

Victim Services Unit

Violent crime has the potential to change the course of a person's life. Crime impacts victims, witnesses, families, and entire communities. The Victim Services Unit (VSU) of the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) was established in order to ensure the fair, compassionate, and sensitive treatment of victims and witnesses of crime. The VSU supports crime victims and witnesses by helping them to navigate the criminal justice system and by responding to their emotional, physical, and financial needs. The LMPD guarantees that victims and witnesses of crime are treated with respect and dignity and afforded rights and services designed to address the specifics of their victimization. These services are available to help victims cope with the trauma and the aftermath of victimization and to lessen the inconveniences often associated with participation in the criminal justice process. Please contact **Victim Services Advocate Nicole Carroll at 574-1264** for assistance.

For what crimes are victims eligible to receive services?

- Abuse of the elderly
- Assault
- Child physical and sexual abuse
- Domestic violence
- Homicide
- Human trafficking
- Sexual assault
- Stalking

What services are provided?

- Initial in-person or telephone contact explaining victim services
- Crisis intervention and support
- Information on victims' rights and services
- Safety planning
- Explanation of the protective order process and the criminal justice/court process
- Court accompaniment
- Referrals – emergency services, counseling, etc.
- Investigative updates
- Transportation assistance
- Emergency shelter
- Assistance with the victim impact statement
- VINELink/Advance notification of release
- Assistance with filing victim compensation claims
- Interpreter/translation services
- Intervention with employers, academic institutions, creditors, service providers and landlords

VINELink – Victim Information and Notification Everyday

Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) is a toll-free, 24-hour, anonymous, computer-based telephone and email service that provides victims of crime two (2) important features - information and

notification. The VINE service provides information by phone, email, TTY, and text message where available. A victim may register for notifications in two (2) ways:

- The VINE website, <https://vinelink.com>
- Toll-free telephone number for the state of Kentucky, 800-511-1670

VINE notifies victims when an inmate (local or state) is released, transferred, or escapes. It also allows a victim to learn of an inmate's parole status, if the inmate is parole eligible. VINE can also be used as a means of tracking a Domestic Violence Order (DVO) or an Interpersonal Protective Order (IPO). It is the responsibility of the Victim Services Specialists to register a victim once an arrest has been made.

Victim Rights

Crime victims and witnesses have certain rights under Kentucky's Crime Victim Bill of Rights (KRS 421.500 - 575). These rights include:

- Victim/witness protection
- Financial assistance
- Notification
- Victim input
- Courtroom assistance

This information is intended to ensure that victims and witnesses of crime are informed of their rights and treated with dignity, fairness, and respect. These rights keep victims and witnesses informed of:

- Emergency, protective, social, and medical services
- Crime victim compensation
- Community treatment programs
- The criminal justice process.

These rights also ensure that victims and witnesses are present and heard at critical stages of the criminal justice process.

Important Numbers

- Adult Protective Services (APS) 595-4550
- Child Protective Services (CPS) 595-4550
- Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney 595-2300
- County Attorney Office 574-6336
- Department of Social Services 595-4803
- Domestic Violence Intake Center 595-0853
- Family Court Division 595-3025
- Homicide Support Group 574-8853
- Jefferson County Sheriff's Office 574-5471
- The Center for Women & Families 581-7200
- Victim Services Unit 574-1264

- Emergency 9-1-1
- Non-Emergency 574-7111
- 1st Division 574-7167
- 2nd Division 574-2478
- 3rd Division 574-2135
- 4th Division 574-7010
- 5th Division 574-7636
- 6th Division 574-2187
- 7th Division 574-2133
- 8th Division 574-2258

Homicides

In 2014, the LMPD formed a Homicide Support Group. It was created to enhance a network of support for survivors of homicide victims.

The LMPD, led by Chief Steve Conrad and Lt. Emily McKinley of the Homicide Unit, is partnering with homicide survivors, Hosparus Grief Counseling Center, Kentucky Community Crisis Response Board, Office for Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods, Jefferson County Coroner's Office, and other agencies to provide a safe and understanding environment where experiences can be shared and support can be provided.

Survivors help each other feel less isolated by connecting with others who've suffered a similar tragedy. They help each other gain an understanding of loss and grief. They help promote a better understanding of the criminal justice system that will lessen the burden on survivors of homicide victims.

The LMPD Homicide Support Group was designed to establish a better rapport within the community and bridge gaps in communication between survivors' families and the judicial process in general. Intimate group settings will be planned and implemented throughout Metro Louisville in impacted neighborhoods. This is an effort to ease travel hardships on affected families. Meetings are held monthly with survivors' families. Below are some resources readily available for homicide victims' families:

- Hosparus Grief Counseling Center
- Kentucky Community Crisis Response Board
- Jefferson County Coroner's Office (Voice of the Survivors)
- Office for Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods

If you would like more information on the Homicide Support Group, please contact **Detective Amber Koenig at (502) 574-8853**.

As always, if you or someone you know has information on a homicide, please contact the LMPD at 502-574-LMPD (5673). **All calls remain anonymous.**

Domestic Violence Services

- **24 Hour Crisis Line (1-844-BESAFE1 (237-2331))** - This number is staffed with certified Domestic Violence Counselors, trained to offer crisis counseling, support, referrals, and other information about domestic violence.
- **Emergency Shelter** - Shelter offers a safe place for women and their children to escape from the threat of violence and begin their healing process.
- **Transitional Housing** - A second step in the shelter program, these facilities are available for people who are leaving the shelter, but who are not yet able to relocate independently.
- **Hospital Advocacy** - Available 24 hours a day, advocates meet victims of domestic violence in the emergency rooms of area hospitals to immediately begin offering the support and services of the Center for Women and Families.
- **Legal Advocacy** - Advocates are available to explain the legal process and offer emotional support by being present with the client in court.
- **Safety Planning** - Provides support regarding decision making.
- **Counseling** - Available to resident and non-resident victims of domestic violence, this support helps the victim regain self-esteem and make decisions about their life.
- **Case Management** - Provides a linkage to legal options, financial aid, employment, and permanent housing.
- **Children's Services** - The goal is to teach children that violence is not okay and that it is not their fault, to help improve their self-image and communication skills and to teach them ways to be safe.

Patrol Response

All officers will be responsible for providing information concerning victims' rights, the role of victims/witnesses in the criminal justice system, available support services, and other resources, as required by law, during the course of conducting domestic/dating violence and abuse investigations. These resources include:

- Counseling
- Immediate medical attention
- Compensation programs or emergency financial assistance
- Victim advocacy services

Officers will encourage victims to contact the Domestic Violence Squad should any additional information become known and provide the victim with the telephone number for MetroSafe.