

2.436 VICTIM/WITNESS SERVICES (55.1.3.a)

2.436.02 Victim/Witness Rights (55.1.1)

- A. Consistent with **Maryland Constitution, Declaration of Rights, Article 47**, all employees will treat crime victims with dignity, respect, and sensitivity.
- B. See also **Criminal Procedures**:
 - 1. **CP § 11-1002 Guidelines for treatment of victim of crime, victim's representative, or witness**;
 - 2. **CP § 11-1003 Guidelines for treatment of victim of delinquent act, victim's representative, or witness**.

2.436.04 Coordinating Victim / Witness Services (55.1.2, 55.1.3.a, .c, & .d)

- A. As described in **1.200 Organization**, the supervisor of the investigations function, hereafter “investigations supervisor,” is designated the agency’s victim / witness service coordinator.
- B. Related duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Ensuring documented reviews of local victim / witness needs and available services are conducted and submitted through the chain of command to the Chief at least once every three years starting in 2010;
 - 2. Ensuring victims / witnesses are familiarized with follow-up or supplemental services beyond those initially provided by patrol or other agency personnel; and
 - 3. Ensuring the community and local media sources are informed of the agency’s victim / witness services; and
 - 4. Working with the Communications Unit supervisor to ensure victim / witness resource information contained in the Communications Resource System is current with respect to:
 - a. Victim / witness assistance supplied directly by the agency; and
 - b. Referral information regarding other services offered within the university community and Baltimore County.

2.436.06 Delivering Victim/Witness Service (55.1.3. a, & .b, 55.2.1, 55.2.2, 55.2.3, 55.2.4, 55.2.5)

- A. Victim / witness service and referral information is available 24 hours a day through the Communications Resource System.
- B. Employees will ensure the confidentiality of victims and witnesses and their roles in case development is protected to the extent possible consistent with **2.429 Public Information**;
- C. In addition to the procedures described in **2.304 Preliminary Investigations**, officers are responsible for:
 - 1. Providing victims / witnesses with case numbers and subsequent steps in processing their cases;
 - 2. Providing the agency’s emergency and non-emergency phone numbers for victims / witnesses to call and report:
 - a. Additional case information or to obtain information about the status of their cases;
 - b. If they are targets of victim/witness intimidation and/or as described in:
 - (1) **CR § 9-302 Inducing False Testimony or Avoidance of Subpoena**;
 - (2) **CR § 9-303 Retaliation for Testimony**;
 - (3) **CR § 9-305 Intimidating or Corrupting Juror**;
 - (4) **CR § 9-306 Obstruction of Justice**.
 - 3. Consistent with **CP § 11-104 Victim Notification**, giving copies of the brochure titled “*Crime Victims and Witnesses: Your Rights and Services*” to victims who have suffered actual or threatened physical, emotional, or financial harm as the result of crimes or delinquent acts.
 - a. Brochures will also be given to family members who are guardians of victims who are minors, deceased, or disabled.
 - b. Officers may also give brochures to others as reasonable and prudent.

- c. The investigations supervisor will work with the Logistics Officer to ensure a supply of the current brochure, with university victim / witness services stickers attached, is readily available for distribution
- D. Employees will provide assistance to victims / witnesses who have been threatened or who, in the judgment of the agency, express specific and credible reasons indicating a high probability of intimidation or further victimization.
1. Assistance will be provided based on criteria that include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Nature of the cases;
 - b. What resources are available; and
 - c. Where victims / witnesses are located.
 2. Officers' related duties and responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Ensuring on-duty patrol supervisor is notified;
 - b. Making reasonable and prudent attempts to promptly notify and/or alert the victims / witnesses of the danger;
 - c. Responding to the locations of victims / witnesses if within the agency's jurisdiction to provide protection from immediate or imminent threats;
 - d. If victims / witnesses are in other jurisdictions, notifying the police agencies of primary jurisdiction of the danger; and
 - e. Making other notifications and taking other steps as directed.
 3. Supervisors' related duties and responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. During regular business hours, notifying the investigations commander;
 - b. During non-business hours, notifying the Duty Officer; and
 - c. Making other notifications and taking other steps as directed.
- E. In addition to the procedures described in **2.308 Follow-Up Investigations**, officers are responsible for working with the investigations supervisor to:
1. Periodically recontact victims / witnesses to determine if their case related needs are being met and if, in the opinion of the agency, the impact of crimes on victims / witnesses has been unusually severe thereby making it necessary to facilitate or arrange for above-average victim / witness assistance;
 2. Explain to victims / witnesses the procedures involved in the prosecution of their cases and their role in those procedures, if not an endangerment to the successful prosecution of the cases;
 3. Schedule line-ups, interviews, and other required appearances at the convenience of the victims / witnesses and, at the option of the agency, providing transportation, if feasible;
 4. Facilitate or accompany, as needed, victims / witnesses to court and other judicial proceedings;
 5. Promptly return all victim / witness property taken as evidence (except for contraband, disputed property, and weapons used in the course of the crime), where permitted by law or rules of evidence, if feasible; and
 6. If applicable, be placed in contact with a victim advocate through the OSA or other appropriate organization.
- F. After arrests have been made, arresting officers are responsible for working with the investigations supervisor and taking good-faith efforts to ensure:
1. Victims and witnesses are notified:
 - a. That arrests were made;
 - b. Of the charges that were placed against the arrestees;
 - c. Of arrestees' names and addresses;
 - d. Of arrestees' custody status;
 - e. Of dates, times, and locations of all applicable judicial and/or administrative hearings; and
 - f. If arrestees or their associates have made threats against victims/witnesses;

2. Victims are strongly encouraged to participate in the VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday) program as described in the “*Crime Victims and Witnesses: Your Rights and Services*” brochure.