

**MINUTES**  
**Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime**  
**September 16, 2025**  
**225 Spring Street, Room 4B, Wethersfield, CT**

**Members in Attendance:** Co-Chair Judge Courtney M. Chaplin, Co-Chair Yvette Young, Emily Burnett, Lisa D'Angelo, Beth Hamilton, Brittany Kaplan, Amy Lupoli, Irene Mikol, Geralyn O'Neil-Wild, Jessica Pizzano, Andrew Woods

**Judicial Branch Office of Victim Services Staff in Attendance:** Lisa Aiello, Colette Donnelly, Alex Gittines, Marc Pelka, Jean M. Weisbrod

**Guests in Attendance:** Connecticut Network (CT-N recorded meeting)

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome and Announcements

Co-Chair Yvette Young called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Council members and OVS staff members made introductions.

2. Approval of prior meeting minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

3. Update to the handling of quorum

The threshold for establishing a quorum was approved to transition from two-thirds to fifty percent plus one majority attendance.

4. Presentation regarding OVS Communications Unit – updated training and outreach strategy

A presentation by Alex Gittines outlined the duties of the Office of Victim Services (OVS), which align with those mandated by Connecticut General Statute § 54-203. She described how OVS provides supportive services, advocacy, and victim notification, and works with other agencies to inform victims of their rights. The communications unit trains law enforcement on victims' rights and coordinates the distribution of information cards to victims at crime scenes.

Members discussed VINE and CT SAVIN and efforts to transition to VINE as the primary source of victim notification.

Members discussed the Victim Needs Assessment Survey and the ways that it has helped to improve services for victims of crime.

5. Advisory council discussion regarding effective strategies for training, outreach, and stakeholder engagement

The SAFE training program collaborated with St. Vincent's Hospital for the Fall 2025 semester, with classes held at the hospital. The initiative allows for expanded enrollment and is part of the SAFE Programs' ongoing efforts to enhance education and innovation.

During their discussion on outreach strategies, members of nonprofit service provider agencies acknowledged the distinct advantages of both digital and print media.

6. Victim of Crime Act Assistance funding update

Marc Pelka reported on a coalition of states that filed a lawsuit challenging new conditions on VOCA funding.

Marc explained the definition of grant years for the Victim Assistance grants and Victim Compensation grants.

- The approximate \$750,000 in FY2025 VOCA Compensation funds are calculated based on Connecticut's compensation payments in fiscal year 2023.
- The \$13 million in FY2025 VOCA Victim Assistance funds would be Connecticut's allocation.

7. Policy planning and implementation update

It was reported that the Waterbury and New Britain Superior courts now have Wi-Fi access available for public use.

8. New Business

Survivors of Homicide Awareness month is November 20<sup>th</sup> to December 20<sup>th</sup> and information is provided about grieving during the holidays by the service provider agency, Survivors of Homicide. Details will be provided at a later date.

Response to Recovery Conference hosted by the Connecticut's Children's Alliance, Inc. will be held September 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> at the Connecticut Convention Center.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness month. For event information, please visit the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence website.

Trunk or Treats by Klingberg Family Centers, Inc. will be held in Hartford and New Britain. Go to Klingberg Family Centers website for more information.

9. Adjournment

Co-Chair Yvette Young adjourned the meeting at 3:22 p.m.

Jean M. Weisbrod, Recorder