



Prosecuting Attorney - Local Crime Victim Compensation 11701.841.

Mission Statement

Seek the Just Result

Function

The Victim Witness Services Division provides vital support and services to victims and survivors of crime. Employees within this division help crime victims and survivors navigate the criminal justice system, and related programs, and ensure that they are treated in accordance with rights conferred through the Washington State Constitution and the Crime Victims' Bill of Rights. They also help coordinate witness participation in trial proceedings.

Trends/Events

Trends

- Significant increase in strangulation (assault 2) cases. Strangulation is one of the most lethal forms of assault and an assailant is more likely to move onto homicide once they have strangled a victim. These victims must acquire medical care as the effects of strangulation may occur months to years later if not addressed. Education of these victims/survivors takes additional time and resources.
- Outside advocacy agencies are taking the laboring oar on notifying victims of hearing dates, ultimately freeing up the VWCs to put efforts elsewhere. Of course, this is only for those that take advantage of outside advocacy agencies. Currently, we are preparing for a decrease in services provided by at least one of the advocacy agencies due to significant funding cuts which will stall resources/assistance to the VWC and our victims/survivors. This will increase the work of the VWC in making notifications after each hearing for every victim case.
- The Washington State Indeterminate Sentencing Review Board (ISRB) routinely reviews the status of incarcerated sex offenders and evaluates them for possible release into communities around the state. Each time we are notified of such a review, Victim Witness Coordinators are tasked with locating the survivor(s) as well as the original law enforcement investigator(s), arranging meetings with the deputy prosecuting attorney assigned to the case, and assisting with recommendation preparation. Review hearings occur several times per year.

- Those that are civilly committed pursuant to a finding of Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (NGRI) may petition the court EVERY 6 months for increased privileges. For each petition, the VWC contacts all the survivors and original investigators, has a meeting with the DPA and assists with recommendation preparation. Clallam County currently has five (5) people civilly committed following an NGRI finding.
- More victims/survivors in both charged and uncharged cases require increased dedicated face time and efforts by VWC due to increased trauma and the PAO's trauma informed victim centric prosecution philosophy. Even in a referral that is declined for prosecution, the VWC is required to facilitate and attend the decline meeting, arrange for advocacy and assistance post decline.
- We continue to prosecute cases that involve multiple victims. Examples for the year 2025 include:
 - Frugal's armed robbery (2 victims)
 - Dollar Tree armed robbery (2 victims)
 - Kitsap Bank robbery in Sequim with multiple victims.
 - Child sexual assault case (2 known victims)
 - State v. Cox (6 victims – all law enforcement)
 Multi-victim cases invariably include separate meetings for each victim, multiple meetings just to begin a case, in addition to multiple individual preparation sessions for trial. Restitution needs to be tracked for each victim on property crime cases.
- The Clallam County Sexual Assault and Abuse Investigation Protocols were changed last year requiring all interviews of trauma survivors, not just children, be done at the CAC or a soft interview room with a DPA present. This has increased the number of interviews that must be arranged at the CAC. The Felony VWC assists in locating an available DPA for the interviews.
- Considerations for implementing new county-wide protocols for handling of strangulation cases which would invariably require training of law enforcement, community partners, advocacy agencies and the like.
- Law enforcement continue to reach out to the VWC when interested in connecting victims and survivors with criminal justice services.
- Our VWC is currently tracking subpoenas sent to all law enforcement officers, for all courts.
- We receive inquiries and complaints from community members about criminal justice services or the PAO (e.g., coordination of crime victim compensation for survivors in need of counseling, complaints about resolutions or charging, funeral expense reimbursement, etc.) in the normal course of business. The VWC is required to be present for all such meetings.
- The one VWC in 2025 has been pulled in multiple directions trying to assure victims/survivors of their constitutionally and statutorily required rights. Oftentimes, victims/survivors are not receiving the level of service that our office has attempted to provide in years past. She has had to keep up on the Superior Court cases as well as the District Court cases, when the Superior Court Legal Assistants are unable. (see challenges for more information).

- Due to the lack of two VWCs this year, the Juvenile Court has not received the assistance of the VWC and the duty has been thrust upon the legal assistants and the Juvenile Court DPA. The VWC has been assisting as needed and when requested on more complex cases.
- Increase in tribal cases and work with the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Taskforce. The MMIP has consulted with the office on the George David homicide, the Valerie Claplanahoo homicide, and the Marley Zimmerman missing persons case. The Attorney General is prosecuting the George David homicide against Tina Alcorn, however, the VWC must still arrange for conference room availability and assistance with the AG's VWC division.

Events (first six months of 2025)

- District Court I & II have 231 victim cases from Jan-Jun 2025; total number of cases is 410; these numbers do not reflect the number of victims, just the number of cases. For example, one victim CASE could have six victims.
- Juvenile Court has 45 victim cases from Jan-Jun 2025; total number of cases is 63; these numbers do not reflect the number of victims, just the number of cases. For example, one victim CASE could have six victims.
- Superior Court has 132 victim cases from Jan-Jun 2025; total number of cases is 168. these numbers do not reflect the number of victims, just the number of cases. For example, one victim CASE could have six victims.
- Since the last budget cycle, we have charged one (1) murder and one (1) attempted murder; both involve multiple survivors, each of whom is entitled to numerous services and meetings.
- The VWC is currently assisting with outreach to the survivors in a case in the pre-charge stance for a murder/manslaughter charge that may be forthcoming.
- Participated in and facilitated 2 quarterly STOP grant meetings.
- Presented numerous trainings for law enforcement, and/or community groups on topics including court process, testimony and victim rights.
- Advised law enforcement regarding multi-victim cases.
- Felony VWC attended Forensic Interview Training to assist with skills needed for victims/survivors. Eventually this will be for the strangulation protocols as well.
- The Dennis Bauer case, the triple homicide, has returned for retrial from the Court of Appeals. The VWC has now had to start tracking down 90 witnesses and arranging meetings with the DPAs, not only to advise of what is happening but then to start preparing for trial again. This must be done, in addition to the regular work and that of the District Court wherein there is no VWC.

Goals

- Convert the VWC positions back to salary to increase services and reduce/eliminate the need for overtime, especially in light of retrial of Dennis Bauer and the number of hours that will be needed to prep the significant number of witnesses.

- Obtain a temporary VWC to cover the Superior Court calendar during the retrial of Dennis Bauer; and if there is not a District Court VWC hired by that time, another VWC to handle the District Court.
- Continue cross training Victim Witness Coordinators.
- Create a road map for Superior Court and District Court victims/survivors and collaborate with agencies and law enforcement to distribute.
- Continue to provide victim/witness/survivor services in a trauma-informed, culturally competent manner that acknowledges implicit bias.
- Continue collaboration with all branches of law enforcement, fire departments, community advocacy groups to maximize criminal justice system efficiencies.
- Acquire funding to enable VWCs to attend more trainings to foster further education on trauma responses (biological and psychological), vicarious trauma, and trauma-informed prosecutions.
- Re-evaluate compensation for all positions to ensure the office remains competitive in the labor market.

Challenges

- Domestic violence victims calling/reaching out to the VWC at all hours of the nights and weekends and the VWC not being allowed to respond until the next business day given their designation as hourly employees. This has already been a challenge but with the decrease in services from the local advocacy groups due to significant budget cuts, the victims/survivors are the ones that will be hurt.
- Due to the decrease in the number of hours allowed, from full-time to part-time, the PAO has had a difficult time filling the second position; we have lost at least one candidate due to the part-time nature of the second position.
- Having only one VWC for 2025 thus far has had a far and wide impact on our office, victims, witnesses and the community. With regards to services to victims / witnesses in District Court, the legal assistants in Superior Court have had to put aside their regular jobs to sit in and assist with the notifications and trial prep. This extra work is in addition to the extra work that the Superior Court legal assistants are doing to supplement for the deferred legal assistant position from District Court. The victims and witnesses are not receiving the level of service required by the Washington Constitution and statutes.
- Funding continues to be a challenge as the Courts are not imposing the victim penalty assessment and instead are waiving it due to indigency of the defendant on nearly every case. This funding was routinely used to compensate the VWC division.
- The move to hourly pay from salary has impacted the ability to complete work within the scheduled hours of 8:00 am-4:30 pm. To keep up the caseloads and stats and be present during court or interviews when held after hours makes it compulsory to work after hours and attempt to flex time or take overtime. Due to one VWC during the first part of 2025, flex time has been hard to find as there is too much work to complete and no time to flex.

- The increase in serious crime with multiple co-defendants and multiple victims is having a disproportionate impact on the already limited resource within the Victim Witness Services Division.
- Statistics do a poor job of conveying the quantity of work performed by Victim Witness Coordinators and fail to address the quality of work performed. Each victim case is touched by a Victim Witness Coordinator in one way or another. The numbers do not reflect the non-victim cases where the VWC work with witnesses. The numbers also do not reflect cases from previous years that are still open. Nor do they reflect the number of decline meetings, NGRI cases, ISRB cases, or post-conviction restitution cases. Additionally, they do not reflect the calls from the community for cases not even referred to our office.
- Lack of certified court interpreters continues to be a challenge this year.
- Uninformed criminal justice professionals and participants concerning trauma responses and ability to be trauma informed. This sends a message to our victims/witnesses that their trauma is not real nor important. The impact is that the VWC and the advocates need to spend much more time with victims to assist in the emotional toll.
- Being trauma informed requires DPAS and VWCS to meet the survivors/victims where they are at. This invariably means on their time frame to include during lunch, after court hours, and on weekends. This also includes off-site visits and coordination.
- Lack of training and education for criminal justice participants about the lethality of strangulation, in light of the drastic increase of numbers of these cases.

Workload Indicators

	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual
Total Victims Served	248	333	205
Victims of DV	190	164	71
Adult Sexual Assault Victims	5	5	2
Child Physical/Sexual Abuse Victims	9	4	1
Services Provided: Information and Referral	485	320	101
Services Provided: Accompanying to Court	359	585	47
Services Provided: Restitution Assistance	23	28	10
Services Provided: Criminal Justice Support	525	192	583
Services Provided: Notification of court hearings	1028	749	248

Grant Funding Sources

1. Department of Justice (Federal)
2. Washington State Department of Commerce

Revenues

	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual	2026 Budget
Beginning Fund Balance	28,642	43,232	116,407	95,700
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Licenses and Permits	0	0	0	0
Intergovernmental Revenues	90,941	154,643	51,887	98,095
Charges for Goods and Services	43,787	39,819	11,185	29,900
Nonrevenues	4	1,368	691	0
Miscellaneous Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Financing Sources	0	0	0	0
Transfers In	82,000	67,000	43,146	55,435
Total	245,374	306,062	223,316	279,130

Expenditures

	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual	2026 Budget
Ending Fund Balance	43,232	116,407	155,546	39,830
Salaries and Wages	136,470	99,622	32,180	133,855
Personnel Benefits	55,162	45,657	14,069	55,913
Supplies	0	0	0	200
Other Services and Charges	1,735	345	0	18,800
Intergovernmental Services	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlays	0	0	0	0
Interfund Payments for Services	8,775	44,032	21,521	30,532
Transfers Out	0	0	0	0
Total	245,374	306,063	223,316	279,130

Staffing

	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual	2026 Budget
Full Time Equivalents	2.00	2.00	1.80	1.80