

# Victim Witness: One Half of the Dynamic Duo and Beyond



**CRISIS?**

I am ready!

## My Beginnings



- When I started I was following in the footsteps of someone who was very successful at this position and I knew there were big shoes to fill.
- My greatest desire was to continue the excellence of this program.

## What Makes this Program Unique

- **Embedded in the police department**
  - Benefits
  - Office location
- **No advocate privilege**
  - Advantages
  - Information
- **Work with MPO who is a sworn officer**
  - Helpful
- **Work with any crime against persons victim**
  - Felony
  - Misdemeanor
- **Work with multiple jurisdictions**
  - Glasgow/ Valley and Phillips county
  - Out of state

## Who do I Work With

- **Victims**
- **Prosecutors**
- **Courts**
- **Law enforcement**
- **Misdemeanor Probation**
- **School Resource Officer**
- **Victim services (mental health etc.)**
- **State entities (Child and Adult protective services, probation and Parole etc.)**

## Who is a Victim

- **Any gender**
  - Males
  - Females
  - LBGTQ
- **Any age**
  - 18-Infinity
- **Even children**
  - 0-18
- **Races**
  - All
- **Socioeconomic**
  - Poverty
  - Middle
  - Affluent



## General Process with Victims 18- Infinity

- **Start at time of crime**
  - Law Enforcement
  - Called out
  - Notified
  - 10 seconds
  - Bond
  - Safety plan
  - Lethality assessment
  - Paperwork
  - Pictures/ evidence
  - Medical records

## General Process with Victims 18- Infinity con't

- **Walk the victim through legal process/ offer support**
  - Orders of protection/ no contact/ court conditions
  - Release
  - Initial appearance
  - Plea
  - Next
- **Case updates**
  - Charges
  - Hearings/ plea agreements
  - Dropped/ dismissed



I'm warning you, don't come any closer!  
I'm fully charged with static electricity...

## General Process with Victims 18- Infinity con't

- **Victim services**
  - Mental health
  - Child protective and Adult protective services
  - Financial information
- **Trial prep and work with prosecution**
  - Day one
  - Defense interview
  - Defense
  - Trial
- **Sentencing and parole hearings**
  - Victim impact
  - Statements/ testify
  - Arrange/ support

## Child Victims

- **Multidisciplinary Team Facilitator**
  - What is MDT?
  - Who participates
- **Attend Child Protection Team meetings**
  - What is CPT
  - Who participates
- **Forensic interviews**
  - Process
  - Training
- **Work with CPS**
  - Referrals
  - Information



## Prosecutors

- **Collect information for restitution**
  - Bills/receipts
  - Insurance company
- **Help prosecutors prep victim for trial**
  - Tips to testify
  - Statements/ transcripts/ photos
  - Medical records
- **Review case file for trial**
- **Review plea agreements with victims**
- **Attend hearings**
  - Initial appearance
  - Omnibus/ bail hearings
  - Change of plea
- **Prep victims for sentencing**
- **Testify**
  - Sentencing
  - Trials

## Court

- **Convey to the court victim feelings**
  - Trauma
  - Fear
- **Orders of protection**
  - Court conditions
- **Keep the court informed**
  - Issues
  - Updates



## Law Enforcement

- **Keep them up to date on victim information**
  - Mental health
  - Address/phone number
- **Prosecution information**
  - Filings
  - Pleas
  - Court hearings
- **Safety planning**
  - Witness tampering
  - Harassment
  - Order of protection/ no contact
- **Work as liaison between all those involved**
- **Review criminal records and prior convictions**
  - Out of state
  - Tribal

## Misdemeanor Probation Officer

- **Safety plan**
  - Lethality assessment
  - Victim input
- **Work towards accountability**
  - Balance
  - Success/ revocation
- **Keep MPO informed of victim needs**
  - Intimidation
  - Healing
- **Help find resources**
- **Attended community meetings for mental health**
  - Gap in community

## School Resource Officer

- **Harassment at school**
  - Bullying
  - No contact orders
- **Cyber-Bullying**
  - Education
  - Dangers
- **Working with children**
  - Victims in school
  - Offenders/family
  - Harassment/tampering



## Victim Services



- **Mental health**
  - Providers
  - Needs
- **Find shelter services**
  - Where/options
- **Housing**
  - letters
- **Referrals**
- **Victim compensation**
  - Forms/ submit
  - Process

## Probation and Parole

- **Victim impact statements**
  - Sentencing
- **Pecuniary loss**
  - Sentencing
- **Pardon and Parole hearings**
  - Vision Net
  - Statements
  - Testimony prep
  - Testify
    - ✦ Prosecutor
    - ✦ Victim/family
    - ✦ Victim witness specialist

## The Effects on the Community



- **Increase in convictions**
  - Victim investment
  - Follow through
  - Increase prosecution
- **Increase in reporting**
  - Atoned
  - Safe
- **Community safety**
  - MPO accountability
  - Protection

## Final Thoughts



- This program is a critical piece in a puzzle that helps complete the justice system. I like to refer to the Victim Witness and MPO programs as the one two punch. However combine these programs with a progressive police department such as the Glasgow Police Department and it is truly the epitome of community policing at its finest.