) 223-1302

**To be automatically connected to local programs, call the 24-hour statewide hotlines (*confidential to anonymous callers*):**

**Domestic Violence: 1-800-228-7395**

**Sexual Violence: 1-800-489-7273**

***www.vtnetwork.org***

*\*Program with shelter*

# SAFE AT HOME



## **Address Confidentiality Program Vermont Secretary of State's Office**

**The Safe at Home Program** is a component of an overall safety plan for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking (and their children) who are living in a location unknown to the abuser, who have recently moved, or who are planning to relocate in the near future to a safe place unknown to the abuser. The program provides participants with a substitute mailing address to be used as their legal residence, work and/or school address. First-class mail is sent to a substitute post office box, where it is then forwarded by the Safe at Home Program, at no cost, to the participant's confidential location.



The program provides a substitute address so abusers cannot locate victims through the public record system, i.e., voter registration, motor vehicle records, marriage or birth records, etc. The program also permits participants to vote in their districts as "blind ballot" absentee voters.

You may apply to the program by contacting a domestic violence/sexual violence program (see previous page). Please call Safe at Home or check our website for a listing of advocates who are trained in the program.

For information about Safe at Home, contact:

**Safe at Home Program**  
P.O. Box 1568  
Montpelier, VT 05601-1568  
1-800-439-8683 (VT only)  
**e-mail:** safeathome@sec.state.vt.us

**[www.sec.state.vt.us/otherprg/safeathome.html](http://www.sec.state.vt.us/otherprg/safeathome.html)**

# VERMONT RESTITUTION UNIT



**The State of Vermont Restitution Unit** was created by Vermont's legislature to address the financial hardship caused to crime victims by having to wait for an offender to pay their restitution. For any restitution ordered on or after July 1, 2004, the Restitution Unit is able to pay a victim their restitution shortly after it has been ordered by the court. The payments are made from a Restitution Fund. The Restitution Unit will then collect the outstanding amount from the offender and reimburse the Fund.



There is a cap on the maximum restitution payment from the Restitution Fund. However, if a judge orders an offender to pay restitution to you for more than the capped amount, the Restitution Unit will attempt to collect the full amount of restitution ordered and reimburse you for the full amount.

If you have questions about the court-ordered offender restitution, or about the Restitution Unit, please call:

**1-800-584-3485** (*toll-free in Vermont only*)  
**(802) 241-4688**

## DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (DOC) VICTIM SERVICES PROGRAM



**The Department of Corrections Victim Services Program** provides assistance to crime victims with concerns related to offenders who are under the Department's supervision or are incarcerated. We can provide information regarding the status of the offender, safety planning, accompaniment to parole board hearings, and assistance in preparing for offender reentry.

Visit our website at [www.doc.state.vt.us](http://www.doc.state.vt.us), or contact the Director of Victim Services: **(802) 241-2302**.

# SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY



**The Vermont Department of Public Safety** maintains the Sex Offender Registry. Generally, offenders who were convicted of sexual offenses, as defined by law, on or after 7/1/96, or released on or after that date, in Vermont or any other state, are required to register.

If you have been the victim of sexual violence and your offender has been convicted and sentenced for the crime, you have the right to be notified by the Vermont Sex Offender Registry of that offender's current address. To receive a notification form, contact the Sex Offender Registry Coordinator at 1-802-244-8727, or visit the Department of Public Safety's website: [www.dps.state.vt.us](http://www.dps.state.vt.us).

The Department of Public Safety posts information about certain classes of sex offenders on this website. However, victim information will not be posted and will remain otherwise confidential. For more details on how to access the Sex Offender Registry, visit the Department of Public Safety's website.

## VICTIM/SURVIVOR VOLUNTEER ADVISORS AT THE VERMONT CENTER FOR CRIME VICTIM SERVICES

Our mission is to join with victims, survivors, and those who interact with victims to implement, sustain and support a system of services across Vermont that is victim-centered, comprehensive and just. As part of this mission, the Center invites victims and survivors to become advisors to the Center and its programs. We believe that this input is vitally important in helping us maintain the direction and integrity of our work.

Our hope is that victims and survivors can assist those who have also experienced crime, contribute to the prevention of crime and violence, as well as advance in their own healing. Our belief is that crime victims and survivors have a critical role to play in the community's response to victimization, and we want to support volunteer advisors in this role.

For more information, contact the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services.

## OTHER STATEWIDE RESOURCES

After Hours Emergency Relief from Abuse Orders  
1-800-540-9990

Adult Protective Services  
1-800-564-1612 V/TTY

Child Protection Line (24/7 child abuse hotline)  
DCF Family Services Division  
1-800-649-5285

DCF Economic Services Division (formerly PATH)  
1-800-287-0589

DCF Child Welfare and Youth Justice (formerly SRS)  
(802) 241-2131

Vermont Legal Aid, Inc.  
1-800-889-2047

### FOR VICTIM/SURVIVORS WHO ARE DEAF:

Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services  
(802) 479-1934 TTY  
1-800-303-DVAS TTY Warm Line

### FOR VICTIM/SURVIVORS WHO HAVE DISABILITIES:

Barrier-Free Justice  
1-800-834-7890 • (802) 229-2603 TTY

Disability Law Project  
1-800-747-5022 V/TTY

Communication Support Project  
*(For people with disabilities that interfere with  
their ability to communicate)*  
1-888-317-2006

### FOR CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND HATE CRIMES:

Human Rights Commission  
(802) 828-2480

Attorney General's Civil Rights Unit  
1-888-745-9195

### FOR LGBTQQ SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE:

SafeSpace  
(802) 863-0003 V/TTY • 1-866-869-7341

*For a more complete list of  
services in your area, consult  
the Vermont Victim Services  
Resource Directory on our  
website, [www.ccvs.state.vt.us](http://www.ccvs.state.vt.us).*

