

Classification **PUBLIC**

Meeting **09 February 2009**

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 Constable

Date: _____

Broadest Policy Provision:

“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 of this policy that it requires that victims of crime receive and/or are referred to the appropriate level of support in accordance to the severity of the crime and the vulnerability and needs of the victim. While this policy sets a direction of providing service to every victim of a crime, neither we, nor the related community agencies currently have that level of capacity. Therefore it is my reasonable interpretation that the words “appropriate support services” includes the option of providing no referral to victims of very minor

offences and/or those who decline or who are apparently not in need of such services. Further it is my interpretation that referral means providing the victim with the information and only with the consent of the victim providing the victim's particulars to other service providers. It is my further reasonable 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), Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG).

It is my further interpretation that "appropriate referral" 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 that is funded and/or regulated by the Federal, Provincial or Municipal levels of Government.

Compliance Statement:

I report **compliance** with this policy.

Data Support:

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 provided through the Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Service (VCARS), a program of the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG).

During the course of 2008 the VSU was contacted by or offered services to victims of crime in relation to 3565 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 3565 cases, 2775 referrals were made to our Community Partners for further intervention, assistance or support as required. Notably, in 137 cases victims declined any assistance.

As a result of a more efficient data management system and full implementation of the hybrid model we have seen a substantial percentage increase in the amount of referrals in 2008 over 2007 – the net result being increased service for victims of crime. The chart below indicates the number of referrals initiated by the VSU for 2007 and 2008:

Victim of Crime Referrals	2007	2008
Addiction Services and Resources	35	99
Bereavement Services and Grief Counseling	23	43
Domestic Violence / Sexual Assault Services (Includes: Assaulted Women's Help, Distress Centre, DVSACC)	57	347
Elder and Vulnerable Adult Services (Includes: Alzheimer Society, Durham Access to Care)	15	15
Employment Services	4	20
Family Services / Individual Counselling (i.e.: Catholic Family Services, CAS, John Howard Society, and similar local agencies for women, men, youth)	299	1216
Financial Assistance / Injuries Compensation	13	32
Immigration and Interpreter Services (Includes: Women's Multicultural Resource and Counseling)	8	2
Lawyers / Legal Services (includes: Crown's Office, Legal Aid, Luke's Place, VWAP)	235	747
Mental Health Services	24	119
Shelters and Emergency Housing	58	106
Services Outside of Durham Region	16	29
Total	787	2775

In 2008 the Durham Regional Police Service provided 9,121 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.