

Classification **PUBLIC**

Meeting **February 18th, 2011**

Agenda Item **Monitoring Report:
Assistance to Victims of Crime**



Recommended Motion:

THAT the Board finds that all provisions of the *Assistance to Victims of Crime Board Policy Monitoring Report* have been complied with.

Assistance to Victims of Crime

I hereby submit my monitoring report on your Ends Policy, Assistance to Victims of Crime, according to the schedule set out. I certify that the information contained in this report is true.

Signed: _____
Chief of Police

Date: _____

Broadest Policy Provision:

The police are often the first point of contact within the criminal justice system for victims of crime, who have a wide range of needs based on their own unique circumstances. Having experienced the trauma of being victimized, all victims deserve special care and attention.

It is the policy of the Durham Regional Police Services Board that the Durham Regional Police Service will extend victims of crime an abundance of respect, understanding and appropriate levels of support and services.

“Citizens or visitors who are victims of a crime in Durham Region are referred to appropriate support services.”

Interpretation of the Chief of Police:

It is my interpretation that the Board End of Community Safety is directly related to Section 1, principle 4 of the *Police Services Act, 1990* - "*The importance of respect for victims of crime and understanding of their needs*". The Victim Services Board End is also responsive to sec 4(2) (3) of the *Police Services Act* regarding adequate and effective police services involving: assistance to victims of crime. This Board End encompasses all manner of victim services either provided directly or indirectly by the Durham Regional Police Service.

It is my interpretation of this policy that it requires that victims of crime receive and/or are referred in a timely manner to the appropriate level of support in accordance to the severity of the crime and the vulnerability and needs of the victim. While providing service to every victim of a crime is an ideal, neither the Service nor the related community agencies currently have the capacity to meet that ideal. Therefore it is my interpretation that the "appropriate levels of support and services" includes the option of providing no referral to victims of very minor offences, or for those who decline or apparently are not in need of such support. Further it is my interpretation that referral means providing the victim's information (only with the victim's approval) to other victim service providers.

It is my further interpretation that in every case where we provide a Crown Brief to the Ministry of the Attorney General that this constitutes de facto referrals to Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) of the Ministry of the Attorney General.

It is my further interpretation that "appropriate levels of support and services" is one that refers the victim to an agency that provides services in the field or specialty that the victim needs and that said agency either has a memorandum of understanding with us or is funded and/or regulated by the Federal, provincial or municipal levels of government.

Compliance Statement:

I report **compliance** with this policy.

Data Support:

Services of Durham Region	2008	2009	2010
Addiction Services and Resources	99	111	61
Bereavement Services and Grief Counselling	43	113	130
Domestic Violence / Sexual Assault Services (Includes: Assaulted Women's Help, Distress Centre, DVSAAC, DRIVEN)	347	522	504
Elder and Vulnerable Adult Services (Includes: Alzheimer Society, Durham Access to Care) (Contact from VSU support worker for Break and Enter incidents)	15	62	167
Employment Services	20	15	19
Family Services / Individual Counselling (i.e.: Catholic Family Services, CAS, John Howard Society, and similar local agencies for women, men, youth)	1216	1140	1223
Financial Assistance / Injuries Compensation	32	18	47
Immigration and Interpreter Services (Includes: Women's Multicultural Resource and Counselling)	2	4	2
Lawyers / Legal Services (includes: Crown's Office, Legal Aid, Luke's Place, VWAP)	747	743	852
Mental Health Services	119	146	134
Shelters and Emergency Housing	106	190	205
Services Outside of Durham Region	29	23	61
Services Referred Total	2775	3087	3405
Declined Assistance	137	171	127
Victim Quick Response Program (VSU Assisted)	30	60	43
V.S.U. Pamphlet / Home-letter mail outs (Includes: Safety Planning, Assorted Durham Support Resources)	1780	1684	1894
V.S.U. Referred by Divisions / Units	66	44	59
V.C.A.R.S. - Incidents Handled (Versadex statistic)	214	199	356
V.S.U. - Incidents Handled (Versadex statistic)	3351	3582	4134

The Durham Regional Police Victim Services Unit (VSU) is the primary provider of support to victims of crime within the Service. The unit is a hybrid model of sworn police officers and civilian specialists from Victims Services of Durham Region, a program of the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG).

During the course of 2010 the VSU was contacted by or offered services to victims of crime in relation to 4134 incidents. The VSU ensured that the needs of our community members were met in each instance either by the provision or offering of direct support, advice, or consultation. Of the 4134 cases, 3405 referrals were made to our Community Partners for further intervention, assistance or support as required. Notably, in 127 cases victims declined any assistance.

In 2010 the Durham Regional Police Service provided 11,160 prosecutorial briefs to the Durham Region Crown Attorney's Office. Each brief constitutes a referral to the Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP – MAG).

The Victim Services Unit and the Professional Standards Unit indicate that our Service has not received any complaints, from victims or our community partners, regarding the provision of victim assistance services.