

VICTIM SERVICES IN DEER LODGE, MT



6/21/2023

Montana Board of Crime Control State and Tribal Victim Liaison Project

Data collected from a roundtable discussion with victim service providers and allied partners who support Deer Lodge, Powell County, and the surrounding areas.

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MONTANA BOARD OF CRIME CONTROL STATE AND TRIBAL VICTIM LIAISON PROJECT

PARTICIPANTS

Thank you to the courteousness of Powell County Courthouse and the help of the Office of Victim Assistance for providing us with a location. Through this collaboration, we were able to host multiple service providers who support survivors and victims of crime. These service providers and allied professionals came together to discuss the services provided, where there are strengths and weaknesses in the community, and where there are opportunities for growth. We finished off the meeting with a discussion regarding our top priorities. Those participating in the roundtable included:

- Powell County Attorney's Office
- Deer Lodge Police Department
- Montana Legal Services Association
- Adult Protective Services
- Powell County Office of Victim Assistance
- Safe Space Inc.
- Montana Department of Corrections – Victim Services Unit
- Powell County Sheriff's Office
- Powell County Justice Court

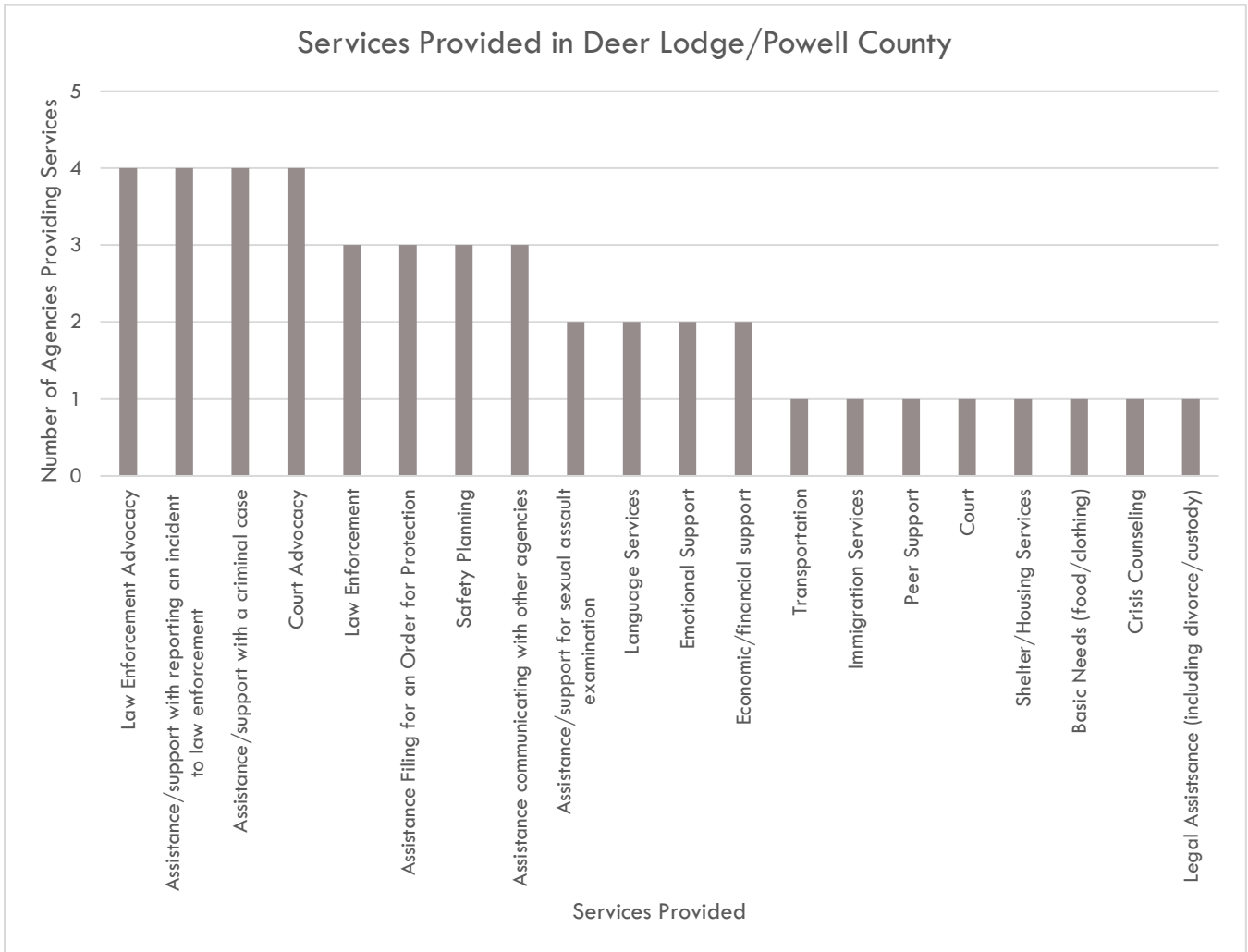
Services Represented

Service providers and allied partners for Deer Lodge, Powell County, and surrounding areas completed short surveys addressing the services they provide to the community.

This list summarizes the services from the survey and all the agencies that provide these services. The agencies identified 44 services with some duplicates, as shown in the following lists and graphs:

<i>Law Enforcement Advocacy</i>	4
<i>Assistance/support with reporting an incident to law enforcement</i>	4
<i>Assistance/support with a criminal case</i>	4
<i>Court Advocacy</i>	4
<i>Law Enforcement</i>	3
<i>Assistance Filing for an Order for Protection</i>	3
<i>Safety Planning</i>	3
<i>Assistance communicating with other agencies</i>	3
<i>Assistance/support for sexual assault examination</i>	2
<i>Language Services</i>	2
<i>Emotional Support</i>	2
<i>Economic/financial support</i>	2
<i>Transportation</i>	1
<i>Immigration Services</i>	1
<i>Peer Support</i>	1
<i>Court</i>	1
<i>Shelter/Housing Services</i>	1

Basic Needs (food/clothing)	1
Crisis Counseling	1
Legal Assistance (including divorce/custody)	1
Grand Total	44

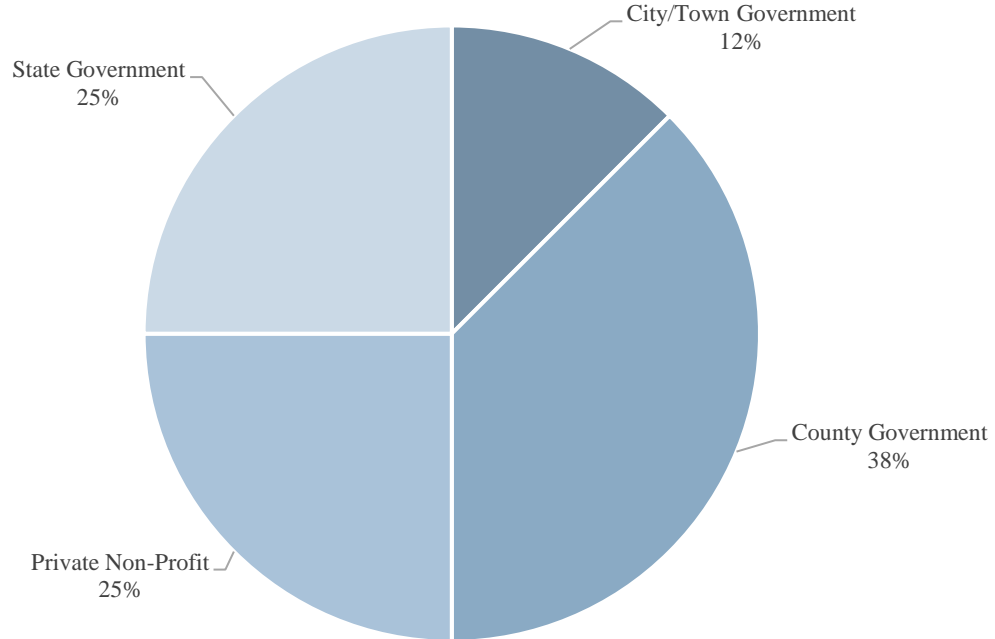


Types of Organizations Represented

The following data represents how the organizations and agencies identified their type of organization. This data outlines what agencies are providing services and originates from agencies supporting Deer Lodge and the surrounding communities.

City/Town Government	1
County Government	3
Private Non-Profit	2
State Government	2
Grand Total	8

Types of Organizations Represented in Deer Lodge, MT



Strengths

What does Deer Lodge/Powell County do well?

- Communication – knowing who to call
- Policy and procedure manual through the Office of Victim Assistance
- No back log in the court
- Law enforcement communication to victim assistance communication to county attorney (connected working group)
- Law enforcement, victim assistance, and county attorney's office have weekly meetings
- Everyone knows each other
- MCDC has no wait time
- Mental health services for law enforcement
- Safe Space has multiple ways to reach out (text, messenger, Instagram, phone, email, through website)
- Safe Space developing the possibility of a "no contact" intake

What valuable resources exist?

- Ministerial Association
- Council on Aging

- Action Inc
- Rescue Mission
- The Lifeguard Group
- Thrift Store

Weaknesses

What could be done better?

- Legal services for guardianships (no private practice available)
- SANE services
- No resources
- No hotel availability
- Detox/rehab require private pay or private insurance
- Isolation of service providers
- Law enforcement response times (specific to Butte)

What can we do to prevent retraumatizing victims?

- Make trauma-informed practices training mandatory

Opportunities

What opportunities do we have to do better?

- More services for guardianships
- More SANE services
- Peer support groups for victims
- Self-help packet for guardianships and power of attorney (potentially adapted from the adoption packet)
- Online intake processes
- Slush fund for un-anticipated situations
- Better resources for follow-through
- Tech short cuts
 - For instance, text messaging services
- Flexible scheduling
- Mental health benefits
- Access to mental health services
- More providers
 - Law enforcement
 - Victim services
 - Attorneys
- More attorneys

Actionable Priorities

What can we do when we leave here today?

- Building a transition plan
 - Safe Space working with Powell County Services to ensure victims are supported

Action Items:

- Tawny – Identify texting services/resources

Conclusions reached

Discussing victim services in communities across Montana allows us to determine where Montana is meeting the needs of victims of crime and survivors.

The discussion in Deer Lodge was a productive conversation that opened the collaboration of providers and allowed us to see what resources are available and where there is more need. One of the positives that came out of this meeting was learning about the different roles of the providers at the table. However, this is also an area to continue exploring so we are limiting duplication of effort, but also ensuring that the victim knows all their choices.

Without the voices and knowledge of victim service providers, the voices of victims would not be heard in an offender-centric system.