



Prosecuting Attorney - Local Crime Victim Compensation 11701.841.

Mission Statement

Seek the Just Result

Function

The Victim Witness Services Division provides vital support and services to victims and survivors of crime. Employees within this division help crime victims and survivors navigate the criminal justice system, and related programs, and ensure that they are treated in accordance with rights conferred through the Washington State Constitution and the Crime Victims' Bill of Rights. They also help coordinate witness participation in trial proceedings.

Trends/Events

Trends

- An increase in fatal drug overdose has led to more controlled substance homicide investigations which may result in additional murder prosecutions.
- Outside advocacy agencies are taking the laboring oar on notifying victims of hearing dates, ultimately freeing up the VWCs to put efforts elsewhere. Of course, this is only for those that
- The Washington State Indeterminate Sentencing Review Board (ISRB) routinely reviews the status of incarcerated sex offenders and evaluates them for possible release into communities around the state. Each time we are notified of such a review, Victim Witness Coordinators are tasked with locating the survivor(s) as well as the original law enforcement investigator(s), arranging meetings with the deputy prosecuting attorney assigned to the case, and assisting with recommendation preparation. Review hearings occur several times per year.
- Those that are civilly committed pursuant to a finding of Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (NGRI) may petition the court EVERY 6 months for increased privileges. For each petition, the VWC contacts all the survivors and original investigators, has a meeting with the DPA and assists with recommendation preparation. Clallam County currently has five (5) people civilly committed following an NGRI finding.
- More and more victim/survivors, in both charged and uncharged cases, require increased dedicated face time and efforts by VWC due to increased trauma and the PAO's trauma informed victim centric prosecution philosophy.
- We continue to prosecute cases that involve multiple victims. One example is a robbery in the first degree with six (6) victims. Multi victim cases invariably includes separate meetings for each multiple times just to begin a case, in addition, to individual preparation sessions for trial multiple times.

- The Clallam County Sexual Assault and Abuse Investigation Protocols were changed this year requiring all interviews of trauma survivors, not just children, be done at the CAC or a soft interview room with a DPA present. This has increased the number of interviews that must be arranged at the CAC. The Felony VWC assists in locating an available DPA for the interviews.
- Law enforcement continue to reach out to the VWC when interested in connecting victims and survivors with criminal justice services.
- We receive inquiries and complaints from community members about criminal justice services or the PAO (e.g., coordination of crime victim compensation for survivors in need of counseling, complaints about resolutions or charging, funeral expense reimbursement, etc.) in the normal course of business. The VWC is required to be present for all such meetings.

Events (first six months of 2024)

- District Court I & II have 186 victim cases from Jan-Jun 2024; total number of cases is 348.
- Juvenile Court has 22 victim cases from Jan-Jun 2024; total number of cases is 34.
- Superior Court has 115 victim cases from Jan-Jun 2024; total number of cases is 286.
- Charged two (2) murders that involves multiple survivors, each of whom is entitled to numerous services and meetings.
- Participated in and facilitated 2 quarterly STOP grant meetings.
- Presented numerous trainings for law enforcement, and/or community groups on topics including court process, testimony and victim rights.
- Advised law enforcement regarding multi-victim cases.
- Concluded one multi-victim sexual assault case.
- Felony VWC attended Forensic Interview Training to assist with skills needed for victims/survivors.

Goals

- Convert the VWC positions to salary to increase services and reduce/eliminate the need for overtime.
- Continue cross training Victim Witness Coordinators.
- Create a road map for Superior Court and District Court victims/survivors and collaborate with agencies and law enforcement to distribute.
- Continue to provide victim/witness/survivor services in a trauma informed, culturally competent manner that acknowledges implicit bias.
- Continue collaboration with all branches of law enforcement, fire departments, community advocacy groups to maximize criminal justice system efficiencies.
- Acquire funding to enable VWCs to attend more trainings to foster further education on trauma responses (biological and psychological), vicarious trauma, and trauma informed prosecutions.
- Re-evaluate compensation for all positions to ensure the office remains competitive in the labor market.

Challenges

- Funding continues to be a challenge as the Courts are not imposing the victim penalty assessment and waiving it due to indigency of the defendant. This funding was routinely used to compensate the VWC division.
- The move to hourly from salary has impacted the ability to complete work within the scheduled hours of 8 am-430 pm. To keep up on the caseloads and stats and be present during court or interviews when held after hours makes it compulsory to work after hours and attempt to flex time or take overtime.
- The increase in serious crime is having a disproportionate impact on the already limited resource within the Victim Witness Services Division.
- Statistics do a poor job of conveying the quantity of work performed by Victim Witness Coordinators and fail to address the quality of work performed. Each victim case is touched by a Victim Witness Coordinators in one way or another. The numbers below do not reflect the non-victim cases that the VWC work with witnesses. The numbers also do not reflect cases from previous years that are still open. Nor do they reflect the number of decline meetings, NGRI cases, ISRB cases, or post-conviction restitution cases.
- Lack of certified court interpreters.
- Uninformed criminal justice professionals and participants concerning trauma responses and ability to be trauma informed.
- Courts holding court past 4:30 PM.
- Being trauma informed requires DPAS and VWCS to meet the survivors/victims where they are at. This invariably means on their time frame to include: during lunch, after court hours, and on weekends.
- The lack of childcare resources within the community has emerged as a significant challenge for one or more employees of the office.

Workload Indicators

	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	6/30/24 Actual
Total Victims Served	586	248	185
Victims of DV	186	190	119
Adult Sexual Assault Victims	18	5	2
Child Physical/Sexual Abuse Victims	19	9	6
Services Provided: Information and Referral	713	485	191
Services Provided: Accompanying to Court	1075	359	27
Services Provided: Restitution Assistance	19	23	8
Services Provided: Criminal Justice Support	488	525	322
Services Provided: Notification of court hearings	1873	1028	426

Grant Funding Sources

1. Department of Justice (Federal)
2. Washington State Department of Commerce

Revenues

	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	6/30/24 Actual	2025 Budget
Beginning Fund Balance	9,627	28,642	43,234	26,041
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Licenses and Permits	0	0	0	0
Intergovernmental Revenues	87,687	90,941	78,680	135,647
Charges for Goods and Services	40,607	43,787	23,055	43,300
Nonrevenues	1,617	4	656	0
Miscellaneous Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Financing Sources	0	0	0	0
Transfers In	77,000	82,000	67,000	43,146
Total	216,537	245,374	212,625	248,134

Expenditures

	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	6/30/24 Actual	2025 Budget
Ending Fund Balance	28,642	43,232	126,699	22,558
Salaries and Wages	119,017	136,470	55,599	123,697
Personnel Benefits	52,394	55,162	24,467	56,636
Supplies	0	0	0	200
Other Services and Charges	971	1,735	0	2,000
Intergovernmental Services	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlays	0	0	0	0
Interfund Payments for Services	15,514	8,775	5,860	43,043
Transfers Out	0	0	0	0
Total	216,537	245,374	212,625	248,134

Staffing

	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	6/30/24 Actual	2025 Budget
Full Time Equivalents	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00