Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims: A 21ST CENTURY STRATEGY

International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims: Implementation Guide
The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) has developed four companion documents to help you implement its new industry standard: *Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims*. Referred to as the *Strategy Package*, it is a four-volume resource developed by the IACP with funding from and in collaboration with the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) at the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

**Volume 1** - A *21st Century Strategy* conceptually introduces state, local, and tribal law enforcement leaders to the benefits, challenges, methods, and responsibilities for enhancing their response to victims of crime. As the first of four volumes, this document discusses the evolution of enhanced victim response, summarizes its four core elements (leadership, partnering, training, and performance monitoring), identifies the seven critical needs of victims, and illustrates the potential of community partnerships. It also contains an inspiring message from the chiefs of the three agencies that piloted this strategy and a summary of the project history and cycle.

**Volume 2** - The *Implementation Guide* consists of four instructive sections which outline the steps to implement the strategy. It instructs law enforcement agencies how to identify their goals and measurements of success, gather pertinent information, develop action plans and performance monitoring approaches, and sustain the effort in the long term. The Guide operationally bridges the gap between the concepts outlined in the *Strategy* and templates in the *Resource Toolkit*. It is the document to which you will refer most often during the implementation process.

**Volume 3** - The *Resource Toolkit* provides templates to aid in the implementation of the steps in the *Implementation Guide*. Law enforcement agencies will find in the *Resource Toolkit* sample documents and materials developed by the pilot and validation sites that may be adapted for your own use. The *Resource Toolkit* includes such resources as revised mission statements, schedules and process descriptions, key stakeholder interview questions, sample action plans, Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and partnership agreements, policies and procedures relating to victim response, steps toward staff buy-in and performance appraisals, informational brochures provided to crime victims, press releases, Web site samples, and links to numerous victim-related resources.

**Volume 4** – The online *Training Supplemental* presents law enforcement agencies with content that can be customized to provide every agency employee, from recruit to executive, with specific knowledge, skills, abilities, and tools to better respond to victims of crime. It outlines victim response enhancements that can be integrated into all existing basic and advanced law enforcement curricula and utilized with a minimum investment.
The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) is indebted to a great number of experienced, creative, and committed individuals who made the conceptual development and publication of the strategy for enhancing law enforcement response to victims and its two companion documents possible. The scope of contributions, insights, and perspectives provided by the many professionals representing different organizations and points of view is tremendous and extends far beyond what can be acknowledged in this section.

We would like to start by expressing our appreciation to the project Advisory Group comprising representatives from the national and local law enforcement agencies, victim service provider organizations, and victims of crime. The advisors helped direct the project’s design at onset and participated in the review phase by providing content and editorial comments. Their efforts have resulted in a credible, consistent, and well-balanced document.

Participants at the four national information-gathering forums served as a driving force for this effort. We are very grateful to the many law enforcement leaders and trainers, victim advocates and service providers, crime victims and survivors, as well as military experts, who, through their participation, contributed unique insights and perspectives to the project development.

We are particularly indebted to the leadership and personnel at the three agencies that piloted the strategy. These agencies played a pivotal role in putting theory into practice by field-testing draft strategy concepts. Their contagious enthusiasm and commitment as well as their vision, support, and direction sharpened the focus of the project and improved the usefulness of the document.

Our heartfelt thanks go to: Chief Darrel Stephens, Deputy Chief Gerald Sennett, Major Tim Danchess, and Captain Steven Brochu at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) Police Department; Chief David G. Bishop, Captain Tim Roberts, Captain Steve Stevenson, and non-sworn employees Michelle Harrold and Meredith “Bud” Bliss at the Beaverton (OR) Police Department; Chief Raymond Rose, Deputy Chief Michael O’Brien, and Commander Eric Guenther at the Mundelein (IL) Police Department as well as the many dedicated men and women employed by these agencies. Their hard work resulted in not only the development of this publication, but, more important, the creation of enhanced service environments and opportunities for crime victims in their jurisdictions.

We would be remiss if we failed to express our sincere appreciation for the project partners from our eight additional sites who worked tirelessly to validate the Strategy
implementation process in preparation for its national release. We are grateful to the Broken Arrow (OK) PD, California State University @ San Bernardino PD, Denver (CO) PD, Flint (MI) PD, Hastings (NE) PD, Loudoun County (VA) Sheriff’s Office, New York State Police and Sumner (WA) PD for accepting this challenge and the insights gained from their participation.

We would also like to thank John Gillis, Director of the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) at the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, who offered his vision of a new era in law enforcement response to victims. He has provided and continues to provide his agency’s significant financial and programmatic support for this effort.

We are grateful to the staff at OVC, particularly Joye Frost and Meg Morrow, who have been indefatigable in their ongoing support and guidance to the IACP throughout the course of this project.

Finally, our gratitude is extended to the teams of the project consultants, Teri Martin, Lori Kenney, and Donna Drinan of Law and Policy Associates, and Joanne Vatz and Shaina Vatz of CIR DAN Group who supported the pilot and validation sites during this challenging endeavor and helped shape and write the documents.

This document, Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims: A 21st Century Strategy, was produced by the International Association of Chiefs of Police under grant number 2003-VF-GX-K004, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this document are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.
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Dear Fellow Law Enforcement Executives:

As the chiefs of the three departments selected by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) to pilot test the concepts outlined in the new Strategy for Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims, we are pleased to introduce this document to our colleagues and peers around the country and assure that implementing the strategy presents a significant opportunity to make an extremely positive impact on victim response in any jurisdiction.

Believing we were already meeting a majority of crime victims' needs, we initially viewed this project as a way to validate our existing efforts. What we learned, is that every law enforcement agency, even if already actively utilizing a community oriented policing approach to solving crime, can significantly advance its response to victims without expending an enormous amount of resources.

Incorporating the strategy concepts into all aspects of our organizations has taken leadership, vision, commitment, perseverance and creativity. Nonetheless, in just a little over 12 months, we were able to achieve measurable changes in our agencies in the areas of leadership, partnering, training and performance monitoring, the core elements of the strategy.

Although we took different approaches, the commonalities of issues and lessons learned far outweighed any geographical or organizational differences amongst our departments. The results of our efforts and suggestions for strategy implementation have been incorporated into the four companion volumes included here for your use.

As law enforcement leaders we recognize that it only makes sense to continually improve our services to victims of crime, an important constituency, since those individuals live and work in the communities that we serve, and law enforcement exists to support the community.

We urge you to adopt and implement the strategy for enhancing law enforcement response to victims. From our experience we know that it works and can, without a doubt, improve not only the lives of victims in your communities, but also the level of job satisfaction of every officer in your departments.

Sincerely,

Darrel W. Stephens, Chief of Police, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC Police Department

David G. Bishop, Chief of Police, Beaverton, OR Police Department

Raymond J. Rose, Chief of Police, Mundelein, IL Police Department
I. Executive Summary

A 21st Century Strategy for Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims introduces state, local, and tribal law enforcement leaders to the benefits, challenges, methods, and responsibilities for enhancing their response to victims of crime. As the first of four companion volumes, this document discusses the evolution of enhanced victim response, summarizes its four key principles, identifies the seven critical needs of victims, and illustrates the potential of community partnerships in the implementation of the strategy.

Although state laws define the rights and redress of victims of crime, very often these individuals are neglected in the criminal justice system. Historically, law enforcement has focused on the apprehension and prosecution of perpetrators. The enhanced response to victims strategy, however, developed and tested with law enforcement’s direct participation and input, is intended to assist America’s law enforcement community in embracing a philosophy that places crime victims’ interests and needs at the zenith of response to crime and community problem-solving.

Every sworn and non-sworn law enforcement employee plays a key role in enhancing response to victims. This effort is not simply the creation of a separate victim unit, but an integrated and inclusive effort that will extend to all branches and levels of law enforcement. In championing enhanced victim response, the IACP designed this strategy for use by the executives and leadership, middle management, and front line officers serving in state, county, municipal, tribal, college and university law enforcement agencies.

The strategy has been successfully pilot tested by three police agencies: Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC, Beaverton, OR, and Mundelein, IL, and validated by the following eight additional agencies: Broken Arrow, OK, California State University at San Bernardino, Denver, CO, Flint, MI, Hastings, NE, Loudoun County Sheriff’s Office, VA, New York State Police, City of Sumner, WA. This publication documents the benefits these departments enjoyed as a result of implementing enhanced response to victims. Two companion documents, the Implementation Guide and the Resource Toolkit, detail lessons learned and methods developed through the efforts of personnel and their partners at these sites.
II. Evolution of Law Enforcement Response to Victims and Scope of the Project

Law enforcement agencies across the United States have worked for many years to ensure that they respond to crime victims promptly, appropriately, and effectively. Dispatchers who take emergency calls, officers who respond to these calls, and detectives who investigate crimes are in a position to influence positively the attitudes of crime victims toward the criminal justice process. Victims who are treated with sensitivity and respect are more likely to cooperate in the investigation of crimes. Ideally, a victim who is comfortable and therefore cooperative with law enforcement can increase the likelihood that perpetrators are arrested and successfully prosecuted.

Beginning in the 1970's, with seed money from the Department of Justice's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), law enforcement agencies around the country began to develop innovative programs to assist elderly crime victims and create mobile crisis response units staffed by police and mental health professionals. With LEAA assistance, the first police-based victim assistance programs were established in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and Indianapolis, Indiana.

In 1982, the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime was created to address the needs of millions of Americans victimized by crime every year. The Task Force's Final Report1 expressed increased concern for the rights and needs of crime victims. In the recommendations for law enforcement as first responders, the report emphasized the importance of training officers to be sensitive to victims' needs, knowledgeable about their rights, and familiar with services available to them. Other recommendations included speeding the return of victims' property, ensuring periodic and timely notification regarding their case status, and prompt investigation of victim and witness intimidation.

Before the Task Force completed its work, only a handful of states had enacted laws defining and protecting victims' rights. By 2000 all 50 states had such laws, and every state had created a crime victim's compensation fund. Currently, 33 states have constitutional amendments to protect the rights of victims. Though victim laws and statutes vary from state to state, there are several common, basic rights that justice system entities and law enforcement are obligated to follow and observe. These rights include the right of the victim to be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect; to be informed and present throughout the entire criminal justice process; to be reasonably protected from the accused; and to be entitled to seek restitution.

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Since the mid-1980’s, under the leadership of the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), and federal agencies such as the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) have cooperated to fund and provide victim assistance and response training to thousands of local, state, and federal law enforcement officers and other criminal justice staff.

When community policing expanded as a distinctive strategy in the 1990’s, its philosophy of encouraging law enforcement officers and citizens to work together to solve community problems dovetailed naturally with the growing emphasis on law enforcement’s response to crime victims. In 1998 New Directions from the Field; Victims’ Rights and Services for the 21st Century pointed out that “as law enforcement officers develop trust with residents in neighborhoods, community policing may encourage victims who traditionally do not report crimes to participate in the system and seek assistance for their financial, physical and emotional injuries.”

In 1999 the IACP, with funding from OVC, held a national summit on victims of crime. The summit included over 100 representatives from law enforcement, prosecutors’ offices, corrections agencies, victim service providers, health and mental health professionals, schools, researchers, crime victims, and victim advocacy organizations. The final summit report highlights seven critical needs of crime victims and outlines law enforcement agenda. While law enforcement agencies alone cannot satisfy all of these needs, they play a major leadership role in ensuring that victims’ needs are broadly understood and consistently met.

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2CALEA is a cooperative venture of the IACP, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), the National Sheriffs’ Association (NSA), and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF).


SEVEN CRITICAL NEEDS OF VICTIMS

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<tr>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Protection from perpetrators and assistance in avoiding re-victimization</th>
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<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Assistance to enable participation in justice system processes and repair of harm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Concise and useful information about justice system processes and victim services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Opportunity to participate in justice system processes and obtain information and services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>Consistency in approaches and methods across agencies through all stages of the justice process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Opportunities to speak out on specific case processing issues and larger policy questions</td>
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<td>Justice</td>
<td>Receiving the support necessary to heal and seeing that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions</td>
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Building upon the summit outcomes and through the OVC-funded *Improving Police-Based Victim Services* project, between 1999 and 2005 the IACP provided training and technical assistance to over 1,000 law enforcement agencies nationwide. This work was successful, and the IACP realized that thousands of other departments were interested in enhancing their response to victims of crime. To address this need, the IACP started a new initiative to create a national strategy designed to create a cultural “sea change” within America’s law enforcement community helping to move toward a philosophy and practice of enhanced victim response.

*Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims: Designing a 21st Century Strategy* project began in 2004. The IACP actively sought leadership input from the field by engaging a national multi-disciplinary Advisory Group and four national information-gathering forums comprising law enforcement leaders, victim advocates and service providers, and victims of crime. Input garnered from these efforts established the foundation for a development of the draft strategy published in 2005 and subsequently field-tested at three pilot sites representing large, medium, and small local law enforcement agencies respectively. Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC, Beaverton, OR, and Mundelein, IL police departments worked with the IACP to implement draft strategy concepts, tailor their strategic approaches, and document successes and challenges.
Based on critical lessons learned from the pilot process, the IACP finalized the draft and developed two companion documents: The Implementation Guide, which provides operational “how-to” approaches, and the Resource Toolkit, containing sample documents, materials, and templates developed by the pilot sites.

Although the original scope of this project was designed, developed, and tested primarily to impact victims of crime, the concepts can be readily applied to other victims, such as those of natural or man-made disasters.

For the purposes of the project, however, the following definition of a crime victim will apply:

A victim of crime is a person who has been injured either physically or emotionally due to the occurrence of a crime. Victims include individuals who have been direct targets of violence or property loss or damage, their family members, and people who experience emotional trauma as a result of witnessing such an incident.

Enhancing victim response is a continuous and evolving process, but even in the early stages of implementation, law enforcement agencies will recognize the benefits of this effort. By placing victims’ interests at the center of response to crime, law enforcement can improve their ability to accomplish their primary mission – to protect, serve and preserve life.
III. Benefits and Challenges of Enhancing Response to Victims

“…in its own best interests, law enforcement has a role to play in victim/witness assistance… that no other component of the criminal justice system can effectively duplicate.”

CALEA Standards on Victim/Witness Assistance

Although crime victims and members of their families and communities will clearly be the primary beneficiaries of enhanced response to their needs, law enforcement personnel and their agencies, along with other criminal justice system entities, stand to gain in many ways from implementing this strategy.

BENEFITS

“Traditionally, law enforcement views its role as detecting, finding and apprehending criminals. This strategy provides an opportunity to focus on the victims of crime, assist them in their current situation, and, hopefully, empower them. A large percentage of the people law enforcement comes into contact with are crime victims, and those individuals live and work in the communities we serve. It only makes sense to enhance services to those citizens, as they are a core constituency. Law enforcement exists to support the community, not the other way around. Those agencies that acknowledge victims as such will be recognized as leaders in their profession.”

-- Chief Raymond Rose, Mundelein Police Department

In times of reduced budgets and increased service demands, one major benefit of enhancing response to crime victims is improved investigations and subsequent follow-up. Depending on the environments and circumstances, victims who believe they have been treated with empathy and respect by law enforcement and other criminal justice professionals are more likely to cooperate with law enforcement and make efforts to minimize their potential risk of re-victimization.

Additionally, enhanced response to victims offers several opportunities to increase efficiency and effectiveness in law enforcement agencies. By treating victims issues as a high priority, agencies will create opportunities for leadership and innovation, reinforced focus on law enforcement responsibilities, increased job satisfaction, and greater cooperation and appreciation by citizens and victims.
III. OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH:

<table>
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<th>Benefits</th>
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<td>Expanded knowledge of and access to victim services and supports</td>
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<td>Greater willingness by victims to cooperate with investigation</td>
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<td>Potential for increased case clearance rates</td>
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<td>Better perception of community safety and increased confidence and trust in law enforcement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potential for improved crime reporting</td>
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<td>Improved morale and job satisfaction</td>
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Specifically, pilot agencies saw improvements in policies, procedures, training, and other mission-specific matters, which can consume precious time and resources that may be better spent investigating and solving crimes.

Immediate benefits experienced by the three pilot sites included the enhancement and expansion of partnerships with victim service providers, improvement in the level of victim cooperation, better referrals to support services, increased awareness of victim and community expectations of law enforcement personnel, and greater understanding of training needs.

EXPANDED KNOWLEDGE OF AND ACCESS TO VICTIM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Enhanced response to victims means more effective collaborations between law enforcement and victim service providers. This collaboration will increase victims’ access to support and compensation, thereby freeing officers to focus on investigating crimes. Greater knowledge and understanding of existing resources can help officers better match appropriate services and referrals with individual victim’s needs.

GREATER WILLINGNESS BY VICTIMS TO COOPERATE WITH INVESTIGATION

When victims observe law enforcement officers who can understand crisis and trauma reactions and facilitate access to appropriate support services and information, they are more likely to cooperate in ongoing investigations and follow up. A person's initial victimization may be his or her first experience with law enforcement. If this interaction is positive, and the victim's needs are met, the probability of future cooperation by the individual, or as a force multiplier within the community, increases exponentially.
POTENTIAL FOR INCREASED CASE CLEARANCE RATES
Investigators often rely on timely information gained through interviewing victims and witnesses early in the process. Victims who trust and feel comfortable with law enforcement are more likely to share relevant facts. This increased participation can, in turn, lead to increased case clearance rates and more successful prosecutions.

BETTER PERCEPTION OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND INCREASED CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN LAW ENFORCEMENT
Crime is often a product of external conditions beyond one's control, which cannot be eliminated entirely by law enforcement action. By encouraging citizen involvement in crime and fear of crime reduction strategies as well as quality of life improvements, law enforcement can help raise the perception of safety within the community. When victims and community members feel more engaged in developing solutions, their confidence in law enforcement will increase.

POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVED CRIME REPORTING
When agencies make positive changes in their responsiveness to crime victims, it is likely that, over time, an increased proportion of these victims will report the crimes. It is imperative to note that law enforcement leaders must ensure that an increase in crime rates due to victims’ greater willingness to report will be welcomed as an indicator of success rather than a sign of poor performance.

IMPROVED MORALE AND JOB SATISFACTION
With more positive and trusting relationships between law enforcement and victims and community members, the quality of investigations and closure rates are likely to increase. Consequently, improved morale and job satisfaction will follow, thereby leading to better performance and greater opportunities for personnel recognition.
CHALLENGES

One of the challenges we encountered at the beginning of this program was establishing buy-in from our officers. Although the struggle is ongoing, the officers are becoming more accepting of the changes as they see the benefits the changes provide. As with any undertaking that involves an entire law enforcement agency, there must be continuous dedication of time, resources, and the commitment from the leaders within the agency.

--Chief David G. Bishop, Beaverton Police Department

Enhancing response to victims requires changing some of the values, attitudes, and protocols that comprise the current organization of law enforcement agencies. Such alterations will, of course, create challenges that can be categorized as internal, external, and resource factors. Overcoming these challenges will require a comprehensive, long-term strategy that all stakeholders need to understand and embrace.

INTERNAL CHALLENGES

Competing priorities

Establishing buy-in

Limited training resources

Insufficient information about victim service providers

Communication with and service gaps for culturally diverse populations

Difficulties in measuring success

COMPETING PRIORITIES

The expanding obligations placed on law enforcement in a post-9/11 era challenges law enforcement leaders and members of their departments to balance homeland security concerns with basic law enforcement services; therefore, victim response may be usurped by competing priorities. Investing in enhanced victim response, however, will yield victims who feel safer and more content, and consequently more willing to report crime and work with law enforcement.
ESTABLISHING BUY-IN

Any successful change in agency administration must be accompanied by support on the executive level. Perceived lack of commitment on the part of agency leaders to enhanced victim response will substantially weaken and slow progress toward this goal.

Agency executives must be fully committed to this effort and motivate their staff by clearly communicating that victim response is a top priority within their organizations. All personnel can and should actively contribute to the development of victim response approaches tailored to their departments. This participation is vital to fostering ownership of and investment in the change process and its outcomes.

Changes in mission, vision, and value statements as well as policies, procedures, training, and personnel performance evaluations will support and reinforce a perception of leadership commitment.

LIMITED TRAINING RESOURCES

To institutionalize changes and updates into training curricula that reflect the prioritization of enhanced victim response is a long-term effort that would require planning and multi-level involvement. Mandated training and fiscal concerns often impact agencies’ capacity to provide adequate training on victim issues both in the recruit and in-service arenas. Agencies can alleviate this challenge by identifying their subject matter needs and working with local stakeholders to develop curricula enhancements and provide relevant training. These stakeholders might include state or consolidated training academies and commissions, allied law enforcement, prosecutors’ offices, victim service provider and advocacy agencies and organizations, regional dispatch services, colleges, and universities.

INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION ABOUT VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDERS

Inadequate relationships between law enforcement and victim service providers often result in limited law enforcement access to current, accurate information regarding available victims’ services and resources. By improving collaboration and communication with local victim service providers, law enforcement agencies can equip their personnel with practical tools for making more accurate referrals.

COMMUNICATION WITH AND SERVICE GAPS FOR CULTURALLY DIVERSE POPULATIONS

One of the central benchmarks of a well-commanded law enforcement agency is the establishment of good relationships with local communities, especially those comprising ethnic minorities.
Often the difficulty of law enforcement agencies in communicating with culturally diverse populations exacerbates the challenges of enhancing response to victims. When minority populations do not speak English or understand American culture, often they will not or cannot report crimes. Thus, law enforcement cannot help them if they are victimized.

Ideally, the recruitment and retention of a workforce that reflects the community served should be a top priority for law enforcement executives. In the interim, departments can hire bi-lingual officers, use professional interpreters or volunteers, equip their personnel with “pocket translators,” or host meetings with ethnic community members. These efforts can lead to increased understanding of community cultures and serve as an opportunity to acquaint members of these communities with local laws and ordinances.

**DIFFICULTIES IN MEASURING SUCCESS**

Increasing the comfort and safety of victims may very well lead to increased crime reporting, which may in turn confuse standards of success. Because reduction of the actual rate of crime has traditionally been used to measure effectiveness of law enforcement, agencies may need to reconsider and redefine performance standards. Increased reporting should not be mistaken for failure or increased crime activity.

**EXTERNAL CHALLENGES**

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<td>Lack of services for victims of non-violent crimes</td>
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Some challenges that law enforcement face in enhancing their response to victims arise from sources outside their departments and can only be resolved through the coordinated efforts with the criminal justice and community partners.
COMPETING GOALS OF VICTIMS, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE PARTNERS

At times, the priorities of prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the judiciary may be at odds with those of law enforcement, particularly when it comes to communicating with victims of crime and supporting their participation in the justice process. In the interests of their personal safety and security, victims and witnesses may desire different outcomes from those sought by the justice system.

Law enforcement should enlist the support of criminal justice agencies in enhancing their responses to victims. Ideally, law enforcement leaders and other criminal justice system professionals will coordinate strategic planning efforts together to keep victims comfortable and cooperative. A consistent and empathetic approach to victims throughout the law enforcement and justice process will have a significantly positive impact on investigations and prosecutions.

LIMITATIONS OF VICTIM SERVICES

While improved referral to victim services organizations will benefit victims and law enforcement alike, victim services organizations have limitations. Many of them are not-for-profit and struggle with inadequate budgets and volunteer-based staffing.

These agencies can be overwhelmed with the number of victim referrals and may find it difficult to ensure equal access to their services for cultural and linguistic minorities. This accessibility problem may also be present for elderly victims, persons with mental illnesses, and those with physical or developmental disabilities. Serving these populations may be difficult or even impossible for understaffed or under-funded victim services organizations.

These challenges cannot be completely overcome by law enforcement agencies, but strong collaborative efforts will ensure that law enforcement personnel possess accurate and timely information of victims’ resources. Perhaps a victim services organization specializes in helping victims with mental illness, or the organization has special in-home counseling for victims who cannot leave their homes. This information will aid agencies in matching victims’ needs with appropriate services more effectively.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SERVICE PROVIDER AND LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSPECTIVES

Even in communities with a comprehensive array of victim services, providers may be uncomfortable partnering with law enforcement agencies. When law enforcement personnel encourage and educate crime victims about ways to reduce the risk of
re-victimization, victim service providers may see this effort as “victim-blaming.” Some providers lack confidence in law enforcement’s ability to be sensitive to victims’ emotional needs and fear that victims who participate in the justice system process may be further traumatized. If victims are reluctant to report crimes, victim service providers have an obligation to explore their concerns openly and discuss with them the services available if they report. It is critical that service providers perceive that law enforcement will understand victims’ needs and will be responsive to their concerns and issues.

With concerted and continuous efforts to learn more about the other’s values, roles and responsibilities, law enforcement and victim service providers may overcome these misunderstandings and establish common language and shared priorities.

**FACTORS THAT CHALLENGE LAW ENFORCEMENT’S ABILITY TO RESPOND TO VICTIMS**

Enhancing response to some victims will be inherently challenging. Victims who have developmental disabilities or mental illnesses, vulnerable older adults, those who are substance-impaired, for example, may have additional issues that need to be addressed. Additionally, victims who have had multiple victimizations, or those whose victimization resulted from participation in criminal activity may present law enforcement with complicated circumstances. Other difficult situations arise when law enforcement personnel are the accused or potential perpetrators of the crime.

In all such instances, law enforcement needs to carefully assess the circumstances and determine why a victim may not be cooperating in the investigation or may inadvertently be endangering himself or herself or others. For example, an older person abused by a caregiver may be reluctant to report the abuse because of fear of being placed in a nursing home, or because it would mean turning in the victim’s own son or daughter. Another example is in a case of domestic violence where a victim is not willing to report her abusive spouse because of extreme fear, or for numerous other reasons that are economic or concern custody of the victim’s children. Many studies have shown that the most dangerous time for a victim of domestic violence is in the period after leaving the abuser.

Responding effectively in these challenging situations requires thorough training supported by clear policies and protocols that help guide officers’ actions. Other agencies’ resources and those of specialized victim service providers may assist in meeting these victim’s needs.
III. LACK OF SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF NON-VIOLENT CRIMES

In most communities there are few or no resources available to victims of non-violent crimes. Some of these victims face emotional and economic hurdles that limit their ability or willingness to participate in the investigation and prosecution of cases. Law enforcement personnel are often their only source of information and encouragement.

Expanding the scope of services available to victims of non-violent crimes, such as identity and economic crimes, theft, and vandalism will require communities and policymakers to advocate for additional or reallocated resources, both public and private.

MEDIA COVERAGE AND PORTRAYALS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Media coverage of crime influences public perception of law enforcement's image and effectiveness and may affect crime victims' and witnesses' willingness to cooperate. Television programs and movies dramatizing law enforcement and investigative work may foster unrealistic expectations that lead to victim frustration or even refusal to participate in the real-world justice process.

As first responders, law enforcement personnel are in an optimal position to re-establish realistic expectations for victims by providing relevant, useful, and accurate information specific to their circumstances. On a larger scale, law enforcement at all levels can coordinate with the media to provide the public with accurate and timely information about criminal activity in their communities. Agency Web sites along with other electronic and print publications can be powerful sources of valuable information about crime victimization, the continuum of services available for victims of crime and reducing the risk of re-victimization.

RESOURCE CHALLENGES

Law enforcement leaders deal with the ongoing problem of having to allocate resources among often competing priorities, and the importance of enhancing response to victims is no exception. While not all key elements of the strategy will require additional resources, executives should anticipate the need for reallocation of existing resources or acquisition of supplemental funding to enable its full implementation. Possible competition for resources between law enforcement and victim service provider agencies also presents a challenge.
IV. Seven Critical Needs of Victims Law Enforcement Must Address

**SAFETY**

People who become victims of crime are generally at higher risk of being re-victimized\(^5\). Law enforcement officers must protect victims from intimidation and educate them as to how to decrease their likelihood of re-victimization, thereby helping community members feel safer and more secure. Law enforcement should also work with residents to develop strategies to prevent them from being victimized the first time.

**SUPPORT**

Law enforcement needs to ensure that victims receive current and accurate referral information about victim service professionals whose role is to provide ongoing support and assistance.

**INFORMATION**

As first responders, law enforcement officers must provide victims with information about their rights and resources available to them as well as future points of contact within the criminal justice process. If a case moves forward, law enforcement should assist in keeping victims apprised of the status of the investigation and prosecution. In the event a case does not result in an arrest and prosecution, keeping the victim informed of the case status may serve as the only measure of available justice.

**ACCESS**

Law enforcement agencies need to ensure that information is readily available in languages that represent the community’s composition. Agencies should also attend to the special needs and circumstances of differently-abled victims, such as people with developmental or physical disability, diminished competency, or mental illness, by helping them to participate fully in the investigative process and access applicable supportive services.

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**CONTINUITY**

Law enforcement needs to collaborate with victim service providers and other criminal justice professionals to ensure that victims receive consistent information and support throughout their involvement with the justice system. This approach helps to avoid having a victim shuffled from one source of information to another.

**VOICE**

Law enforcement needs to empower victims by encouraging them to ask questions and listening to their concerns. Inviting victims and victim advocates to participate in policy-making may ensure that policies and protocols effectively guide law enforcement to meeting victims’ needs.

**JUSTICE**

Law enforcement needs to directly improve victims’ sense of safety and well being by conducting thorough investigations, follow-ups, and doing their part to hold offenders accountable. Though justice is not always fully achieved, victims who see law enforcement working in their best interests will feel safer and better served.
The following four core elements proved to be most effective in forming the foundation of the enhanced response to victims: leadership, partnering, training, and performance monitoring.

**LEADERSHIP**
Enhancing response to crime victims requires a shift in law enforcement priorities as well as practical changes. Law enforcement executives play a pivotal role in the success of this effort, so their buy-in and commitment from the earliest stages of this initiative are critical.

Changing an organization’s culture takes time. Leaders will need to commit to an ongoing process. By working to define intermediate and long-range victim response outcomes and providing continuous feedback to their staff, executives can effectively guide their organizations toward long-term success.

**EFFECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highlight the benefits of enhanced response to victims, and emphasize that every member of the force has a role to play</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate enhanced victim response strategies into the agency’s vision, mission, core values, policies, and procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiate, develop, and support departmental infrastructure that reinforces this priority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhance and/or expand available victim response training for all personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster ongoing communication and viable partnerships with victim service providers and other community partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate victim response goals into personnel performance appraisals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustain long-term departmental commitment to enhancing response to victims</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
PARTNERING

Community policing is a philosophy, management style, and organizational strategy that promotes proactive problem solving and police-community partnerships to address the causes of crime and fear as well as other community issues.

--California Attorney General’s Office Definition

Law enforcement agencies struggle to respond effectively and appropriately to victims, as many of them do not have the resources, time, or personnel to achieve an optimal victim response. By partnering and networking with victim service providers, other criminal justice and human service agencies as well as community-based organizations, departments of all sizes can maximize their capacity to better meet victims’ needs.

KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS:

- Clear understanding of each partner’s roles and responsibilities
- Common language
- Shared information and networking
- Joint training opportunities
- Agreement on indicators of partnering success
- Continuing assessment and fine-tuning of partnerships

The range of potential partners that can help law enforcement respond to victims is broad, extending beyond traditional allies to encompass faith communities, businesses and volunteer groups as well as civic and community organizations. Law enforcement agencies should work to forge partnerships with all of them. Detailed descriptions of the partners and their possible roles are outlined in Section VII, Importance of Community Partners.
TRAINING

There are a significant number of training opportunities for law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and corrections professionals for enhancing responses to victims. Federal agencies and state and national law enforcement organizations have supported extensive training programs on issues such as those facing victims of child abuse, sexual assault, elder abuse, domestic violence, and homicide. The three pilot sites have provided further insights into training needs and identified promising ways to help ensure that law enforcement receive adequate training that will prepare them to respond more effectively to crime victims.

Although the critical needs of victims remain constant, the ways in which law enforcement can effectively respond will change as technology, crime analysis, investigation techniques, and resources evolve. Thus, ongoing training that provides victim response skills, knowledge, and tools must be required at all career stages and levels. Rather than being offered as specialized or stand-alone training available only to select audiences, it should be integrated into all basic and advanced law enforcement curricula and be multi-disciplinary in nature, when necessary. While developing training materials, agencies should bear in mind that victims have different needs and circumstances.

VICTIM RESPONSE TRAINING COMPONENTS:

- Mandatory and ongoing victim response training for all personnel to include recruit, in-service, and executive level curricula
- Joint training opportunities with victim service providers on availability of their services and procedures as well as access protocols
- Assessment of training effectiveness

As the pilot agencies found, victim service providers can be valuable contributors of training resources, including training regarding availability of and access to their services. “Sit-alongs” with service providers will allow law enforcement to observe these partners at work. An additional opportunity to foster the relationship between service providers and law enforcement would be ride-alongs, which may help providers better understand law enforcement responsibilities.
PERFORMANCE MONITORING

| Collect baseline information about the current status of victim response |
| Define enhanced victim response goals based upon data collected |
| Establish links between these goals, and determine required resources, strategies and approaches, as well as expected short-term impacts and long-range outcomes |
| Analyze trends, and make mid-course corrections as needed to improve outcomes |

A recently published performance measurement guide for law enforcement leaders\(^6\) emphasizes that “it is only by clearly articulating the objectives of agencies, understanding the current environment within which they operate, establishing baseline measures on critical factors related to the overall success in meeting agency objectives, and constantly measuring the impact of agency actions taken to achieve defined objectives that we can be effective.”

Agencies aiming to enhance their victim response must develop performance measures that enable them to identify their progress toward that goal.

First, they should document baseline information about the quality of their current victim response. Subsequently, the department will be able to analyze the baseline data and develop relevant strategies and approaches that will improve their victim response outcomes.

After identifying enhanced victim response goals and objectives, departments should develop a roadmap that describes the links between victim response goals, the resources required to implement them, the strategies or activities that should be undertaken, and the desired short-term and long-range outcomes.

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By mapping these links, law enforcement leaders can clarify for themselves and their employees how particular victim response strategies should work and what the desired effect will be. As part of this mapping process, leaders should also identify progress indicators that can be monitored as the victim response initiative evolves. That way, personnel can discern whether they are making progress toward their goals or need to make mid-course corrections.

Enhancing victim response is a continuous and evolving process. Therefore, the collection of information relevant to performance measures and examination and analysis of progress trends are imperative.

Monitoring progress toward victim response goals will not necessarily require significant new investments in data collection and analysis, but it may entail looking at information already gathered for other purposes in new and innovative ways.

**SUGGESTED DATA COLLECTION POINTS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime victims’ perceptions of law enforcement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community members’ attitudes toward law enforcement response to crime victims</td>
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<tr>
<td>Citizens’ perception of their vulnerability to crime and the safety of their community</td>
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<tr>
<td>The quality of communication and collaboration with victim service providers</td>
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<tr>
<td>The number and rate of victims accessing available services</td>
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<tr>
<td>General crime victimization rates (These may initially rise as greater trust of law enforcement leads to increased willingness to report.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case clearance rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-victimization rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of crime victim reparations filed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer service satisfaction surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exit interviews</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Every individual employed by a law enforcement agency, from the executive to the newest recruit, plays a vital role in making his or her department optimally responsive to victims’ needs. In departments that already have begun to enhance their response to crime victims, personnel likely will find that they have accomplished some of the tasks listed for their roles or positions. Because responding appropriately to crime victims is an ongoing process, law enforcement personnel must continue to revisit their assigned tasks to ensure that they are sustaining, updating, and assessing the impact of their work.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT ROLES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Executives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Command Staff / Mid-level Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Line Supervisors</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Responders Including Officers, Investigators and Support Personnel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dispatchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Information Specialists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Records / Information Systems Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planners / Crime Analysts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Non-Sworn Personnel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some agencies may not have specific personnel dedicated to all of the listed roles, but the relevant responsibilities most likely compose some employee’s job description. Also, in some jurisdictions a consolidated agency operating independently of a local department may be responsible for certain functions such as dispatch, for example.

In any organizational structure, the individuals responding to crime victims have the power through their attitudes and actions to maximize their agency’s effectiveness in each of the four core areas of the strategy.
AGENCY EXECUTIVES

LEADERSHIP:
Prioritize victim response goals
Lead revision of mission, policies, and procedures
Ensure continuous feedback and improvement to refine vision and goals
Recognize those who provide outstanding service to victims
Advocate for resources necessary to enhance victim response

PARTNERING:
Establish common language with partner agencies
Structure partnerships with victim service providers and other community partners
Engage in ongoing dialogue with leaders of provider agencies
Facilitate joint training opportunities

TRAINING:
Stay informed about current trends in victim response
Identify skills and knowledge necessary to better meet victim needs
Offer and require training in victim response
Work with trainers to assess and improve impacts of training

PERFORMANCE MONITORING:
Define desired outcomes of enhanced victim response
Document and publicize positive outcomes
Invest in data collection and analysis necessary to assess progress
Institute performance appraisal system that evaluates victim response efforts
COMMAND STAFF AND MIDDLE LEVEL MANAGEMENT

LEADERSHIP:
Communicate that victim response is a high priority
Serve as a role model in enhancing responsiveness to crime victims
Participate in design of tools and protocols necessary to enhance response to victims
Help establish performance appraisal system that evaluates victim response efforts

PARTNERING:
Develop and sustain working relationships with managers of victim service agencies and other community partners
Encourage community partners' participation in on-the-job training experiences with law enforcement
Work with community residents to solve problems and improve community safety

TRAINING:
Take advantage of training opportunities
Help to identify skills and knowledge necessary for optimal victim response
Provide employees with opportunities to apply knowledge and skills, and offer them ongoing feedback on their victim response work
Encourage employees to offer suggestions to improve training

PERFORMANCE MONITORING:
Help to define desired outcomes of enhanced victim response
Contribute to the design and implementation of record-keeping systems that can document victim response achievements
Coordinate data collection and analysis efforts that evaluate victim response.
FIRST LINE SUPERVISORS

LEADERSHIP:
Encourage officers to respond appropriately and consistently to crime victims from first response through investigation and follow up
Serve as a role model in responding to victims
Lead personnel to develop tools and job aids that will improve their responses to victims
Provide opportunities and encouragement for employees to apply knowledge and skills gained from training

PARTNERING:
Ensure that subordinates have updated information about victim service providers
Invite community service providers to participate in training for personnel
Structure opportunities for service providers to ride along with officers, and for officers and non-sworn personnel to “sit-along” with providers

TRAINING:
Stay up-to-date with techniques, tools, and protocols that can assist in responding to victims
Take advantage of available training opportunities
Participate in designing and delivering on-going training in victim response to department personnel

PERFORMANCE MONITORING:
Monitor employee use of job aids and tools and obtain feedback for possible improvements
Apply insights from observing and coaching officers to improving victim response policies and procedures
Help to design performance appraisal system and adequate documentation procedures that incorporate victim response assessment and feedback
Help to collect and analyze data about response to victims and victims’ opinions
FIRST RESPONDERS INCLUDING OFFICERS, INVESTIGATORS, AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL

LEADERSHIP:
- Make assisting and responding to crime victims a top priority
- Help victims and survivors understand what to expect if their case goes forward
- Participate in revising agency mission, policies and procedures
- Assist in the design or improvement of tools and strategies to enhance victim response

PARTNERING:
- Refer crime victims to appropriate service providers
- Provide avenues for victims to stay in touch with law enforcement
- Get involved in ride-along and “sit-along” opportunities with victim service providers
- Learn about the services offered by providers and participate in joint training opportunities

TRAINING:
- Provide input to supervisors and trainers on skills and knowledge necessary for optimal response to victims
- Participate in orientation and continuing training on victim response skills and methods
- Provide feedback on the usefulness of training
- Seek constructive feedback on victim response skills from supervisors and victims

PERFORMANCE MONITORING:
- Help define departmental performance measures and employee performance appraisal criteria related to victim response goals
- Provide feedback about the usefulness of tools, methods, and techniques for victim response
- Help collect and make use of data and information about the impact of responses to victims
VI. DISPATCHERS

LEADERSHIP:
Offer suggestions to supervisors and leadership for improving officer and dispatcher response to crime victims
Coordinate dispatch and first responder policies and procedures
Be familiar with the range of victim services available
Maintain up-to-date call-back and contact information for victim service providers, and make it available to officers

PARTNERING:
Develop and maintain working relationships with victim service providers and other community organizations that assist crime victims
Share information with these providers about victim response strategies and methods
Be prepared to refer victims to appropriate services

TRAINING:
Participate in orientation and ongoing training relevant to victim response
Request feedback and assistance from supervisors to improve victim response skills

PERFORMANCE MONITORING:
Document information about victim and incident characteristics as required by policies and protocols
Participate as requested in analyzing and interpreting data related to dispatcher response to crime victims
TRAINERS

LEADERSHIP:
Work with leaders, supervisors, officers and service providers to determine the skills and knowledge necessary for optimal victim response
Recruit experienced officers and non-sworn personnel to conduct training
Collaborate with leadership to develop efficient learning methods

PARTNERING:
Invite victim service provider staff to offer training opportunities on their services
Plan and facilitate joint training for law enforcement and victim service providers
Advocate for improved victim response training at state academies, colleges and universities

TRAINING:
Use a variety of techniques to train personnel in victim response skills
Ensure that the content of classroom and on-the-job training prepares personnel for the variety of victims and situations they will encounter
Ensure that field training programs incorporate victim services components

PERFORMANCE MONITORING:
Obtain feedback from trainees on the relevance and effectiveness of the training they receive
Establish methods of assessing the impact of training on individual and departmental performance
VI.

PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALISTS

LEADERSHIP:
Work to ensure victim and survivor privacy, while also providing accurate and timely information to the media.
Facilitate creation and update of Web sites and other communicative publications for community members, service providers and the media.

PARTNERING:
Connect victims and their families with resources to help them deal with publicity on their cases.
Work with counterparts in victim service provider and other community partner agencies to develop a consistent message regarding overall response to crime victims.

TRAINING:
Stay up-to-date about resources available to victims and the status of departmental response to victims.
Assist trainers in designing and providing training for law enforcement on interacting with media and community representatives.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING:
Help to design and implement methods of assessing public opinion about agency’s response to victims.
Monitor the impacts of the media’s crime reporting and coverage of controversial policy issues that may have effects on views of law enforcement response to victims.
VI. RECORDS / INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS PERSONNEL

LEADERSHIP:

With executives, supervisors, and officers, determine information necessary to assess victim response
Help public information specialists identify confidential information not for release to public
Facilitate victims’ access to information about their cases
Advocate for resources necessary to maintain useful records for victims and overall performance monitoring

PARTNERING:

Work with victim service providers to design methods of collecting information about victims’ perceptions of the agency’s response
Assist victim service providers with analysis of information they collect that is pertinent to victim perspectives on law enforcement response

TRAINING:

Participate in training on victim response strategies
Assist agency leaders and trainers with collecting feedback regarding the larger impacts of victim response training
Stay informed about the role of records management and database design in facilitating program evaluation and performance monitoring

PERFORMANCE MONITORING:

Participate in defining performance measures for victim response
Design methods of collecting information necessary to monitor and assess progress toward goals
Collaborate with other personnel in analyzing information about victim response
PLANNERS AND CRIME ANALYSTS

LEADERSHIP:
Work with agency leaders to define victim response progress indicators and outcome measures
Determine logical inputs and outputs of progress indicators and outcome measures

PARTNERING:
Engage victim response partners in developing goals, interim indicators, and outcome measures to assess overall effectiveness
Enable partners to collect and analyze relevant data

TRAINING:
Offer training on planning and evaluation topics to law enforcement leaders and their counterparts in partner agencies
Work with trainers to develop methods of assessing training impacts

PERFORMANCE MONITORING:
Collaborate with information systems staff to establish victim response data collection systems
Work with leadership to continuously update agency performance monitoring systems
Maintain records documenting victim response initiative progress

Other non-sworn personnel, such as the staff of victim units, management analysts, and volunteers also have an important role in implementing enhanced victim response.
Meeting the full spectrum of victims’ needs requires the collaboration and commitment of many stakeholders, including crime victims themselves, victim service providers and advocacy organizations, criminal and juvenile justice agencies, human service and health care practitioners, school systems, elected officials, businesses, faith communities, the media, and community residents. All of these stakeholders benefit from enhanced response to crime victims, but they can also contribute their expertise to the process.

For all community partners, communication is vital. Law enforcement agencies cannot utilize or benefit from services or organizations about which they do not know. Positive collaboration and an understanding of and value for each partner’s role are critical for an effective relationship. Each potential partner below has the opportunity to provide law enforcement with up-to-date services and contacts. These community partners can also provide feedback about the successes of the enhancement of response to victims.

**Crime Victims**

**WHO THEY ARE:**

Crime victims include individuals who are the direct targets of violence or property loss resulting from criminal activity, their family members, witnesses, and other community residents who feel less safe as a result of a crime.

**HOW THEY CAN HELP:**

- Communicate clearly with law enforcement, and provide information in a timely manner.
- Utilize available victim services as needed.
- Stay informed about the progress of their cases.
- Become aware of ways to reduce risk of re-victimization.
**Victim Service Providers**

**WHO THEY ARE:**

Victim service providers offer direct financial, psychological and emotional services and support to victims where appropriate and available. These organizations can help crime victims and survivors from first response through the investigation and prosecution of cases. Law enforcement agencies may work with victim service providers to receive regular updates regarding the scope of their services and the ways victims can access them. Victim service professionals can identify underserved crime victim groups, specify services that crime victims may need, and provide training to law enforcement.

**HOW THEY CAN HELP:**

- Support crime victims.
- Provide law enforcement with up-to-date information about their contacts, services, accessibility, and eligibility.
- Encourage victims to report crimes, but provide assistance to victims whether they report the crime or not.
- Collaborate with law enforcement partners to offer training in victim services.
- Participate in ride-alongs, and provide “sit-along” opportunities to law enforcement in exchange.
- Maintain knowledge base of the victim services continuum, and identify underserved crime victims groups.
Advocacy Organizations Representing Victim Interests

WHO THEY ARE:

Victim advocacy organizations at the national, state, and local level champion legislative and policy initiatives that reinforce victims’ rights. Some of them, such as organizations for victims of domestic violence or sexual assault, also provide direct services to victims. Advocacy organizations help to ensure that adequate resources from public and private venues exist to meet victims’ needs. Victim advocates can encourage victims, victim service providers, and other community residents to join with law enforcement to make their neighborhoods safer.

HOW THEY CAN HELP:

- Collaborate with law enforcement on legislative, policy, and funding initiatives.
- Keep policymakers informed about developments in victim services arena.
- Educate political leaders and legislators.
- Provide legal and other services to victims.

Criminal Justice Agencies

WHO THEY ARE:

Criminal justice agencies provide important information to crime victims as their cases progress through the system and the legal and custody status of accused or convicted perpetrators changes. These agencies are responsible for prosecuting, sentencing and supervising offenders. In some jurisdictions courts, prosecutors’ offices, and/or community corrections agencies operate victim assistance units.
HOW THEY CAN HELP:

- Provide law enforcement with timely and accurate status of cases and up-to-date information about available victim assistance services.
- Provide information and services to victims.
- Monitor the effectiveness of criminal and juvenile justice systems' services and support for victims.
- Work with law enforcement to develop seamless and consistent approaches to meeting victims' needs.

**Human Service and Health Care Agencies**

**WHO THEY ARE:**

Emergency medical personnel and other health care professionals, such as behavioral/mental health specialists, substance abuse counselors, child welfare case workers, and adult protective services, play a vital role in ensuring that victims of crime receive appropriate and timely support. Some crime victims may already be clients of these professionals, while others may require the assistance of one or more agencies as a result of their victimization. Law enforcement personnel may consider involving these agencies in their efforts to develop interagency response protocols that ensure a coordinated and sustained response.

**HOW THEY CAN HELP:**

- Provide direct health care services to victims.
- Participate in training on crime victims' rights and needs.
- Assess the effectiveness of services human service and health care agencies provide to crime victims.
School Systems, Colleges and Universities

WHO THEY ARE:

School systems, colleges, and universities develop relationships of mutual trust and respect with children, young adults, their parents, staff, and other community residents. When necessary, they may be able to intervene in high-risk situations before they escalate.

School Resource Officers (SROs), campus student conduct offices, strict enforcement of state and local laws and campus policies, especially in the area of alcohol consumption, after-school and youth programs, and daytime curfews can prove to be effective in preventing crime.

HOW THEY CAN HELP:

- Work with local, state, and federal law enforcement to develop initiatives to prevent crime in the schools, campuses, and host communities.
- Maintain clear lines of communication between law enforcement, schools, SRO’s and their supervisors, school boards, campus judicial systems, campus and local victims support services.
- Ensure a continuum of care for school and campus victims of crime.
- Under the Clery Act, report crimes which occur on college and university campuses, make timely notification of crimes, keep an up-to-date crime log available to the public, publish and disseminate yearly crime statistics and safety programs to all campus community members.
- Facilitate collaborations with host community government officials, landlords, and civic groups to improve quality of life in areas adjacent to campus communities.

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act is the landmark federal law, originally known as the Campus Security Act, that requires colleges and universities across the United States to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses.
Elected Officials

WHO THEY ARE:

Mayors, city and county commissioners or councilors, and state legislators craft laws and make budget decisions that affect the capacity of law enforcement to make effective victim response policies.

Law enforcement leadership can do its part to keep elected officials informed of their goals and successes through regular briefing meetings, concise written reports, and invitations to participate in ongoing trainings and community events.

HOW THEY CAN HELP:

- Work with law enforcement executives to determine the impact of policy and budget decisions on victim response.
- Keep abreast of law enforcement’s proven and promising practices in victim response.
- Assist departments in obtaining adequate resources to respond effectively to crime victims.

Businesses

WHO THEY ARE:

When businesses or their employees become criminally victimized, their executives and/or owners have the same responsibilities for working with law enforcement as individual crime victims. These responsibilities include providing clear and complete information to officers and investigators and cooperating in efforts to reduce the risk of future victimization.

If they employ security services, internet fraud prevention units or medically trained personnel, businesses may be their own first responders. Closely collaborating with on-site and corporate security, human resources departments and business owners/managers may have similar benefits in victim response as connecting with other victim service providers.
Community involvement is important to most businesses. Often they contribute to various programs and recruit key individuals to be part of the overall law enforcement support network. By engaging businesses in the planning and execution of victim-related initiatives, law enforcement can gain additional resources, such as project management, communication, Web development and other assistance.

**HOW THEY CAN HELP:**

- Offer programs to employees that communicate policies on victimization in the workplace, safety and emergency procedures.

- Provide assistance to employees who become victims of crime including counseling, benefit packages, leave and disability policies.

- May have specialized units to deal with crimes related to the nature of their business, such as robbery management, shoplifting, or internet fraud.

- May employ personnel responsible for crime prevention and investigation, such as private security firms and off-duty officers.

- Inform law enforcement about services available to victimized employees.

- Follow crime prevention recommendations to prevent victimization and re-victimization.
Faith Communities

WHO THEY ARE:

Faith communities can be a powerful force and valuable resource for crime victims who need comfort and material assistance. In many communities, congregational leaders volunteer to work as chaplains, providing support to law enforcement personnel as well as crime victims and others affected by criminal activity in neighborhoods. Many victims turn first to their faith communities.

HOW THEY CAN HELP:

- Inform departments about services and supports available for crime victims.
- Mobilize communities to help support victims and their families and collaborate in crime prevention activities.
- Help support victims’ well-being and encourage their cooperation with law enforcement and courts.
- Serve as community organizers and trust builders.
- Help to “market” new successes by law enforcement.

Media

WHO THEY ARE:

Departments should reach out to media representatives with news of their progress toward victim response goals. Agencies that foster positive relationships with media professionals are likely to benefit from balanced coverage of the challenges and successes of their local law enforcement. This will result in a community that feels more positively about its local law enforcement and is consequently more cooperative.
HOW THEY CAN HELP:

- Provide coverage of challenges and successes of local law enforcement agencies.
- Inform public about opportunities to make their communities safer.
- Show sensitivity to victims of crime and their families.

Community Residents

WHO THEY ARE:

Experience with community policing demonstrates that citizens have a profound impact on the safety of their own communities. Citizens as well as leaders and members of civic associations and service organizations may work with law enforcement and victim service providers to maintain a network of support for crime victims.

HOW THEY CAN HELP:

- Advocate for adequate resources to meet victims’ needs.
- Participate with law enforcement in problem-solving and crime prevention efforts designated to make communities and individuals safer.
- Volunteer their time and efforts in support of community-related initiatives launched by law enforcement agencies.
Responding effectively and appropriately to all types of crime victims is not only the right thing to do for victims, their families and communities, but it is also in law enforcement’s best interests. When crime victims perceive that they have been treated with compassion, fairness and respect, they are more likely to cooperate in the investigation of the crime making law enforcement’s job easier at first response and as cases progress through the justice system.

By enacting this strategy, law enforcement agencies and their leaders will have not only provided victims with the best possible treatment, but they will have improved the likelihood that their organizations will become better equipped to apprehend and prosecute perpetrators.

Law enforcement agencies will not need to implement victim response enhancements in a vacuum. Various community partners can provide crucial support by supplementing law enforcement resources.

The IACP has prepared this introductory document as well as two accompanying documents: the Implementation Guide and the Resource Toolkit, which detail lessons learned and methods developed through the efforts of pilot testing sites. These documents will provide all of the necessary tools for law enforcement agencies to develop customizable approaches to this strategy for their organizations.

After testing it at three sites and validating it at eight others, it is clear that enhanced victim response is the next logical step in community policing, and, more important, it works. Now is the time to begin work, set goals, and go forward with the implementation of this strategy.