Maryland State Board of Victim Services 2024 Annual Report

Criminal Procedure Article, §§ 11-914(1) and 11-915(b)(5)

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December 10, 2024

WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor

Maryland
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF CRIME PREVENTION AND POLICY

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Executive Director

December 10, 2024

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The Honorable Steven J. Kelly, Esq.
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State Board of Victim Services
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032

RE: Criminal Procedure Article §§ 11-914(1) (MSAR #15688) and 11-915(b)(5) (MSAR #12143)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to §§ 11-914(1) and 11-915(b)(5) of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy respectfully submits this *Maryland State Board of Victim Services 2024 Annual Report*. This report includes information on the Board's accomplishments, the distribution of money under the Maryland Victims of Crime Fund and the Legal Services for Crime Victims Fund, and recommendations to continue comprehensive and compassionate statewide services for every crime victim as allowed by law.

Should you have any questions relating to the information provided in this report, please feel free to contact me at 410-697-9338.

As required, five color copies will be sent to the DLS Legislative Library.

Sincerely,

Dorothy J. Lennig, Esq.
Executive Director

cc: Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)

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Acknowledgments

This *Maryland State Board of Victim Services 2024 Annual Report* is the result of hard work, valuable input, and dedication from numerous stakeholders. Everyone was generous with their time and supportive feedback. Their participation in the Maryland State Board of Victim Services, as well as their feedback, suggestions, and recommendations, were invaluable for the final report. The completion, timeliness, and comprehensiveness of this report would not have been possible without their efforts.

Roster of Members

Pursuant to § 11-912 of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Maryland State Board of Victim Services is composed of various members, including a Chair, appointed by Governor Moore.

Steven J. Kelly, Esq., Chair
Grant & Eisenhofer

Anne T. Bean
Service Provider, Cecil County Department of Community Services

Anthony Brown
Maryland Attorney General

Dawn Collins
Survivor Advocate

Lou Gieszl
Administrative Office of the Courts

R. Gary Hofmann, III
Maryland Sheriffs' Association, Queen Anne's County Sheriff's Office

The Honorable Anne Colt Leitess, Esq.
Anne Arundel County State's Attorney

Dorothy J. Lennig, Esq.
Executive Director, Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy

Rafael Lopez
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Public Member, Washington County State's Attorney's Office

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Public Member, Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc.

Shardal Rose
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Vincent Schiraldi
Secretary, Department of Juvenile Services

Carolyn Scruggs
Secretary, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Lisa Spicknall-Horner
Public Members, Donate Life Maryland

Jeanne Yeager
Public Member, Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence

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Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy

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Laurie Kimbles
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Tara Newcomer
Department of Human Services

David Shultie
Administrative Office of the Courts

Patricia Stevens
Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Executive Summary

In accordance with §§ 11-914 and 11-915 of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Maryland State Board of Victim Services (Board) and the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy's (Office's) Victim Services Coordinator must submit a report to the Governor, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, and the Board each year, as it relates to its activities, the distribution of grant funding, and recommendations to improve victim assistance programs.

Under the leadership of Chair Steven Kelly, Esq., Grant & Eisenhofer, this *Maryland State Board of Victim Services 2024 Annual Report* includes information on the activities of the Board, the administration of funds to victims of crime, and specific recommendations to improve the treatment and services for Maryland's victims of crime. It also identifies the Board's continued partnership with victim service providers, local communities, various branches of State government, and the federal government to better serve Maryland's victims of crime; and continued efforts to improve the treatment for victims of crime by collaborating with criminal justice agencies and private non-profit organizations, creating and expanding innovative initiatives, and welcoming feedback and suggestions from individuals and communities across the State.

Background

Recognizing the unique and distinctive needs of crime victims, the Maryland General Assembly created the Board and the position of the State Coordinator in 1987. This was done to monitor, assess, coordinate, and make recommendations concerning state and local efforts to assist victims of crime. The Board's mission is to ensure that all crime victims in Maryland are treated with dignity, respect, and compassion during all phases of the criminal justice process.

In 1991, under the authority of the Office, the Maryland General Assembly created the Maryland Victims of Crime (MVOC) fund to provide funding support for victim services. In 2007, the Maryland General Assembly created the Legal Services for Crime Victims (LSCV) fund to allow Maryland crime victims to have legal representation in the criminal court system. The Board makes funding recommendations to the Office, which administers and manages the MVOC and the LSCV grant projects.

Pursuant to § 11-914 of the Criminal Procedure Article, and under the authority of the Executive Director of the Office, the Board shall:

(1) Submit to the Governor an annual written report of its activities, including its administration of the MVOC fund;
(2) Monitor the service needs of victims;
(3) Advise the Governor on the needs of victims;
(4) Recommend the appointment of the Victim Services Coordinator to the Executive Director;
(5) Review and approve the Victim Services Coordinator's plans and annual reports, and the Victim Services Coordinator's implementation, operation, and revision of programs;
(6) Approve or disapprove each grant application submitted by the Office;
(7) Advise the State's Attorneys' Coordination Council on the adoption of regulations governing the administration of the Victim and Witness Protection and Relocation Program established under § 11-902 of this subtitle;
(8) Advise the State's Attorneys' Coordinator on the administration of the Victim and Witness Protection and Relocation Program;
(9) (i) Develop pamphlets to notify victims and victim's representatives of the rights, services, and procedures provided under Article 47 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights or State law, how to request information regarding an unsolved case, how to file a complaint to the Department of Juvenile Services alleging that a child is in need of supervision, and how to request that an offender be placed on electronic monitoring or electronic monitoring with victim stay-away alert technology, including:
    1. One pamphlet relating to the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) system protocol registration process and the time before and after the filing of a charging document other than an indictment or information in circuit court; and
    2. A second pamphlet relating to the time after the filing of an indictment or information in circuit court; and

    (ii) Develop a poster to notify victims of the right to request a private room in a law enforcement agency or unit to report crimes under Title 3 of the Criminal Law Article ("Other Crimes against the Person"); and
(10) Develop a notification request form and an MDEC system protocol in consultation with the Administrative Office of the Courts, through which a victim or victim's representative may request to be notified under § 11-104 of this title.

Furthermore, and subject to the authority of the Executive Director, the Victim Services Coordinator is charged with the following duties, as required by § 11-915(b) of the Criminal Procedure Article:

(1) Provide staff support to the Board on victim services matters;
(2) Monitor, assess, and make recommendations to the Board on victim services matters;

(3) Provide technical assistance to local public and private programs that provide victim assistance;
(4) Research and gather data on victims and victim assistance programs and disseminate the data to the public;
(5) Submit to the Governor, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services, and the Board annual report that includes recommendations on how to improve victim assistance programs;
(6) Ensure that the rights of victims are observed;
(7) Help victims get the information to which they have a right and
(8) Monitor compliance with the guidelines for treatment of and assistance to victims and witnesses under §§ 11-1002 and 11-1003 of this title.

Accomplishments

Annual Statewide Memorial Services

In partnership with the Victim and Witness Divisions of the State's Attorneys' Offices, the Office and the Board sponsor four regional memorial services each year during National Crime Victims' Rights Week. The memorial services feature inspirational speakers, musical performances, and quiet reflection, which honor over 5,000 crime victims of homicide, vehicular manslaughter, and missing crime victims and their families. These memorial services provide a safe, supportive, and trustworthy space for families of crime victims to congregate and share their stories. Many advocates who strive to serve victims of crime help to coordinate the memorial services because they understand the importance of a positive outlet for families to cope with their grief and honor their loved ones. The regional memorial services are geographically divided throughout the State (*as illustrated below*).

Eastern Region	Western Region	Southern Region	Northern Region
Caroline	Allegany	Calvert	Anne Arundel
Dorchester	Carroll	Charles	Baltimore City
Kent	Frederick	Prince George's	Baltimore
Queen Anne's	Garrett	St. Mary's	Cecil
Somerset	Montgomery		Harford
Talbot	Washington		Howard
Wicomico			
Worcester			

The *34th Statewide Memorial Services for Crime Victims and Their Families* was hosted by the Baltimore, Carroll, Charles, and Kent County State's Attorneys' Offices on Sunday, April 21, 2024.

Maryland Crime Victims' Rights Conference

The *2024 Maryland Crime Victims' Rights Conference*[1] was held on April 23, 2024, at the Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City, Maryland. The in-person conference garnered over 400 attendees and allowed crime victim service professionals to listen, learn, and network with speakers and peers regarding emerging victim issues and innovative approaches to empower victims. Workshops presented during the conference focused on addressing the unique needs of transgender victims, empowering survivors, culturally responsive services for male victims of human trafficking, post-conviction victim services, legislation, victim impact statements, supportive services for mass casualty incidents, and response to hate crimes.

Victim and Witness Protection and Relocation Program

The Victim and Witness Protection and Relocation Program protects and relocates victims and witnesses and securely facilitates their participation in court proceedings. The State's Attorney Coordinator administers the program, and the Board has the authority to advise the State's Attorneys' Coordination Council (Council) on the regulations and administration of the program.

In 2023, the Board created a workgroup to review the current guidelines and provide recommendations to the Council. The Board provided recommendations to update the guidelines, collect data, and use the funds for pre-arrest/pre-charge expenses. The Board also drafted a sample relocation form and contract. The Council approved the recommendations, form, and contract.

The Board and the Office will continue to assist the Council with training for these changes and advocate for use of the program by state's attorney's offices.

Active Assailant Interdisciplinary Workgroup

Over the last few years, the Board has collaborated with the Maryland Active Assailant Interdisciplinary Work Group (AAIWG)[2] to develop guidance and best practices for support services for mass casualty incidents, including guidance for establishing family assistance centers, victims' rights, and compensation. Board members assisted with the development of

[1] Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy. *GOCPP Hosts Hundreds of Advocates for Annual Victims Rights Conference*
https://gocpp.maryland.gov/gocpp-hosts-hundreds-of-advocates-for-annual-victims-rights-conference/
[2] Active Assailant Interdisciplinary Work Group.. https://aaiwg.maryland.gov/

Support Services for Mass Casualty Incidents: Guidance and Best Practices,[3] which identifies best practices, resources, and operational considerations relevant to response and recovery efforts for a mass casualty incident.

The Board continues to assist with training efforts across the State and will examine efforts to provide a statewide opportunity for crisis intervention training.

Recommendations to the Governor

Pursuant to §§ 11-914(1) and 11-915(b)(5) of the Criminal Procedure Article, and under the authority of the Executive Director, the Board and the Victim Services Coordinator identified the following recommendations to improve treatment and services available for victims of crime (*as illustrated below*).

1. Maryland should continue to support Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) for courts, custody, parole, probation, and sex offender alert line services.
2. The Board will continue collaborating with the AAIWG to develop guidance and best practices for Family Assistance Centers and victim services when responding to an active assailant incident.
3. Maryland State's Attorneys' Offices should continue to utilize the Victim and Witness Protection and Relocation Program. Program funds are used to relocate victims and witnesses to protect them and facilitate their participation in court proceedings.
4. Maryland should pursue long-term strategies to address the financial needs of crime victims, including increasing the collection of restitution. Provisions should be made to increase the collection of costs imposed on convicted defendants in district and circuit courts that are distributed into the MVOC fund and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund. Increased funding would continue to support crime victims through services and compensation, statewide training, federal and state policies, technology, and public awareness and community outreach.
5. The Board supports collaboration and partnerships among direct service providers to sustain continuity of operations.
6. The Board supports training efforts on victims' rights for all stakeholders involved in the criminal justice process including but not limited to the judiciary, state's attorney's offices, law enforcement, correctional services and facilities, and service providers.

All recommendations support the goal of enhancing victims' awareness of services, increasing victims' safety, and increasing victims' self-sufficiency.

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[3] Active Assailant Interdisciplinary Work Group (AAIWG). (2022). *Support Services for Mass Casualty Incidents: Guidance & Best Practices*.
https://aaiwg.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/35/2023/02/Support-Services-for-MCIs-Final-12.2022.pdf

Key Initiatives

Victims' Rights Compliance Initiative

In April 1999, the Board and the Office established the *Victims' Rights Compliance Initiative* (Initiative) to remedy crime victims' rights violations. The goals of the Initiative are to improve the criminal justice system's response to victims of crime through systematic improvements of services provided to victims and to give victims the option to voice their concerns and seek system response when they believe that their statutory rights have been violated at any point in the criminal justice system.

In support of this Initiative, the Office advises criminal justice agencies on victims' rights. The Office promotes and facilitates voluntary, efficient, and effective compliance with laws; analyzes agency implementation practices, policies, procedures, and tools; and recommends and resolves complicated questions and problems between victims and service providers in a non-adversarial manner. More specifically, the Office responds to calls, letters, and emails from crime victims across the State alleging violations of various crime victims' rights, seeking referrals for direct services, and looking for information and explanations about the criminal justice process. Some of these examples include:

- Frustration with the lack of (or limited) criminal justice agency responses to the crime;
- Confusion about and/or failure to be informed of filing of nolle prosequi by prosecutors;
- Lack of information regarding case status;
- Denial of compensation claims by the appointed five-member Criminal Injuries Compensation Board;
- Nonpayment of restitution by offenders granted probationary sentences or parole; and
- Lack of notification of offender's parole, probation violation, and release from incarceration.

In State FY 2024, the Manager of Victim Services Initiatives, who serves as the Victim Services Coordinator, responded to 174 calls, letters, and emails from crime victims in the State regarding complaints or requests for services (*as illustrated below*).

Jurisdiction	Number of Complaints/Request for Services
Allegany	1
Anne Arundel	15
Baltimore	12
Baltimore City	37
Carroll	2
Cecil	2
Charles	3

Dorchester	1
Frederick	5
Harford	3
Montgomery	8
Prince George's	22
St. Mary's	6
Washington	2
Worcester	3
Unknown	52
TOTAL	**174**

The Office seeks to refer victims with active cases to appropriate advocacy groups or responsible agencies and examine the outcome of completed cases. As a result of these efforts, the Office received and addressed numerous victim contacts (*as illustrated below*).

	Referrals	**Number of Referrals**
Closed Matters	Criminal Injuries Compensation Board or other financial assistance	72
	Department of Human Services	3
	Department of Juvenile Services	4
	Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services	11
	Law Enforcement Agency	31
	Office of the Attorney General	2
	State's Attorney's Office or other legal assistance	39
	Victim Assistance Organization	52
	TOTAL*	**214**

*The total number of referrals is greater than the number of complaints/requests for services because several victims received referrals to multiple organizations and agencies.

Mandated Crime Victim Pamphlets and Forms

Pursuant to § 11-914(9)(i) of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Board developed two pamphlets to ensure that law enforcement personnel, commissioners, or juvenile justice intake workers, and state's attorneys uphold a victim's right to be informed of their rights, services, and procedures provided under Article 47 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights or State law, how to request information regarding an unsolved case, how to file a complaint to the Department of Juvenile Services alleging that a child is in need of supervision, and how to request that an offender be placed on electronic monitoring or electronic monitoring with victim stay–away alert technology.

With the enactment of Amber's Law, sections 11–402 and 11–914 of the Criminal Procedure Article allow individuals filing charges to request reasonable protections for the safety of an alleged victim or the victim's family, including a request for electronic monitoring or electronic

monitoring with victim stay–away alert technology. The law also requires such a request to be included in a victim impact statement and requires the Board to educate the public on the process for making that request. The Board developed the *Maryland Crime Victims: Requesting Protections for Safety* brochure to inform victims on how to request that an offender be placed on electronic monitoring or electronic monitoring with victim stay-away alert technology.[4]

The Board also created a poster, as required by § 11-914(9)(ii) of the Criminal Procedure Article, to notify a victim of the right to request a private room in a law enforcement agency when reporting crimes under Title 3 of the Criminal Law Article ("Other Crimes against the Person"). To view the poster, please visit: https://gocpp.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/private-room-poster.pdf.

As illustrated below, **238,300** mandated materials have been distributed throughout the State between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024.

Primary Agency Responsible for Distributing Crime Victim Mandated Pamphlets/Forms			
Agency	**Pamphlets/Forms**	**Language**	**Quantity**
Law Enforcement	Crime Victims and Witnesses: Your Rights and Services	English	173,150
	Crime Victims and Witnesses: Your Rights and Services	Spanish	38,650
	Private Room Poster	English	0
	Maryland Crime Victims: Requesting Protections for Safety	English	0
State's Attorney's Office	Your Rights as a Victim in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Process	English	16,900
	Your Rights as a Victim in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Process	Spanish	5,900
	Crime Victim Notification and Demand for Rights Form	English	3,100
	Crime Victim Notification and Demand for Rights Form	Spanish	600
TOTAL Quantity Distributed			**238,300**

All mandated materials are accessible on the Office's website at: https://gocpp.maryland.gov/victim-services/rights-resources/brochures-forms/. These materials are distributed in English and Spanish, and are also available online in Chinese, Korean, and French.

In November 2023, the Board hosted a statewide meeting with stakeholders and agencies that process the *Crime Victim Notification Request and Demand for Rights Form* [5] to update its instructions and discuss how it is processed in each jurisdiction. Following the statewide meeting, the Board held smaller meetings with individual agencies, including the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Division of Parole and Probation, Department of

[4] Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy. (2018). *Maryland Crime Victims: Requesting Protections for Safety*. https://gocpp.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/requesting-protections-for-safety.pdf
[5] Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy. (2018). *Crime Victim Notification Request and Demand for Rights Form*. https://gocpp.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/crime-victim-notification-request.pdf

Corrections, and Maryland Parole Commission), the Maryland Department of Health, the Department of Juvenile Services, the Office of the Attorney General, Maryland Clerks, the Maryland Judiciary, and local correctional facilities. Based on the smaller meetings, it was determined that the form is processed differently across jurisdictions.

Given the transition to the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) system, court clerks upload the form into MDEC. Because the form is not accessible to all State agencies within an electronic case file in MDEC due to the rights and roles within the system, the paper form is still necessary to disseminate the information to subsequent stakeholders. Stakeholders also determined that the current multi-page paper form is no longer necessary. For this reason, and once the next order of forms are printed, they will include only one page. To make the form accessible online, the Board will amend the form to a fillable PDF and place it on the Office's website. Stakeholders also discussed the inclusion of a checkbox on the form for the preferred method of communication, including email.

The Board plans to update the instructions for the form and host another statewide meeting/training by July 1, 2025.

Grant Programs

Maryland Victims of Crime (MVOC) Fund

Chapter 561 of 1991 created the MVOC fund as a source of revenue to allow the Board to ensure implementation of the Declaration of Crime Victims' Rights Amendment to the Maryland Constitution, as well as the Guidelines for Treatment of and Assistance to Crime Victims and Witnesses, and other laws adopted to benefit victims and witnesses of crime. The fund provides advocacy and support services to victims of crime by creating new ideas and enhancing existing programs that serve victims in Maryland. In 2024, the Office released the *FY 2025 Maryland Victims of Crime (MVOC) Fund Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA),* which identified the following priorities:[6]

- Direct services for victims of crime;
- Victim service providers in law enforcement;
- Victim/witness service providers in state's attorney's offices;
- Enhance services and support for child advocacy centers; and
- Enhance services to crime victims that aid and promote the distribution of mandated brochures and educate them on their rights according to Maryland law.

[6] Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy. *Maryland Victims of Crime Fund (MVOC)*. https://goccp.maryland.gov/grants/programs/mvoc/

In response to the FY 2025 MVOC NOFA, current subrecipients were eligible to receive a second year of level funding, provided that the program was in good standing and demonstrated positive outcomes. Of the 15 subrecipients, 14 applied for continuation funding. Based on the Board's and Office's review of the applications and funding recommendations, the Office awarded $450,000 in grant funds to 14 subrecipients.

Legal Services for Crime Victims (LSCV) Fund

Chapters 125 and 126 of 2007 created the LSCV grant program under § 11-919 of the Criminal Procedure Article to allow victims of crime to have legal representation in the criminal court system. This grant program receives funds from unclaimed restitution to protect victims' rights as provided by law. The Division of Parole and Probation and the Department of Juvenile Services collect court-ordered restitution from adult defendants and juvenile respondents for subsequent distribution to crime victims.

The purpose of the LSCV grant program is to ensure that the money obtained from unclaimed restitution is used for annual grants to provide legal counsel to victims of crime and delinquent acts to protect victims' rights as provided by law. In 2024, the Office released the *FY 2025 Legal Services for Crime Victims (LSCV) NOFA,* which requires programs to offer statewide legal services to victims of crime and delinquent acts.[7] In response to the FY 2025 LSCV NOFA, current subrecipients were eligible to receive a second year of level funding, provided that the program was in good standing and demonstrated positive outcomes. Subrecipients applied for continuation funding, and based on the Board's and Office's review of the applications and funding recommendations, the Office awarded $75,000 in grant funds to one program for statewide legal services in State FY 2025.

Conclusion

The Board and the Office, under the authority of the Office's Executive Director, will continue to partner with State agencies and victim service providers to ensure all crime victims in Maryland are treated with dignity, respect, and compassion during all phases of the criminal justice process.

[7] Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy. *Legal Services for Crime Victims Fund (LSCV)*. https://goccp.maryland.gov/grants/programs/lscv/