

Classification **PUBLIC**

Meeting **April 10, 2017**

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.**

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**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 s.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 or for the Durham Regional Police Service.

It is my interpretation of this policy that it requires that victims of crime receive and/or is 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 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 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:

VICTIM SERVICES OF DURHAM REGION: 2015 and 2016 (Jan. 1st to Dec. 31st) STATISTICS										
<b>REFERRAL SOURCE</b>									2015	2016
Police									6,082	8,485
Health Organizations (including EMS)									3	1
Sexual Assault Centre (SAC)									6	1
Shelter									4	4
Children's Aid									10	2
Self-Referral									271	216
V/WAP									49	46
Other									42	89
<b>TOTAL</b>									<b>6,447</b>	<b>8,854</b>
<b>TYPE OF OCCURRENCES</b>		<b># INCIDENTS</b>		<b>VICTIMS SERVED</b>						
	2015 # INC	2016 # INC	2015 Male	2016 Male	2015 Female	2016 Female	2015 Children	2016 Children	2015 Total Victims Served	2016 Total Victims Served
Abduction	2	3	4	0	2	3	0	0	6	3
Assault (Domestic)	3201	3882	1168	1015	4702	4527	29	183	5,897	5,725
Assault (All Other)	249	505	196	268	257	351	11	62	464	679
Break & Enter	29	15	11	8	28	9	0	0	39	17
Criminal Harassment (incl. Stalking)	48	176	21	42	57	141	0	8	78	191
Elder Abuse (Crime-Related)	4	4	1	3	5	6	0	0	6	9
Hate Crime	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homicide	12	7	28	37	55	96	4	2	87	135
Human Trafficking	38	18	0	2	52	99	13	13	65	114
Motor Vehicle Accident (Crime-Related)	15	14	60	7	48	20	1	2	109	29
Robbery	71	167	86	92	42	60	11	31	139	183
Sexual Assault	111	145	34	51	202	275	28	61	262	387
Theft/Fraud	11	21	4	8	12	16	0	1	16	25
Vandalism	1	7	1	2	0	5	0	0	1	7
Other Crime-Related Occurrence	85	90	31	32	144	87	5	2	180	121
Tragic Circumstance	474	278	316	244	480	394	6	14	802	652
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,351</b>	<b>5332</b>	<b>1,959</b>	<b>1809</b>	<b>6,086</b>	<b>6089</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>8,151</b>	<b>8,277</b>
<b>Total Crime-Related</b>	<b>3,877</b>	<b>5054</b>	<b>1,643</b>	<b>1565</b>	<b>5,606</b>	<b>5695</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>7,349</b>	<b>7,625</b>
<b>FOLLOW-UP CONTACTS</b>										
					2015 On-scene	2016 On-scene	2015 Remote	2016 Remote	2015 # OF VICTIMS	2016 # OF VICTIMS
Abduction					0	0	0	0	0	0
Assault (Domestic)					128	284	871	1564	530	879
Assault (All Other)					29	35	114	129	58	85
Break & Enter					0	0	6	1	4	1
Criminal Harassment (incl. Stalking)					1	5	4	25	2	26
Elder Abuse (Crime-Related)					0	0	1	0	1	0
Hate Crime					0	0	0	0	0	0
Homicide					41	18	164	65	36	33
Human Trafficking					77	26	127	48	39	26
Motor Vehicle Accident (Crime-Related)					0	0	15	3	13	2
Robbery					1	0	17	17	10	13
Sexual Assault					22	37	78	103	52	72
Theft/Fraud					0	0	2	2	2	1
Vandalism					0	2	0	0	0	1
Other Crime-Related Occurrence					1	4	21	20	16	9
Tragic Circumstance					8	15	63	77	48	63
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>306</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>1,481</b>	<b>2054</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>1211</b>
<b>Total Crime-Related</b>					<b>300</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>1,418</b>	<b>1977</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>1148</b>
<b>COMMUNITY DEBRIEFS</b>										
					2015 Debriefs	2015 Attendees	2016 Debriefs	2016 Attendees		
Number of Community Debriefs					0	0	0	0		
<b>INFORMATION AND REFERRALS TO COMMUNITY AGENCIES</b>										
							2015	2016		
Health Organizations/Counselling/Bereavement/Other							4897	6364		
Sexual Assault Centre (SAC)							46	166		
Shelter							125	364		
V/WAP							214	674		
<b>TOTAL</b>							<b>5,082</b>	<b>7,568</b>		
<b>ACCOMPANIMENT WITH VICTIM(S)</b>										
							2015	2016		
<b>TOTAL</b>							<b>0</b>	<b>349</b>		

**NOTE:** Incidents and occurrences include contact made with victims from neighbouring jurisdictions however the people affected reside in Durham Region.

## **Victim Services Unit**

The Durham Regional Police Victim Services Unit (VSU) is the primary provider of support to victims of crime within the Service. The unit is comprised of civilian specialists from Victim Services of Durham Region (VSDR, Victim Services), a program of the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG).

Victim Services ensured that the needs of our community members were met in each instance. While each person's reaction to trauma is highly individual, people who have been victims of a crime or tragedy often share a sense of having lost control over their lives. In the initial stages of any crisis, most people want to speak to someone who will understand their immediate need for information pertaining to: personal safety and options available to them. Victim Services intervention ensures the victim is safe, emotionally stabilized and connected to the appropriate support services.

Victim Services will provide immediate crisis response, intervention and/or prevention services which may include but is not limited to the following: crisis support 24/7, psycho-education about common reactions to crime, victimization and its impact, identifying and addressing the victim's needs and safety concerns, supplying information about the criminal justice system, offering victims counselling services, linking victims with community resources and referrals, and delivering enhanced support for particularly vulnerable victims.

During the course of 2016, VSDR provided support to 8,277 victims of crime and tragic circumstances as a result of 7,625 incidents. Of those 8,277 victims, 2,480 required on-going follow up and support, 6,089 were female, 1,809 were male and 379 were children under the age of 15 years of age. Of the 8,277 incident cases, 7,568 referrals to our community partners that offer on-going support were also provided.

In 2016 the Durham Regional Police Service provided 7184 Criminal prosecutorial briefs to the Durham Region Crown Attorney's Office. This is in comparison to 7061 briefs in 2015. Each brief constitutes a referral to the Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP – MAG).

## **Realignment of the Domestic Violence Offender Management Unit (DVOMU)**

The DVIU was created in the beginning of 2016 with several goals in mind inclusive of improving investigative quality, freeing up front line members from lengthy paperwork, shortening the overall length of time spent per investigation, but most importantly one of the overarching goals of the DVIU was to have a positive impact on our community by improving service to victims of domestic violence. By virtue of having a unit that specializes in domestic violence, members within that unit are trained in assessing the risk of an offender to re-offend and the potential risk to a victim's safety. Members of the unit are able to identify these high risk offenders and confirm that proper efforts are taken to ensure safety planning is addressed and referrals are made to OMU to do compliance checks in the event that the offender is released. With the addition of

the member directly from DVOMU to OMU, that member has been assigned specifically to address and ensure that higher risk DV offenders are monitored.

In June of 2016, the Domestic Violence Offender Management Unit (DVOMU) was disbanded and two of the three members were transferred directly into the newly created Domestic Violence Investigative Unit (DVIU) and the third member was transferred into the already existing Offender Management Unit (OMU). Since this disbandment, the role of the DVOMU has been absorbed by the DVIU and OMU and there has been a continued and sustained focus on ensuring the safety of victims of domestic violence in our community.

DVIU supervisors have taken over the responsibility of attending monthly Domestic Violence High Risk Assessment Review Team (DVHART) meetings, previously attended by DVOMU members. The DVHART meetings are attended by partners in the justice field such as the Office of the Crown Attorney, Victim Witness Assistance Program, Domestic Violence Bail Unit (DVBU), Partner Assault Response (PAR) Program, Durham East Probation, and members of the DVIU. During these meetings, strong foundations have been fostered between members as they meet with a common specific agenda of identifying and monitoring the high risk offenders of domestic violence within the community. Strategic measures are discussed and put into action during these meetings utilizing all available resources to guarantee the respective victim's safety. During these meetings, plans are made to effect compliance on the part of these offenders, utilizing the Offender Management Unit (OMU) as a valuable resource for compliance checks. These compliance checks provide victims with peace of mind and reassurance of their safety as well as hold the offenders accountable.

By way of improving things, DVBU members have also taken on the extra responsibility of updating the local police computer system with high risk DV flags, allowing all DRPS members to be aware of DV offenders that have been deemed high risk. As a result of the DVHART meetings, updates are shared by various agencies on a month to month basis. These meetings are key examples of valuable collaboration with community members to guarantee victims of domestic violence are safe and although the DVOMU has disbanded, their role has been absorbed seamlessly and effectively by the collaborative effort of the Domestic Violence Investigative Unit and the Offender Management Unit.

## **Complaints**

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