



**ILLINOIS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INFORMATION AUTHORITY**

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**VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT
VICTIM ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM
STATE PERFORMANCE REPORT
FFY 2012**

A. What are the major issues, in your state, if any, that hinder victim assistance programs in assisting crime victims in filing for compensation benefits and in understanding state victim compensation eligibility requirements?

In the State of Illinois, many VOCA-funded grantees reported that changes are needed to simplify and expedite the filing process. During FFY12, they provided the following feedback:

- Time-consuming processes and inconsistent dissemination of information makes it difficult for clients to file claims and receive compensation.
- Some victims seem reluctant to submit their required personal information to file their compensation claims.
- Language barriers continue to be an issue for non-English speaking victims particularly in rural and/or smaller segments of the population where trained interpreters are not available.
- Sometimes families delay in reporting sexual abuse to law enforcement officials when the offender is living in the same household as the victim. They may fear deportation or the threat of the victim being removed from the care of the parent because of the crime. This delay in reporting may cause an inability to file for crime victims compensation.

B. Briefly describe efforts to promote coordinated public and private efforts within the community to aid crime victims.

During FFY12, most VOCA-funded grantees worked diligently to promote partnerships with local agencies to assist crime victims. Although the activities listed below are implemented by VOCA-funded agencies, the activities described are not done by VOCA-funded staff. Examples of coordination efforts include the following:

- One agency worked with neighboring agencies to learn what referrals they accepted in an attempt to ensure that clients are informed of other services available to them from other agencies and of the necessary requirements to receive them.
- Staff at a lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans-gender, queer (LGBTQ) community agency participated in a variety of innovative task forces/advisory groups to promote more comprehensive approaches to supporting victims in a variety of settings. As the dynamics of domestic violence, particularly abuse of power and coercion, are at play in many different types of relationships, they found it important to participate in the implementation of a variety of approaches to identifying victims. They are acutely aware

of Illinois' advantage in regards to identifying abuse, as the Illinois Domestic Violence Act provides a wonderfully broad definition of how abuse can be perpetrated and recognized under our laws. This can provide for a higher expectation of accountability within various systems in which abuse should be prevented. They collaborated with a variety of human trafficking agencies (both law enforcement and social service agencies) to improve safety practices for LGBTQ survivors of violence and abuse. They focused primarily on the identification of coercion and dynamics of power and control, as well as the identification of those who may be at a higher risk for experiencing abuse and violence from those who abuse their power.

- One domestic violence program reported that the legal advocate attends the state's attorney's task force meetings to discuss local and statewide issues. This is one forum for the advocate to highlight successful and challenging procedures often faced by domestic violence victims. Conversations regularly focus on orders of protection, including service, violations and GPS monitoring of offenders. The advocate reports these meetings as successful in maintaining collaboration with the justice system, as well as a way to provide victims with more information about their rights and safety.
- Another domestic violence program's relationships with law enforcement and the local hospital have proven to be a successful collaboration resulting in improved and safer victim services. An advocate is housed at the hospital and local law enforcement offices provide brochures highlighting the advocate's presence at the hospital. Victims whose abuser may only allow them to go certain places, such as the doctor's office, now have a safer way to receive services from domestic violence advocates.
- A child advocacy center (CAC) has networking agreements with 34 local police departments within the judicial district. There are also agreements with the county sheriff's department, the state police, a medical unit of another nearby CAC and a local hospital's pediatric residency program.
- A CAC coordinated with a number of community agencies and community members to host a girl's summer camp. Leaders of the camp consisted of CAC staff, therapists from the area rape crisis centers, a private therapist and state's attorney-based victim/witness personnel. Community members also volunteered their time at the camp. During Fashion Day, massage therapists, beauticians, cosmetologist and manicurist provided their services for the girls. During Career Day, local business women met individually with the girls during an afternoon session. These business women included: accountants, lawyers, judges, probation officers, business owners, social workers, day care providers, a school principal and a human resource manager. The camp was a huge success. The CAC and its victim service committee are beginning to plan for the summer 2013 camp.
- A state's attorney's office experienced an increase in criminal sexual assault and aggravated robbery cases. Victim advocates met with the victims and referred them to counseling services in the area. They also co-facilitated six, bi-monthly homicide support group meetings.
- A CAC worked with local law enforcement, the department of family services, the state's attorney's offices, local medical providers, and mental health providers to assure that child victims are not re-traumatized by the system's response to their allegation of abuse. They also created a friends board to address the issue of community education and outreach, which has brought together a core group of individuals who have an interest in

helping them to reach their service goals. As a result, they have had an increased opportunity to go out into the community and educate people regarding child abuse.

- An advocate in a CAC worked to debut a new initiative based on the free legal clinic structure in an agency serving domestic violence victims. A legal assistance agency was contacted and a volunteer attorney was located to serve the victim in the CAC.
- One program worked with the local school counselors on the referral process for identified families with domestic violence. In one of the school districts, the program reported success when all parties were involved with the child's and family's healing. This district's high school counselors have had multiple meetings with the child counselors and supervisors concerning the need for training of staff and the need for education to its students.
- One program's court advocate has created a relationship with the local domestic violence shelters, allowing her access to local clients that are in need of services and housing recommendations.
- A transitional housing program specialist advocates for clients with schools and day care services by ensuring that the clients have referrals for dental, eye, and general health care. Clients also receive the support they need when appearing in court. The specialist assists clients in applying for programs such as legal aid, public aid, social security, and disability benefits, and assist with the finding of employment, permanent housing and eligible benefits.

Other efforts include the display of victim service information on posters at police departments and city hall, city websites, local access channels, radio shows, local schools and colleges.

C. Briefly describe efforts taken to serve federal crime victims, i.e. coordination etc.

The Authority requires that all VOCA-funded grantees serve all crime victims regardless of whether their cases are charged in state or federal courts. In order to facilitate this, federal agencies located within the State of Illinois have access to information on VOCA-funded services so that they can refer victims to those resources.

During FFY12, VOCA-funded staff served victims of child pornography, sex trafficking and child abduction, and collaborated with the US Department of Justice (DOJ), US Attorney's Office (USAO), US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), US Secret Service (USSS), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on these cases. When necessary, subproviders assisted with full faith and credit issues for clients with orders of protection across state lines.

Three CACs reported incidents involving child internet pornography and/or cell phone texting and conducted interviews with children who were victimized in this way. Law enforcement officials contacted the USSS, DHS and the FBI. The CACs provided interview rooms for special agents and victim specialists of the FBI to conduct forensic interviews with the child victims and their parents.

Another CAC interviewed a child whom, without her knowledge, was videotaped having sex with another teenager. The teenager's father was the videographer. The CAC coordinated the

case with the USAO as the video was distributed on the internet. The CAC also referred the child for counseling and coordinated a specialized medical examination. This same center was involved with several physical abuse cases involving US Air Force and Coast Guard personnel. These cases involved coordination with the family advocacy center on base and with military law enforcement and prosecutors, as well as local law enforcement and prosecutors.

In two other investigations, children disclosed that not only were they sexually abused in Illinois but they were taken by the suspect to various states across the country and also abused there. The children and their families received referrals for advocacy services, case management, crime victim compensation information and follow-up services.

VOCA-funded staff also served survivors of intimate partner and family violence whose children were victims of interstate/international abductions. One agency helped immigrant battered women with their VAWA or U-Visa applications by referring them to a local immigration attorney and by writing advocacy letters on their behalf. Another agency assisted elderly victims of scam and fraud. Referrals were made to the FBI financial crimes specialist, for additional help. This agency continues to make victims aware of Medicare/Medicaid, Social Security and Investment Security fraud.

Also, rape crisis centers located near military bases worked with survivors who are military or military family members. These centers are in the process of developing services to work with victims of sex trafficking.

D. Describe any notable activities conducted at the state or subgrant level to improve the delivery of victim services (i.e. needs assessments, program monitoring, and program evaluation). Include training efforts, and use of VOCA approved training funds, if applicable.

In July a CAC hosted a four day summer camp for 18 girls between the ages of eleven and fifteen who were victims of sexual abuse. The camp ran Monday through Wednesday from 8 am to 4 pm and on Thursday 12 pm to 8 pm. Each day of the week involved a different theme. Monday was Empowerment through Self-Defense Day. Tuesday was Fashion Day. Wednesday was Career Day. Thursday was Life Story Day. Group counseling sessions were provided throughout the week.

The camp provided a setting for the girls to share their stories of abuse with the other campers and receive support. The camp was very successful. The girls completed surveys on their overall camp experience. Some of their responses were: "This camp showed me that I am not the only one that went through this and people are out there to help me."; "This camp helped me to not feel alone."; "The camp helped me become stronger and less afraid of telling my story."; and, "I wished the camp was longer-like four weeks."

During the initial camp, staff decided that follow-up camps were needed and would be very beneficial. The first follow-up camp took place at the end of August. This camp session lasted for 2.5 hours and was also very successful. The girls ate dinner and discussed the

issues that were currently affecting their lives. The girls met monthly and had a special retreat in December.

At one transitional housing program, the staff attending both the *Central Regional Advocates* and the *Understanding Trauma – Improving Response to Family Violence* trainings, and also participated in the *Adverse Childhood Experiences and Their Relationship to Adult Well-Being and Disease* webinar.

One county agency implemented a program that is assisting victims with obtaining discounted public transportation services to work, school and job training. Additionally the clients participated in a money management program called *Money Smart* that was coordinated with a local bank.

In one CAC, the family advocates have undergone intensive advanced clinical training on performing risk assessments. Family advocates can now provide all risk assessments that include consultation services.

The victim advocate unit of a state's attorney's office developed an information flow chart which helps to explain what happens in a criminal case. A copy of the flow chart is being given to victims and has proven to be a great aid in explaining the process of court appearances. The flow chart has received positive feedback from victims who now feel more informed and involved due to knowing what stage their cases are in.

One CAC has clients who have difficulty with transportation issues that hinder them from attending victim sensitive interviews or specialized medical exams. The case managers were recently given access to a county vehicle, which allows them to transport victims and families to appointments. The CAC also obtained car seats so that children of all ages can ride safely. The case managers went through an installation tutorial before the seats were donated. The car seats were obtained through the assistance of the Illinois State Police.

E. Include and/or attach anecdotal information and individual case histories illustrating at least four ways in which VOCA funds have been used to assist crime victims. (Letters from crime victims are helpful.)

VOCA funds have been utilized in Illinois to provide services to a variety of crime victims. The following FFY12 anecdotes illustrate the impact of such services:

Services to Senior Victims of Violent Crime

- The victim was an 87 year old man who was living with his wife who was the abuser. It was reported to the Elder Abuse Caseworker (EACW) that the abuser had been emotionally and physically abusive for their entire marriage. It was said that the physical abuse had never escalated past the wife hitting her husband in the arms or chest. The victim was very distraught over the disclosure of this abuse and begged the EACW not to talk to the abuser. The victim did not have family he could live with and unfortunately lacked the support of friends, as well. He was fearful for his life and had informed the

EACW that he wanted to leave his home as soon as possible. The EACW called several domestic violence shelters to find housing for the victim. However, there were no domestic violence shelters in the state that would assist in housing a man of any age. The EACW and her supervisor agreed that a homeless shelter was not an appropriate option because the victim would not be able to move from shelter to shelter. The EACW began to contact supportive living facilities for individuals 65 and older. One facility agreed to take the victim prior to his application being processed, as long as all of the necessary paperwork had been submitted. After the move, the victim reported to the EACW that he was happy and he currently smiles all of the time. He expressed great appreciation for the intervention and services that was offered to him and had saved him from his abusive situation.

Statewide Services to Victims of Drunk Drivers

- A victim services specialist received a phone call from a mother who had lost her 21 year old son in a “driving under the influence” crash. The woman’s son, who was in the passenger’s seat, was the lone fatality in a vehicle that had three occupants. The mother informed me that there had been a great deal of friction between her and her husband with respect to family priorities concerning the case. The mother, who hadn’t even buried her son yet, was focused on giving him a proper wake and burial and did not want to focus on the criminal proceedings until her son was buried. Her husband felt a sense of duty and obligation to attend the offender’s bond hearing out of respect to his son. The bond hearing and the wake were scheduled for the same day but only a few hours apart. The victim services specialist worked with the state’s attorney’s office to coordinate the bond hearing so that it did not conflict with the wake. The victim services specialist was also asked by the family to contact the offender’s family and inform them that they were not welcome at the wake or funeral and should cease to engage in any interaction with the deceased’s family.

Services to Victims of Domestic Violence

- A 37 year old female victim had been abused repeatedly throughout her 15-year marriage. When she came to the courthouse seeking assistance, she had been severely beaten and had black eyes and bruises all over her body. Her husband had struck her with a flashlight repeatedly until she lost consciousness. Then he drove her to the hospital, dropped her off at the door and left. The victim came to the courthouse with her 14 year old child, having fled her home out of fear and having suffered severe head trauma and lacerations throughout her head. When she came to a VOCA-funded agency for assistance, she had no idea where else to go. The police who responded to the scene took information and said they would be in touch, but did not provide additional information. The police tried to find her husband in order to press felony charges against him for aggravated domestic battery, but did not tell her that there were other options available. After fleeing her home and staying temporarily with family, the victim was informed of her option to seek a civil order of protection. With help from a VOCA-funded advocate, the victim obtained an order of protection for herself and her child. Her husband has fled

the jurisdiction and she does not know where he is, but she has an order that prevents him from contacting her in the future.

- An ongoing client had been receiving services due to an abusive spouse, from whom she had been separated. The client stated that the abuser asked her to come and talk to him, and when she did he choked her to the point that she had lost her voice. He pulled her by the hair and threw her to the floor. She was able to get away and went to the local police department and signed a complaint, which led to the abuser's arrest. The client also stated that in the past the abuser had dislocated her thumb, given her many black eyes and held a gun on her twice, once shooting past her head. The abuser had taken her phone and shut off the electricity in the home so that she could not communicate with anyone via computer. The advocate helped her file for an emergency order of protection and develop a safety plan. The advocate also explained the cycle of violence and afterwards, the client told the advocate that the abuser would always behave better after each incident and would do nice things like sending flowers. The advocate made referrals for the client for counseling and to attorneys for a divorce. She also recommended that she seek medical treatment and that she get in touch with the victim advocate at the state's attorney's office. The abuser is currently in the county jail with charges of aggravated domestic battery and unlawful restraint. The client was very appreciative of the services and the advocate believes she will stay away from the abuser.
- A client was brought to an agency by a police officer. She was 19 years old, had three children and was undocumented. Her husband, a US citizen, brought her here to be his wife. The abuse began immediately and by the time she came to the program, the client had been to the hospital four times due to spousal abuse. To further complicate the situation, the client does not speak English and only speaks very broken Spanish as her first language is a dialect of another country. There were no shelter beds available in the city at that time and as she was in imminent danger. The agency safely installed the client and her children in a local hotel. The legal advocate met with the client to talk about her legal options. The advocate discovered that although the abuser introduced her as his wife, they were not legally married. Further, the abuser forced the client to enter a false name as mother for two of her children at birth. The advocate was able to get an order of protection almost immediately for the client, but the issues of custody and immigration were more serious. The advocate discovered that the abuser brought the client to the US when she was 13 years old and got her pregnant for the first time when she was 14. Because they were never legally married, the advocate went to the state's attorney to pursue statutory rape charges. A police report was filed and the abuser was arrested. The advocate accompanied the client to all court hearings and meetings with the state's attorney and worked to get her placement at a local shelter. The advocate continued to pursue having the client officially recognized as the mother of the two oldest children. At fiscal year end, the advocate had arranged for the client to meet with agents of social security in order to get numbers for the children and had accompanied her to a meeting with an attorney who specializes in immigration/custody issues. The client has definitely made improvements in her self esteem and socialization since she began services. She is no longer afraid to ask for help, smiles and her Spanish has improved enough that she can get her needs met within our community.

Civil Legal Services to Victims of Domestic Violence

- A client and her husband are originally from Haiti. The husband is a US citizen and the client recently became a legal permanent resident. The client has two daughters, ages 21 and 16, whom the husband had adopted in Haiti. The client and the husband also have one 11 year old son together. The client's 16 year old daughter arrived in the US in April of 2011. Within a few days of arriving, the husband fondled his 16 year old stepdaughter and asked her to have sex with him. The daughter refused and immediately told the client. The client, who only speaks Creole, could not drive, had no local support system, and worked at a low-paying job, hesitated to contact the authorities. While the husband was never physically abusive to the client, he was often verbally and emotionally abusive to her and frequently demeaned her in front of the children. After several months the client obtained her own apartment and started to move out. She contacted the police and obtained an emergency order of protection. The civil legal services agency agreed to represent the client in her effort to obtain a plenary order of protection. The agency was able to arrange for a Creole translator for the client and her daughter. In addition, the presiding judge spoke fluent French and was able to understand much of what the witnesses were saying. After a contested hearing that lasted two afternoons, the court granted a two year plenary order of protection. The state's attorney has recently interviewed the client and her daughter and is contemplating filing charges against the husband.
- An agency assisted a victim whose mother abused her. The victim is disabled with traumatic brain injury. The mother who was the guardian was physically and financially abusive to the victim. The mother would periodically lock the victim out of the house or confine the victim to a room in the house. The mother was the representative payee for social security and used the money for her own expenses. The mother would hit the victim repeatedly. The agency helped the victim and her 7 year old son after she left and went to a shelter. The agency was able to obtain a two year plenary order. The mother is no longer the representative payee and the shelter is helping the victim move to an apartment.

Services to Victims of Sexual Assault

- In a high profile sex crimes prosecution, a rape crisis center used cutting edge social media strategies to organize a large group of supporters to attend a hearing. In the case, a young woman was battered and sexually abused by her ex-boyfriend. Advocates assisted the woman in preparing a victim impact statement and filled the courtroom with community members who supported the victim.

Transitional Housing and Support Services

- A client is a native of an Eastern African country where she was pursuing higher education when she began corresponding with her future husband in the US through a pen pal agency. While the client thought it was an interesting way to get to know people in the US, she did not realize that this agency was in fact an international marriage broker

assisting men in the US seeking “mail order brides”. Soon the client’s future husband, a former member of the US armed forces, began professing his feelings for her in letters and began calling her. Eventually the client also developed feelings for him and he went to her country to ask her family for her hand in marriage. Though they were initially against it, her family finally relented and agreed to let the client marry the man. After the ceremony, her husband returned to the US and began the process to petition for her to enter the US. However, after she arrived, the client found that she was in a terrible situation where she was kept locked in the house and treated like a sex slave. The husband was nothing like he seemed in the letters and in person when they got married. He was cruel and physically, emotionally and verbally abusive. He kept the client in a state of constant fear.

The client did not speak English at this time and was unfamiliar with the US. However, she managed to call 911 and seek assistance from the local police who transported her to a shelter and helped her file criminal charges against her husband. The shelter then contacted another shelter that would provide more culturally competent services and help the client move to a location further away because she was so fearful of running into her husband. The client then moved into that shelter and began receiving legal advocacy, counseling and case management assistance. All of this was possible through VOCA funds as the community advocate and transitional housing coordinator positions are VOCA-funded. The client has not looked back since! She received an order of protection against her husband, filed for divorce, self-petitioned under the Violence Against Women Act, and is now a permanent US resident. She moved into the transitional housing program and with the help of the case manager found permanent housing. She is now also fluent in English and is pursuing a nursing career. She was able to use funds provided by a donor to pay for a laptop computer, all the associated software, and for books and supplies for the nursing course. She plans to take the certification exam upon completion of the course. The client is also working in the field, providing care to the elderly at an assisted living center.

Child Advocacy Center Services

- A center’s VOCA-funded family advocate worked with a victim (a 9 year old mentally disabled boy who was sexually assaulted) and with his family throughout the investigation and during a jury trial. The offender was found guilty of a predatory criminal sexual assault (a class X felony). The advocate met several times with the victim and witnesses who testified at the jury trial in order to prepare them for the reading of their victim impact statements to the court on the day of the sentencing. The advocate helped the victim and his family understand what a victim impact statement was, why they could write a victim impact statement, and what hearing from the victims means to the sentencing judge. The offender was sentenced to 42 years in prison. There was also a daughter who was mentally delayed and unable to walk who testified that she had tried to report abuse by the offender twenty years prior.
- One VOCA-funded agency has been working with the families of a victim of homicide, who left behind a 2 year old child. Families of both the child’s parents wanted custody.

The VOCA-funded advocate referred the victim's family to a local agency that provided free legal services. The victim's grandmother has died since the murder and the victim's mother is a missing person. While the custody issues are being handled through the court system, the victim's grandfather has custody. The grandfather's lease expired and the VOCA-funded victim-witness assisted the grandfather by referring him to a housing agency where he was able to obtain adequate housing.

- A child advocacy center has been working with a family whose 8 year old daughter was raped in their home. The perpetrator was known to them, but by first name only. The mother is developmentally delayed and unable to read or write. She is a single parent of three children, all of whom were interviewed at the center. One of the children's teachers accompanied the family in order to sign paperwork and be informed so as to help the family when they returned home. Follow up contact proceeded with the teacher who worked as a liaison between the center and family. The center worked with the mother to arrange specialized medical services for the daughter. Police investigation of this case has been slow, due in part to communication issues with the mother. The center has worked with the investigators and the family to bridge the communication gap.
- A 16 year old girl living in Southern Illinois disclosed that she was sexually abused by a man while she was staying with him for the summer in a neighboring county. The girl would spend the summers with this man to train for endurance horse rides and then travel around the US for the horse rides. The girl was initially interviewed by the sheriff's department who was involved with the investigation and attempted to set up an interview with the girl and her local police department. The girl and her mother asked if the sheriff's department could do the interview because they did not feel comfortable with the local police department. The detective leading the investigation contacted the center asking for assistance in the case. The detective wanted the girl and her mother to come to the center for the interview but needed financial assistance in getting the family there. The center agreed to pay the mileage and hotel expenses.

The interview occurred in May and was very successful. The suspect admitted to the abuse and gave more information about the abuse than the victim did. At one point during the interview, he stated that he could not promise that it would not happen again if she came back for the summer. The victim disclosed more detailed information about the abuse to her mother on their way back to Southern Illinois. The family advocate received this information from the mother and reported it to the lead detective. The detective requested that the family be brought back to the center for the second interview instead of having it conducted where they were. The center agreed to pay for the expenses to bring them back.

During the second interview, the girl disclosed that she did not feel comfortable with the initial forensic interviewer then she proceeded to disclose a much more detailed report of the abuse. After the interview, the detective stated that because of all of the information gathered during the first and second interviews they had enough to make an arrest. The detectives arrested the suspect and he was charged with two counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse. The detective indicated that additional charges will be added. The

detective will also be forwarding information regarding this case to the FBI because some of the abuse occurred in multiple states. The center worked with the family by assisting them in finding a specialized therapist in their community. Staff has continued to stay in contact with this family.

Services to Non-English Speaking or Bilingual Domestic Violence Victims

- A VOCA-funded domestic violence agency in a Latino immigrant neighborhood sees additional issues for the children of abused mothers. These children are often used to act as interpreters for their parents. They are forced to hear about issues that are too complex for them to understand and are too often placed in the middle of strife between their parents. The language barriers often create an additional form of isolation making some children believe that the family violence is a cultural problem that American children do not have to face.

Law Enforcement and Prosecutor-based Victim Assistance Services

- Victim Assistance was provided to a 28 year old woman who was in the US via her husband's work visa. The client and her husband's marriage was an arranged marriage in India, where they were married and had lived together until coming to the US two years ago. They also had an 18 month old son together. The client reported that while they lived in India, things were going well in their marriage. Once her husband had the job that transferred them to the US, everything started to unravel. The client related that she felt like she was a prisoner in her own home. She did not have access to money, was not allowed to have a phone nor make any friends, and spent most of her time at home with their son. At first, her husband was only verbally abusive and would make derogatory comments about the client, her family, how she dressed, and how she kept house or cooked. But then it escalated into physical contact although the police were never called. When the final incident occurred in July of this year, the client was in computer contact with her brother, who was working in Europe. He called the local police department to let them know that his sister had been battered. Victim services were offered and accepted by the client. Once the husband had been arrested, he admitted to hitting the client but stated that "she had said bad things about his family and that he didn't know that it was not ok to hit his wife in the US as he was new to the US." Victim services escorted the client to court where the client was granted an order of protection and went to live with a distant relative. The client had to then move into a domestic violence shelter when the distant relative tried to coerce her into dropping the charges and moving back home so that she could be the "good wife she was supposed to be." The case finally concluded in September, after many stalling tactics by her husband and his attorney, and the husband was found guilty, ordered to attend batterer's counseling and agreed to a two year order of protection. The client then was free to go back to India so that she could be with her family and receive help and support from them.

F. Identify any emerging issues or notable trends impacting crime victim services in your state.

The Authority recognizes emerging issues and acknowledges many notable trends impacting crime victim services throughout the state, which include:

- Adults who were victimized as children but did not report until years later are being denied needed counseling services.
- Rising gas prices prohibit clients from traveling to keep appointments for court and health care services.
- Transportation services are needed for children, elderly, and/or victims who live in rural areas.
- Emergency domestic violence shelter beds are needed for women with older male children.
- There is a lack of Spanish interpreters at court.
- A lack of carbonized orders of protection creates a barrier to the provision of services to victims. The copies that have to be prepared are time consuming and are sometimes illegible, as well as unprofessional in appearance.
- Some families are reluctant to allow sexually abused children to receive therapy but if the issues related to the sexual abuse are not properly treated, the child could begin acting out in other ways and possibly harming others.
- There is little consistency statewide in regards to holding abusers accountable for order of protection violations.
- There are continuing improvements needed in criminal courts, which is reflected by light penalties for violations and almost no enhanced penalties for multiple violations.
- There are continuing improvements needed in civil courts, which is reflected by increasing reports of battered women losing custody of children to fathers with records of violent behavior toward both mother and children.
- There is an increase in cases that are dropped by law enforcement and prosecutors without adequate investigation and without charges being filed.

- The criminal justice system is generally perceived as being unresponsive to advocacy efforts.
- Victims report and advocates observe that law enforcement officers and prosecutors frequently treat victims with disrespect, skepticism and even overt hostility.
- The few sexual assault cases that result in investigation, charges and prosecution are not representative of the majority of sexual assault reports.
- Funding reductions have led to the decreased provision crisis intervention, emergency assistance, and basic services to children.
- Reduced and late resources perpetuate the uncertainty and inability for programs to plan and raise resources to meet the ever increasing requests for assistance.
- Projects in rural areas struggle with issues of staff time that must be devoted to helping victims travel long distances to court.
- Sexual assault victims are reluctant to report crimes and receive medical care because they fear negative first responder reactions to their victimization, which affects the level of psychological trauma and ability to heal.
- Advocates spend increased amounts of time challenging and educating medical providers who perpetuate the myth that all victims should respond in a certain manner or that there is a “normal” or “intuitive” way to react to sexual victimization.
- There is decreased assistance to clients in need of mental health/substance abuse treatment services.

Provided below are additional trends and issues impacting victim services in Illinois:

- **Decrease in reported violent offenses.** According to Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data from the Illinois State Police, the number of reported violent offenses decreased 8 percent from 71,142 in 2004 to 65,729 in 2009. During that time period, reported violent offenses decreased 10 percent in Cook County (from 44,069 to 39,765) and decreased 3 percent in central counties (from 11,386 to 11,015). Reported violent crime also decreased in other parts of the state: 2 percent in northern counties outside Cook County (from 8,581 to 8,431) and 8 percent in the southern counties (from 7,104 to 6,517).
- **Decrease in reported number of domestic offenses.** According to Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data from the Illinois State Police, between 2004 and 2009, the number of reported domestic offenses across Illinois decreased 6 percent, from 122,797 reported offenses to 115,988 reported offenses. During that same time period, the number of reported domestic offenses decreased 10 percent in Cook County (80,120 to 72,177) and decreased 28 percent in southern counties (6,823 to 4,883). Conversely, reported domestic offenses increased 7 percent in central counties (23,616 to 25,291) and increased 11 percent in northern counties outside Cook County (12,238 to 13,637).
- **Decrease in reported criminal sexual assault offenses.** Overall, Illinois’ UCR data from 2004 to 2009 indicated a 9 percent decrease in the number of reported Index criminal sexual assault offenses (from 5,862 to 5,316). Reported incidents of criminal sexual assault in Cook County decreased 13 percent (2,397 to 2,080) and decreased 5 percent in central counties (1,400 to 1,330). In addition, offenses in the southern counties and in the northern counties outside Cook County both decreased 8 percent (695 to 642 in

the southern counties and from 1,370 to 1,264 in the northern counties outside Cook County).

- **Increase in reported elder abuse and neglect cases.** The number of elder abuse and neglect cases reported in Illinois was 10,830 during state fiscal year (SFY) 2009, a 30 percent increase from the 8,359 reported in SFY2004. Additionally, reported cases of elder abuse increased across all regions of the state: 42 percent in Cook County (from 2,623 to 3,724), 13 percent in central counties (from 2,506 to 2,825), 42 percent in southern counties (from 1,473 to 2,087), and 25 percent in northern counties outside Cook County (from 1,757 to 2,194).
- **Increase in the number of child abuse and neglect cases reported, yet a decrease in cases that were indicated.**¹ The number of reported cases of child abuse and neglect decreased 2 percent between SFYS 2005 and 2010 from 111,837 to 109,183. The number of *indicated* cases increased 5 percent, from 27,617 to 29,007 indicated cases. During the same time period, reported and indicated cases in Cook County decreased 10 percent and less than 1 percent, respectively (from 37,220 to 33,222 and from 7,821 to 7,822). By contrast, reported and indicated cases in other areas of the state increased: in northern counties outside Cook County, reported cases increased 8 percent (from 26,810 to 29,105) and indicated cases increased 21 percent (from 6,626 to 8,071), in central counties, reported cases increased less than 1 percent (from 29,397 to 29,539) and indicated cases increased 1 percent (from 8,328 to 8,467), and in southern counties, reported cases decreased 3 percent (from 17,380 to 16,725) and indicated cases increased 21 percent (from 6,626 to 8,071).
- **Continued demand for language services.** In addition to the continuing demand for Spanish language services, programs are also seeing an increased need for multilingual and multicultural services. Illinois has experienced growth in the immigrant populations such as Polish, Russian, Korean and other Asian and Middle Eastern populations. In 2010, 1.5 million people in Illinois spoke a language other than English, representing 22 percent of the total population over 5 years old. Victim service programs continue to seek bilingual advocates so that they are better able to serve these populations.

Services to children fall short in many areas. Funding cuts have forced many agencies to cut back or eliminate almost all but the most basic of services to children. Children are receiving safe shelter but programs are stretched to provide more than basic group counseling for dependents of victims.

Rape crisis centers report working with others to enhance services to women with disabilities who experience sexual violence. This population is disproportionately victimized and underserved. Community collaboratives throughout the state are developing training and service protocols to better meet the needs of these victims.

¹ Indicated cases are reported cases that were verified as incidents of abuse and/or neglect by the Illinois Dept. of Children & Family Services after investigation.

Rape crisis centers continue to witness the failure of the criminal justice system in sexual assault cases. Victims report and advocates observe that law enforcement officers and prosecutors frequently treat victims with disrespect, skepticism and even overt hostility. The few cases that result in investigation, charges and prosecution are not representative of the majority of sexual assault reports. Most cases that are charged are pled to lesser, often non-sexual assault charges. A significant majority of sexual assaults are perpetrated by perpetrators who knew the victim. Yet, for adult victims, prosecuted cases are generally stranger rapes that involve a physical attack with significant physical injury and no mitigating factors that comprise victim credibility (e.g., was not drinking, was not out alone at night, has no history of mental illness or other disability, etc.). In child cases, more cases result in charges, but most result in a plea, and acquaintance/family member assaults often result in little penalty for the offender.

G. Specifically discuss how your state has used VOCA administrative funds and the impact of these funds on the state's ability to improve victim services.

The Authority used VOCA administrative funds during FFY12 to strengthen and enhance Illinois' VOCA program and improve victim services across the state. In addition to personnel costs listed below, these funds are used to support a portion of the salaries of three legal advisors, four accountants, two criminal justice specialists, four data process specialist, one associate director, one business administration specialist, one executive I, one travel coordinator, one administrative assistant, one office associate and two public service administrators. Funds are also used for rent, office supplies, equipment maintenance, auto operations, telecommunication/software usage charges, printing and postage. During this past year, staff revised the VOCA proposal material and data report to better reflect the programs funded.

- **Program monitoring staff.** VOCA administrative funds were used to support the salaries of three full-time equivalent grant specialists and a combined 43 percent of two research analyst's salary to support VOCA-funded projects. The grant specialists conducted on-site visits with program staff, provided technical assistance to grantees and monitored project performance. VOCA administrative funds were also used to support a portion of the salaries of three legal advisors, three accountants, two criminal justice specialists, four data process specialist, one associate director, one business administration specialist, one executive I, one travel coordinator, one administrative assistant, one office associate, and two public service administrators. Funds are also used for rent, office supplies, equipment maintenance, auto operation, telecommunication/software usage charges, printing and postage.
- **Illinois' victim service information system (InfoNet).** Seventy-five percent of a full-time staff person's salary was funded with VOCA administrative funds. This staff person manages the InfoNet system, an Internet-based data collection and reporting system used by over 118 victim service agencies from nearly 200 sites across Illinois. More than 90 percent of these agencies receive VOCA program funds for victim assistance services. The InfoNet manager ensures that the system is maintained with quality data; useful to statewide agencies for planning and administration of grant funds; and useful for local

victim service agencies for reporting to funders, program development, and case management. InfoNet contains basic information about all clients – victims and significant others – who receive victim services, including demographic, health insurance, employment, education, marital status, income source, referral source, and special needs. The type of victimization and severity of abuse are also captured, as well as victim interactions with court and health care systems. User agency staff also enters information about the offender’s involvement with the criminal justice system, including arrest, charge, case disposition, and sentencing information. Information is added to a client’s record over time, creating a history of services and events. The InfoNet system continued to provide valuable data and information to program monitoring staff, grantees, members of the Authority’s groups and committees, and the victim service community statewide. These contributions not only help assess [performance of VOCA-funded activities](#), but all victim service activities at local and state levels; including the

- **Statewide Coalitions.** The Authority also disbursed a portion of VOCA administrative funds to the two statewide coalitions. The Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence was responsible for monitoring 96 projects in 51 VOCA subgrants for services to adult and child victims of domestic violence, and the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault was responsible for 74 projects in 33 VOCA subgrants for services to adult and child victims of sexual assault.