

# **GREENBELT POLICE DEPARTMENT**



## **Analysis of Victim and Witness Needs and Services**

**2011**

## Table of Contents

Background	3
Outreach Efforts	3
Raw Police Service Data	3
Components of Analysis	4
Analysis of Victim Witness Assistance	4
Needs and Available Services	6
Improvement of Services	6
Maryland Resource Center History	7
Maryland Domestic Violence Service Providers	8
National Domestic Violence/Child Abuse/Sexual Abuse	9
House of Ruth/Domestic Violence including Legal Clinic	9
Rape Recovery Centers	11
National Rape Crisis Hotline	11
Child Help/National Child Abuse Hotline	12
Missing and Exploited Children	13
Runaway Switch Board	13
Child Find America	13
Patent Abduction Hotline	13
Greyhound Home Free Program	13
Boys Town Suicide and Crisis Line	14
National Association of Anorexia Nervosa & Associated Disorders	14
Elder Abuse Hotline	14
Alzheimer's Association Hotline	14
The Center for Disease Control-HIV/AIDS/Sexually Transmitted Diseases	15
National AIDS Hotline	15
AIDS Hotline in Spanish	15
AIDS Hotline for Hearing Impaired	15
National Sexually Transmitted Disease Hotline	15
Poison Control	16
National Drug Information and Treatment and Referral Hotline	16
National Cocaine Hotline	16
Al-ateen	16
Alcohol Abuse and Crisis Intervention	16
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Helpline and Treatment	16
National Youth Crisis Hotline	16
MADD of Central Maryland	17
Victims Rights in the Criminal Justice System	19
Victims Rights in the District Court	20
Victims Rights in the Circuit Court	21
Victims Rights in the Juvenile Court	24
Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office	26
Homicide Survivor Support Group	26
Source of Analysis	29

This is the third analysis of victim and witness needs and services compiled by the Greenbelt Police Department. The Greenbelt Police Department has the ability to provide for victim and witness assistance through a variety of resources available through the City and numerous private and public organizations in the Washington Metropolitan Area, especially within Prince George’s County.

The Greenbelt Police Department does not have the financial resources to provide for a full-time Victim Advocate. However, the City of Greenbelt does have a social services department known as Greenbelt CARES. Greenbelt CARES was established in 1974 as a community-based, family-oriented counseling program dedicated to promoting responsible behavior and family management skills. Since that time Greenbelt CARES has added three crisis intervention counselors who work hand-in-hand with the Greenbelt Police Department to offer immediate services to individuals who come into contact with the police, often as victims or witnesses of crimes; people who need emergency psychiatric evaluations; or, assist officers in other tasks, such as death notifications.

Greenbelt CARES further provides prevention programs to deter individuals from becoming criminals. They provide out-patient counseling services, school based counseling, vocational and educational counseling, GED classes and a job bank.

More importantly, Greenbelt CARES provides immediate crisis counseling and short term (6-8 sessions) crisis counseling for crime victims as well as maintains an up-to-date referral listing of local resources, such as support groups for victim and witnesses of crimes. All of the services provided to Greenbelt residents and those who are referred by the Greenbelt Police Department are free of charge.

The following are statistics that show outreach efforts by Greenbelt CARES Crisis Intervention Counselors:

<b>Outreach Efforts</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
Persons Contacted	257	196	248
Request for Services	457	196	299
Referral Services	52	74	65

The following are statistics that show crime data reported and calls for service to the Greenbelt Police Department:

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Calls for Service</b>	<b>47,313</b>	<b>47,708</b>	<b>41,524</b>

<b>Class I Offenses</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
Homicide	2	0	2
Rape	11	8	10
Robbery	106	127	152
Assault	66	60	49
B & E/Burglary	221	212	122
Theft	761	823	870
Auto Theft	133	166	270
<b>Total Class I Offenses</b>	<b>1300</b>	<b>1396</b>	<b>1475</b>

Maryland Annotated Code demands that the victims of crimes be provided an informational brochure. Until recently the brochure was only available in English, however now it is also available in Spanish.

### **Components of This Analysis**

Analyzed were the extent and major types of victimization within the City for calendar years 2008, 2009 and 2010. An inventory was created showing the types of services already provided within the City and extending out into Prince George’s County, Maryland.

Departmental statistics were reviewed to determine the levels of victimization and locations by geographical area. In the 2008 Analysis, the majority of crime, roughly 60%, was recorded in Greenbelt West. Greenbelt East recorded roughly 30% and Historic Greenbelt 10%. These ratios had been a consistent trend over a period of ten years. In 2010 a slight shift in this trend was noted, with 51% recorded in Greenbelt West., 35% in Greenbelt East and 14% in Historic Greenbelt. A possible cause for this shift may be the increase in the amount of rental housing in the other areas of the City.

### **Analysis of Victim/Witness Assistance**

In preparing this analysis, allied agencies analyses were reviewed and evaluated to see how the Department’s efforts to assist victims could improve, as well as see where victims and witnesses of crimes could obtain assistance. The following matrix illustrates services currently available to crime victims.

Kinds of Assistance	Provider	Code
Emergency Shelter	Abused Person Program	1
	Central Union Mission	1
Court Accompaniment	State’s Attorney’s Office (Victim/Witness Coordinator)	1
	Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center	1
Medical Attention-Immediate and Continuing Care	Greenbelt Police Officer (immediate)	1
	Prince George’s County EMS System	1
	Prince George’s Hospital Center	1
	Doctors Community Hospital	1
	Greater Laurel-Beltsville Hospital	1
	Med-Star	1
	Children’s Hospital National Medical Center	1
Bi-Lingual Capabilities	Greenbelt Police Officers	6
	Language Line	1
	Allied Police Agencies	1
Homicide Survivor Support Group	State’s Attorney’s Office	2

Financial Aid	Legal Aid Bureau	1
Medical Cost Compensation	State's Attorney's Office	1
Help in Filing Claims	State Criminal Injuries Compensation Board	1
	Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center	2
	Department of Juvenile Justice	1
Counseling	Greenbelt CARES	1
	Adult Protective Services	1
	Operation Runaway	1
	Prince George's County MADD Chapter	1
	Sexual Assault Center	1
	Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center	2
Transportation to Department (initially & during investigations)	All Area Hospitals	1
	Greenbelt Police Officers	1
Transportation to Court	Greenbelt Police Officers	2
Transportation to Hospital (initially)	Greenbelt Police Officers	1
	Prince George's County EMS	1
Transport to State's Attorney's Office (pre-trial meetings)	Greenbelt Police Officers	2
	State's Attorney's Office	1
Help in Preparing a Victim Impact Statement	Greenbelt CARES	2
	Sexual Assault Center	1
	State's Attorney's Office	1
	Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center	1
Providing Information Concerning the Criminal Justice System	Greenbelt Police Officer (brochure)	1
	Greenbelt CARES	2
	Department of Juvenile Justice	1
	State's Attorney's Office	1

Assurance of Participation in:	Greenbelt Police Officers	1
• Plea bargaining	Greenbelt CARES	2
• Probation decisions	Sexual Assault Center	1
• Sentencing	Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center	1
• Restitution	State's Attorney's Office	1
• Patrol hearings	Court-Appointed Special Advocate Program	1
• Bail determination	Prince George's County MADD Chapter	1
• Decision to dismiss		
• Decisions to close investigation		
• Hearing dates		

**Legend**

1 = Being provided

2 = Provides assistance now, but improvement or enhancement necessary.

## **Needs and Available Services**

The needs of victims and witnesses vary depending upon the nature and extent of victimization. Under the Maryland Constitution and State law and guidelines, a crime victim must be treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity during all phases of the criminal justice process. After a crime has been committed and throughout the criminal justice process, different rights and services apply to specific victims.

In analyzing the needs of victims, area services and services providers were inventoried to determine the types of services they offer, as well as did not offer. The analysis demonstrated the City's commitment to providing quality services to its customers, while continuously trying to improve programs offered by the Department. The analysis also complies with National Law Enforcement Accreditation Standard 55.1.2, which requires the Department to *complete an analysis of victim/witness assistance needs and available services within the agency's service area at least every three years or has access to a current analysis.*

## **Where Improvements Can Be Made to Provide Better Services and Reduce Victimization**

The following are recommendations to improve the Department's assistance to victims and witnesses:

- Ensure that victims and/or witnesses to crimes have a ride to court if needed.
- Ensure that victims of crimes receive the brochure mandated by law is given to all crime victims and not just those who are victims of violent crimes. Attempt to obtain brochures on other languages.
- Add a link from the City web site to [www.mdcrimevictims.org](http://www.mdcrimevictims.org).
- Ensure that new employees understand the functions of Greenbelt CARES and their crisis intervention counselors.
- Continue to educate citizens through programs such as Neighborhood Watch.
- Ensure all employees are aware of the Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center.
- Have the Crime Prevention officer conduct group presentations concerning the rights of victims, victimization and ways that citizens can lessen their chances of being victimized, and how citizens can help each other and the police.

The following are excerpts from the Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center (formerly the Stephanie Roper Commission). They provide web sites and phone numbers to numerous victim/witness assistance groups.

# **MARYLAND CRIME VICTIM RESOURCE CENTER**

## **HISTORY**

After their oldest daughter, Stephanie, was brutally murdered in 1982, her parents, Roberta and Vince Roper, learned they had few rights in the criminal justice system.

As a result they founded the agency that bore their daughter's name, the Stephanie Roper Committee and Foundation, now known as the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc.

Today, the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc. is one of the most successful grassroots organizations in the history of Maryland.

The Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center provides criminal justice information and education, support services, therapeutic individual family, and group counseling, legal information, referrals, and representation, and recently established a faith initiative to meet the spiritual needs of crime victims.

The Greenbelt Police Department has put together this analysis of victims' and witness' needs and available services within the City and Prince George's County, Maryland.

### Maryland Domestic Violence Service Providers

County	Program	Hotline
Allegany County	<b>Family Crisis Resource Center</b>	(301) 759-9244
Anne Arundel County	<b>YWCA Domestic Violence Services</b>	(410) 222-6800
Baltimore City	<b>House of Ruth MD*</b>	(410) 889-7884
Baltimore City	<b>TurnAround, Inc.</b>	(410) 828-6390
(West) Baltimore County	<b>Family and Children's Services of Central MD*</b>	(410) 828-6390
(East) Baltimore County	<b>Family Crisis Center of Baltimore County, Inc.</b>	(410) 828-6390
(North/Central) Baltimore County	<b>TurnAround, Inc.</b>	(410) 828-6390
Calvert County	<b>Crisis Intervention Center</b>	(410) 535-1121
Carroll County	<b>Family and Children's Services of Central MD*</b>	(410) 857-0077
Caroline, Kent, Dorchester, Queen Anne's, & Talbot Counties	<b>Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence*</b>	(800) 927-4673
Cecil County	<b>Cecil County Domestic Violence / Rape Crisis Center</b>	(410) 996-0333
Charles County	<b>Center for Abused Persons</b>	(301) 645-3336
Frederick County	<b>Heartly House</b>	(301) 662-8800
Garrett County	<b>The Dove Center</b>	(301) 334-9000
Harford County	<b>Sexual Assault / Spouse Abuse Resource Center</b>	(410) 836-8430
Howard County	<b>Domestic Violence Center</b>	(410) 997-2272 (800) 752-0191
Montgomery County	<b>Abused Persons Program*</b>	(240) 777-4195 (days) (240) 777-4673 (after business hours)
Prince George's County	<b>Family Crisis Center, Inc.</b>	(301) 731-1203
St. Mary's County	<b>Walden / Sierra, Inc.</b>	(301) 863-6661
St. Mary's County (Legal Services)	<b>Southern Maryland Center for Family Advocacy</b>	(301) 373-4141
Somerset, Wicomico, & Worcester Counties	<b>Life Crisis Center*</b>	(410) 749-4357 (410) 641-4357
Washington County	<b>CASA (Citizens Assisting and Sheltering the Abused)</b>	(301) 739-8975
Jewish Population	<b>CHANA (Counseling Helpline and Aid Network for Abused Women)</b>	(800) 991-0023
Spanish-Speaking Population	<b>Adelante Familia at House of Ruth Maryland*</b>	(410) 889-7884

\* Agencies that provide program services in the Spanish language.



## Domestic Violence

**National Domestic Violence/Child Abuse/ Sexual Abuse: 800-799-SAFE /800-799-7233/800-787-3224 TDD**

800-942-6908 Spanish Speaking

24-hour-a-day hotline, Provides crisis intervention and referrals to local services and shelters for victims of partner or spousal abuse. English and Spanish speaking advocates are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Staffed by trained volunteers who are ready to connect people with emergency help in their own communities, including emergency services and shelters. The staff can also provide information and referrals for a variety of non-emergency services, including counseling for adults and children, and assistance in reporting abuse. They have an extensive database of domestic violence treatment providers in all US states and territories. Many staff members speak languages besides English, and they have 24-hour access to translators for approximately 150 languages. For the hearing impaired, there is a TDD number. This is a great resource for anyone--man, woman or child--who is experiencing or has experienced domestic violence or abuse, or who suspects that someone they know is being abused.

**Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-829-1122**

### *The House Of Ruth Maryland Will Always Take A Stand – Always*

We stand strong and unwavering in our drive to end domestic and interpersonal violence.

We stand up as dogged and determined leaders against injustice and ignorance, and for protection, resources and the rights of battered women, men, and their children.

We stand committed to preventing violence through education, outreach, challenging and changing attitudes, behaviors and practices that permit or promote violence.

We stand ready to help in the crisis and in the aftermath. Around the clock, experienced caring staff and volunteers provide skilled intervention to help victims find safety and rebuild their lives.

### **We offer immediate access to services through:**

- 24 hour **Hotline**
- **Community Advocates** who work in the community with victims in crisis
- **Emergency Shelter** with 23 private rooms for women and children in imminent danger; six **transitional apartments** and supportive services
- **Legal Clinic** services providing free legal advice and representation in securing Protective/Peace Orders ; divorce and custody

- **Individual and group counseling**, therapy and case management services for women, children and youth
- A teen school-based educational program to assist youth involved in dating violence and stop the cycle of violence
- Therapeutic services for children of victims through our comprehensive **Children's Program**
- School and community-based prevention programs for children to change their social norms and teach skills for healthy interactions and problem-solving.
- **Abuser Intervention** through our Gateway Project which provides psycho-educational programs for men who are emotionally, physically, or sexually abusing their partner; and assists and educate victims to ensure their safety.

## Legal Clinic

Legal representation is one of the greatest unmet needs confronting victims of domestic violence throughout Maryland. The House of Ruth Maryland – Marjorie Cook Domestic Violence Legal Clinic helps more than 2,000 victims of domestic violence obtain protective orders, peace orders, divorce decrees, custody of their children and child support each year. We currently staff 17 attorneys plus paralegals and administrative staff throughout 6 offices in Maryland, including courthouse locations in Baltimore City, Hyattsville, Upper Marlboror and Montgomery County. To keep pace with the demand, more than 100 pro bono attorneys throughout Maryland have been trained and given technical support to prepare them for providing legal representation to battered women across the state.

Our staff attorneys provide civil legal representation to help women obtain:

- Protective orders
- Peace orders
- Divorce decrees
- Custody of their children
- Child support

Please call for more information on House Of Ruth Maryland legal services and victims' legal rights.

All calls are confidential.

**Main office (410) 554-8463**

**24-hour legal line (888) 880-7884**

## Rape Recovery Centers

MCASA member programs provide the following confidential services to adult and child victims as well as their families, partners, and loved ones:

- Crisis intervention, counseling and referral
- Victim accompaniment to hospitals, police interviews and court
- 24-hour Crisis Hotline with counselors trained to listen and offer information
- Individual, group and family psychotherapy
- Assistance navigating the legal and judicial systems

All crisis-intervention, referral and accompaniment services are free. Clinical services provided by specially trained psychologists, social workers and paraprofessionals are either free or based on a sliding scale according to an individual's financial resources. Programs may also accept private insurance, Medical Assistance or Medicare and most offer subsidized fees. No one is turned away due to inability to pay for services.

### MARYLAND RAPE RECOVERY CENTER IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

#### PRINCE GEORGE'S

Sexual Assault Center, PG Hosp. Ctr.

3001 Hospital Drive

Cheverly, MD 20785

Tel: (301) 618-3158

TTY: 618-3607

Hotline: (301) 618-3154

[http://www.dimensionshealth.org/website/c/pghc/services/sexual\\_assault\\_center](http://www.dimensionshealth.org/website/c/pghc/services/sexual_assault_center)

## Rape

**Nationwide RAINN National Rape Crisis Hotline: 800-656-4673**

## Child Abuse

**ChildHelp USA National Child Abuse Hotline: 800-4-A-CHILD** (422.4453) or 800.2.A.CHILD (222.4453, TDD for hearing impaired)  
Provides multilingual crisis intervention and professional counseling on child abuse. Gives referrals to local social service groups offering counseling on child abuse. Operates 24 hours, seven days a week.

### **Department of social services for public to access information:**

- **800-345-KIDS:** Provides information concerning children available for adoption and other children's programs
- **800-342-3009:** Access to general information regarding Department programs and HEAP Hotline
- **800-732-5207:** Day Care Complaint Line
- **800-342-3720:** Child Abuse Hotline

### **National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-25-ABUSE**

Thursdays Child (Comprehensive Links and Information for Children's Resources):  
[www.thursdayschild.org](http://www.thursdayschild.org)

## Runaway/Exploited Children

### **Missing Children Network: 800-235-3535**

**The National Call Center for At-Risk Youth:** (818) 710-1181

### **National Hotline for Missing and Exploited Children: 800-843-5678**

Operates a hotline for reporting missing children and sightings of missing children. Offers assistance to law enforcement agents. Hours of operation are 7:30 a.m.-11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

### **National Runaway Switchboard: 800-621-4000**

Provides crisis intervention and travel assistance to runaways. Provides information and local referrals to adolescents and families. Gives referrals to shelters nationwide. Also relays messages to, or sets up conference calls with, parents at the request of the child. Operates 24 hours, seven days a week.

### **Child Find of America Hotline: 800-I-AM-LOST (426.5678)**

Looks for missing and abducted children. Operators available 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST Monday-Friday. Voicemail on evenings and weekends with calls returned.

## ***GREYHOUND BUS COMPANY***

### **Home Free Program**

Home Free Program: Free transportation home for runaways is provided on Greyhound in conjunction with the National Runaway Switchboard. About 10,000 kids have been returned home under this program. A youth who calls the switchboard is eligible for a ticket home if he or she is 12-20 years old, is willing to return home to their legal guardian, the legal guardian wishes them to return home, the guardian has filed a runaway report, and the program has not been used by the youth two times before. To reach the National Runaway Switchboard, call toll free 1-800-RUNAWAY. For more information, please visit [www.1800runaway.org](http://www.1800runaway.org)

### **CONFIDENTIAL Runaway Hotline: 800-231-6946**

### **Parent Abduction Hotline: 800-292-9688**

Provides crisis mediation in parental abduction. Provides prevention information and referrals to local agencies. Operators available 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST Monday-Friday. Voicemail on evenings and weekends with calls returned.

## Crisis Intervention/Suicide

**Boys Town Suicide and Crisis Line: 800-448-3000 or 800-448-1833 (TDD)**

Provides short-term crisis intervention and counseling and referrals to local community resources. Counsels on parent-child conflicts, marital and family issues, suicide, pregnancy, runaway youth, physical and sexual abuse, and other issues. Operates 24 hours, seven days a week.

**Covenant House Hotline: 800-999-9999**

Crisis line for youth, teens, and families. Gives callers locally based referrals throughout the United States. Provides help for youth and parents regarding drugs, abuse, homelessness, runaway children, and message relays. Operates 24 hours, seven days a week.

## Eating and Associated Disorders

**National Association of Anorexia Nervosa & Associated Disorders (ANAD): 847-831-3438 (long distance)**

**National Mental Health Association: 800-969-6642** 9AM-5PM Mon-Fri information on mental health topics and referrals, access to an info specialist

## Elder Abuse

**Elder Abuse Hotline: 800-252-8966**

**Alzheimer's Association Hotline: 800-621-0379** 8:30AM-4:00PM, Mon-Fri information and referral services, free brochure

## HIV/AIDS/Sexually Transmitted Diseases

**The CDC (Center for Disease Control) National Prevention Information Network**  
1-800-458-5231 9AM-6PM Mon-Fri includes info on new medicines, treatment trials, HIV & AIDS, with info specialists avail. to answer questions; also at [www.CDCNAC.org](http://www.CDCNAC.org) (CDC National Aids Clearinghouse)

**National AIDS Hotline: 800-342-AIDS (2437)**

Information and referrals to local hotlines, testing centers, and counseling. Open 24 hours, seven days a week.

**AIDS Hotline in Spanish: 800-344-SIDA (7432)**

Open 8 a.m. to 2 a.m. Eastern Standard Time, seven days a week.

**AIDS Hotline for the Hearing Impaired: 800-243-7889 (TDD)**

Open 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday

**National Sexually Transmitted Disease Hotline: 800-227-8922**

Information and referrals to free and low-cost public clinics. Operators can answer general questions on prevention, symptoms, transmission and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. Open 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

**Sexually Transmitted Disease & AIDS/HIV Information Hotline: 800-332-2437, TTY - 800-332-3889 (Ohio)**

## Poison Control

**Poison Control Any Kind of Substance: 800-662-9886**

**Poison Control: 800-362-9922**

## Substance Abuse/Alcoholism

**Boys Town National Hotline 800-448-3000**

**National Drug Information Treatment and Referral Hotline: 800-662-HELP (4357)**

Information, support, treatment options and referrals to local rehab centers for any drug or alcohol problem. Operates 24 hours, seven days a week.

**National Cocaine Hotline: 800-COCAINE (262-2463)**

Information, crisis intervention, and referrals to local rehab centers for all types of drug dependency. Operates 24 hours, seven days a week.

**Al-ateen: 800-352-9996**

**Alcohol Abuse and Crisis Intervention: 800-234-0246**

**Alcohol and Drug Abuse Helpline and Treatment: 800-234-0420**

**Alcohol Hotline Support & Information: 800-331-2900**

## Youth

**National Youth Crisis Hotline: 800-442-HOPE (4673)**

Provides counseling and referrals to local drug treatment centers, shelters, and counseling services. Responds to youth dealing with pregnancy, molestation, suicide, and child abuse. Operates 24 hours, seven days a week.



# MADD OF CENTRAL MARYLAND

Victim's Assistance

## *How **MADD** Can Help*

***MADD National Victim Services Helpline***

***1-877-MADD-HELP***

The helpline is a 24-hour live nationwide victim assistance provider. A counselor is available Monday - Friday from 5:00pm till 8:00am the next morning and 48 hours through the weekends. The helpline service is also available on all holidays. The helpline counselors will provide supportive listening, guidance, and referrals. After initial phone assistance, the helpline counselor will refer all victim/survivor callers to local MADD chapters and/or state offices for ongoing support.

---

### **Victim Advocate for MADD Maryland:**

The victim advocate for MADD Maryland is Jan Withers. Jan can be reached by e-mail at [www.madd.centralmd@verizon.net](mailto:www.madd.centralmd@verizon.net). Jan hosts a support group, *Family Forever*, on the First and Third Mondays of every month at 7:30pm. The meetings are held in Upper Marlboro, MD. Please call Jan Withers if you wish to attend - 301-627-7315 or 301-627-1743.

We provide services for all persons victimized by the crime of drunk driving, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or relationship with the victim. Our services are free of charge.

**MADD** victim advocates help drunk driving victims/survivors in the following ways;

- Provide emotional support and information by phone or in person.
- Offer referrals for professional counselors, civil attorneys and clergy skilled at working with crash victims.
- Hold victim support groups where you share your experience.

- Offer a wide selection of publications for crash victims (in Spanish and English).
- Assist in applying for financial assistance through the ***Crime Victims' Compensation Fund*** (in Maryland, call **1-888-679-9347**. TTY/TDD **1-800-735-2258** or [www.dpscs.state.md.us/cicb](http://www.dpscs.state.md.us/cicb)).
- Inform you about drunk driving laws and victim rights.
- Monitor your court case against the defendants.
- Assist in preparing a victim impact statement.
- Accompany you to court to offer support and inform you about legal procedures.
- Represent your family with statements to the media - at your request.
- Assist with the development of probation conditions if the offender does not go to jail.

### What are Your Rights?

Under the Maryland Constitution and under State laws and guidelines, a victim of crime must be treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity during all phases of the criminal justice process.

- A victim may have the right to be notified of all hearings related to their case.
- A victim may have the right to be present at the trial.
- A victim is not required to speak to the defense attorneys or their investigators prior to the hearings.
- A victim or the victim's representative may have the right to address the court to describe the impact of the crime.
- A victim has the right to request restitution.
- A victim may have the right to be notified of any further hearings related to the defendant's sentence or release by the Division of Correction, Patuxent Institution, or the Parole Commission.

# **GREENBELT POLICE DEPARTMENT**



## **Victims' Legal Rights in the Criminal Justice System**

# Your Rights As A Victim in District Court

The District Court handles the following types of cases:

- Traffic cases
- Minor criminal cases
- Small claims
- Non-jury matters

If your offender is being prosecuted in the District Court of your county (or Baltimore City), the following are your rights as a victim of crime:

## **Your Right to Be Treated with Dignity, Respect, and Sensitivity**

Article 47 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights guarantees you, as the victim of crime, the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and sensitivity during all phases of the criminal justice process and by all agents of the criminal justice system.

## **Your Right to Be Notified of Court Events Related to Your Case**

Maryland does not provide for mandatory notification of court events in District Court cases. However, you should **always** inform the State's Attorney's Office if you wish to be notified. You can do this by writing a letter to the State's Attorney handling your case, sending a copy to the Clerk of the District Court, and a copy to the defense attorney. Be sure to include the defendant's name and case number. You are also eligible to receive notification through the VINE system, an automatic notification system.

## **Your Right to Be Present at the Court Events Related to Your Case**

You have the right to attend any court event that the Defendant has a right to attend. You *must* notify the State's Attorney prosecuting the case, and the District Court Clerk, that you wish to be present at the proceedings. It is important that both the State's Attorney and the District Court Clerk have your most recent address. If you are a witness to the crime, you may need to testify for the State. You may not be able to sit in the courtroom until after you testify. After you testify, you have the right to be present in the courtroom unless the Court determines otherwise. Please arrive at the courthouse

early on the day of the court event and remember to check in with the State's Attorney prosecuting the case when you arrive.

### **Your Rights to Be Heard Before Sentencing is Imposed**

You have the right to give written and oral victim impact statements to the Court before sentencing. You may do this by obtaining a form from the prosecuting State's Attorney or by writing your own statement detailing how the crime has impacted you and your family. As soon as you have completed your victim impact statement, send a copy to the State's Attorney's Office, the Clerk of the District Court, and the defense attorney. You also may have the right to speak at the sentencing. If you wish to do this, please notify the prosecuting State's Attorney in writing as soon as possible asking the prosecutor to request this right for you at Court. Be sure to include the case number and the Defendant's name on all correspondence.

### **Your Right to Restitution from Your Offender**

You have the right to request from your offender for out-of-pocket costs incurred as a direct result of the crime. To request this restitution, you should file a *Request for Restitution* with the State's Attorney prosecuting the case, the Clerk of the District Court Clerk, and the defense attorney. Your Request should detail all expenses and should include receipts and bills, if they are available. You also have the right to collect on a judgment of restitution.

### **Your Rights As A Victim in Circuit Court**

The **Circuit Courts** in Maryland are general jurisdiction trial courts handling all trials including:

- More serious criminal cases
- Major civil cases
- Family matters (including divorce, child custody, child support)
- Appeals from District Court, Orphan's Court, and administrative agencies

# Your Rights As A Victim in Circuit Court

The Circuit Court hears all jury trials, and oversees grand jury proceedings.

If your offender is being prosecuted in the Circuit Court of your county (or Baltimore City), the following are your rights as a victim of crime:

- o Your Right to Be Treated with Dignity, Respect, and Sensitivity

Article 47 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights guarantees you, as the victim of crime, the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and sensitivity during all phases of the criminal justice process and by all agents of the criminal justice system.

- o Your Right to Be Notified of Court Events Related to Your Case

Within 10 days of the filing of a petition to the Court, the State's Attorney's Office should send you a Crime Victim Notification and Demand for Rights form. You should complete this form and send it back to the State's Attorney's Office in the city or county where the crime occurred as soon as possible. When you file this form, the State's Attorney's Office is required by law to notify you of all events related to your case. You are also eligible to receive notification through the VINE system, an automatic notification system. [VINE Fact Sheet](#)

- o Your Right to Be Present at the Court Events Related to Your Case

You have the right to attend any court event that the Defendant has a right to attend. When you file the Crime Victim Notification and Demand for Rights form, you are notifying the State's Attorney's Office that you want to attend all court events. Arrive early on the day of the court event and notify the State's Attorney that you are there. If you are a witness to the crime, you may need to testify for the State. You may not be able to sit in the courtroom until after you testify. After you testify, you have the right to be present in the courtroom unless the Court determines otherwise.

- o Your Rights to Be Heard Before Sentencing is Imposed

You have the right to give written and oral victim impact statements to the Court before sentencing. You may do this by obtaining a form from the prosecuting State's Attorney or by writing your own statement detailing how the crime has impacted you and your family. As soon as you have completed your victim impact statement, send a copy to

the State's Attorney's Office, the Clerk of the Circuit Court, and the defense attorney.

- Your Right to Restitution from Your Offender

You have the right to request from your offender out-of-pocket costs incurred as a direct result of the crime. To request this restitution, you should file a Request for Restitution with the State's Attorney prosecuting the case, the Clerk of the Circuit Court Clerk, and the defense attorney. Your Request should detail all expenses and should include receipts and bills, if they are available. You also have the right to collect on a judgment of restitution.

- Your Right to Be Informed of a Plea Agreement

You have the right to be informed of the terms and conditions of a plea agreement. Although you have the right to be notified of a plea agreement, you do not have the right to decide whether the plea is accepted by the Court. Only the judge has that right. You do, however, have the right to express your opinion about the plea agreement through your victim impact statement. If you do not agree with the plea, you should tell the Court and the State's Attorney.

# Your Rights As A Victim in Juvenile Court

## Your Rights as a Victim in the Juvenile Justice System

The crime that has been committed against you may be handled in the Department of Juvenile Services. This means that the person charged with the crime is under the age of 18. Although many procedures are different between juvenile court and criminal court, you still have rights as the victim of the crime. The Maryland Constitution guarantees every victim of crime the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and sensitivity during all phases of the criminal justice system.

### Your Right to Be Notified of Court Events Related to Your Case

Within 10 days of the filing of a petition to the Court, the State's Attorney's Office should send you a Crime Victim Notification and Demand for Rights form. You should complete this form and send it back to the State's Attorney's Office in the city or county of the crime as soon as possible. When you file this form, the State's Attorney's Office is required by law to notify you of all events related to your case. Because your case is in juvenile court, there may be a "waiver hearing." A waiver hearing is a hearing to determine if the case against the juvenile should be handled in criminal court instead of juvenile court. If your case is initially charged in criminal court, you may also have a "reverse waiver hearing." In that hearing, the court decides whether the case should be moved back to juvenile court. You have a right to be notified of both these hearings. If you do not agree with the decision of the intake officer, you have a right to appeal the decision.

### Your Right to Be Present at the Court Events Related to Your Case

You have the right to attend any court event at which the Respondent has a right to attend. When you file the Crime Victim Notification and Demand for Rights form, you are notifying the State's Attorney's Office that you want to attend all court events, including a waiver or reverse waiver hearing as described above. Arrive early on the day of the court event and notify the State's Attorney that you are there. If you are a witness to the crime, you may need to testify. You may not be able to sit in the courtroom until after you testify. After you testify, you have the right to be present in the courtroom unless the Court determines otherwise.

### Your Right to Be Heard Before Sentencing is Imposed

You have the right to give written and oral victim impact statements to the Court before sentencing. You may do this by obtaining a form from the prosecuting State's Attorney or by writing your own statement detailing how the crime has impacted you and your family. As soon as you have completed your victim impact statement, send a copy to the State's Attorney's Office, the Clerk of the Juvenile Court, and the defense attorney. You also have the right to give a victim impact statement at a reverse waiver hearing if there is one in your case. You may do this by completing the victim impact statement as described above.

### Your Right to Restitution from Your Offender

You have the right to request from your offender for out-of-pocket costs incurred as a direct result of the crime. Because the offender is a juvenile, there is a \$10,000 limit on the amount of restitution that can be ordered. However, the Court can also order the



juvenile's parents to pay the restitution, as well as the juvenile. To request this restitution, you should file a Request for Restitution with the State's Attorney prosecuting the case, the Juvenile Court Clerk, and the defense attorney. Your Request should detail all expenses and should include receipts and bills, if they are available. You also have the right to collect on a judgment of restitution.

#### Your Right to Be Informed of a Plea Agreement

You have the right to be informed of the terms and conditions of a plea agreement. Although you have the right to be notified of a plea agreement, you do not have the right to decide whether the plea is accepted by the Court. Only the judge has that right. You do, however, have the right to express your opinion about the plea agreement through your victim impact statement. If you do not agree with the plea, you should tell the Court and the State's Attorney.

The Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center can provide assistance with the victim impact statement, requesting restitution, and additional court procedures that may arise.

# Office of The State's Attorney for Prince George's County

## Victim/Witness Assistance Unit

The State's Attorney's Office protects the rights of victims of crime and informs victims of their rights while they are involved in the criminal justice process.

### *How We Help*

- Our office provides direct assistance and information regarding court proceedings **Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**
- We help solve problems caused by necessary court appearances, such as being excused from work.
- We provide a secure waiting room for witnesses making court appearances and escort them from the waiting room to the courtroom.
- We aid eligible victims in seeking court-ordered restitution for stolen property, as well as compensation for physical injuries.
- We provide information about social services available to crime victims.
- We encourage victims to describe in a written Victim Impact Statement the harm the crime has caused and how the crime has affected their lives. This Statement is used by the court in determining sentences.

Our well-trained staff of the Victim/Witness Assistance Unit helps guide victims and witnesses through the sometimes complex criminal justice system. The successful prosecution of criminal cases depends mainly on the support and assistance victims and witnesses provide, especially their willingness to testify in court. It is our responsibility to ensure that victims and witnesses are treated with dignity and respect.

The Victim/Witness Assistance Unit also conducts a bi-monthly **Homicide Survivors Support Group** which provides short-term grief counseling, referrals, informational materials and a resource library to spouses, children, siblings, parents and other family members of victims who have been murdered in Prince George's County.

### *What You Need To Know*

#### **Victim/Witness Coordinator**

Victims and witnesses will be assigned a Victim/Witness Coordinator who will be available to answer questions and provide any assistance they need.

#### **Summons/Subpoena**

A Deputy Sheriff will deliver a witness summons to victims and witnesses notifying them of the scheduled court date. The law requires them to appear on that date unless they have been excused by a representative of the State's Attorney's Office.

### **Defense Attorney**

Victims and witnesses have the right to decide whether or not they want to discuss the case with the defendant's attorney. If they choose to talk to the defendant's attorney, they may also request that a representative from the State's Attorney's Office be present during the interview. Victims and witnesses should always be sure they know who they are talking to when they discuss their case.

### **Motion's Hearing**

It may be necessary for victims and witnesses to appear at an informal hearing called a Motion's Hearing. This hearing is scheduled before the trial so that the evidence can be reviewed by the judge. Victims and witnesses should call their Victim/Witness Coordinator the day before the hearing to see if they will be needed.

### **The Day of the Trial**

The trial may not start as early as scheduled, so we suggest bringing reading material. Victims and witnesses will be questioned by the prosecutor, and then the defense attorney will have the opportunity to "cross examine" them. The defense attorney must protect his client's rights and this may involve closely scrutinizing the testimony. Victims and witnesses should not let the defense attorney's questions upset them. They should remain calm and answer the questions as best they can.

### **Continuances**

Court hearings cannot always take place as scheduled and may be "continued" (postponed). Victims and witnesses should call their Victim/Witness Coordinator the day before the trial to make sure there have been no last-minute changes. If they call the State's Attorney's Office after 5:00 p.m., a recorded message will also list changes.

### **Victim Impact Statement**

Everyone who has been a victim of a crime is asked to complete a Victim Impact Statement. This Statement is used by the court in determining sentences and is a chance for victims to describe how the crime has affected their lives.

### **Pleas of Guilty**

In some cases, the defendant will enter a plea of guilty to specific offenses. If a defendant pleads guilty, there will be no trial and the testimony of victims and witnesses will not be needed. Many defendants plead guilty before the trial, once they are convinced witnesses are willing to testify against them in court.

### **Sentencing**

The victim's appearance at the sentencing is not required. However, the victim's Victim Impact Statement will be given to the sentencing judge. Victims are informed by letter of the sentence imposed.

### **Keep Us Informed**

It is very important that victims and witnesses keep the State's Attorney's Office informed of their current address and telephone number so that we can contact them about their case. If victims or witnesses move, they must call their Victim/Witness Coordinator.

## **Sources Used for this Analysis**

This analysis was conducted using several sources of information, including:

Reports and records from the Greenbelt Police Department relating to victimization;

Criminal Statistical Reports;

Allied Agencies Victim-Witness Analysis;

Uniformed Crime Reports for the City;

Newspaper Articles and media reports of crime victimization; and,

Numerous web sites including: Maryland Courts, Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office, House of Ruth, MADD of Prince George's County (Central Maryland) and Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center.