



Pennsylvania
**Commission on Crime
and Delinquency**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 7, 2024

Media contact: Ali Gantz, algantz@pa.gov

Commission on Crime and Delinquency Joins Victim Service Agencies in York to Highlight Support for Survivors of Domestic Violence and 2024-25 Shapiro-Davis Budget Investment for Victims Compensation

The Shapiro-Davis 2024-25 budget invests \$5 million in PCCD's Victims Compensation Assistance Program to help victims in the aftermath of a crime

York, PA — In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the **Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)** visited the [York County Victim/Witness Unit](#) today to highlight the support and services offered to survivors of domestic violence and the importance of the \$5 million investment in the Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP) in the Shapiro-Davis 2024-25 state budget.

"During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, it is essential to recognize the critical support available through PCCD's Office of Victims' Services and Pennsylvania's Victims Compensation Assistance Program," said **Kathy Buckley, Director of Victims' Services for PCCD**. "VCAP not only provides financial assistance to crime survivors during a difficult time of their lives, but also empowers them to reclaim their independence after experiencing trauma. This financial support also plays a key role in ensuring safety and recovery for domestic violence survivors. By raising awareness, we can help ensure that every survivor knows they are not alone and that resources are available to support their healing journey."

VCAP serves as a critical financial lifeline for people who have experienced crime victimization by covering costs for medical bills and counseling, loss of earnings, loss of support, stolen cash, relocation, funeral, crime scene cleanup, and more. Over the past five years, PCCD has paid more than 76,000 VCAP claims totaling \$65 million in eligible expenses for Commonwealth residents. In York County alone during that time period, VCAP has paid 2,822 claims totaling more than \$2 million to support individuals in York County who have experienced crime victimization.

York Victim/Witness Unit

York Victim/Witness Unit, within the York County District Attorney's Office, is a local victim service program for residents of York County and was created to help Crime Victims in

understanding the criminal justice system and to ensure their voice is heard in the criminal court process. The Unit works with crime victims for all types of crimes including but not limited to thefts, property crimes, physical assaults, sexual assaults, child abuse, DUIs, homicides, domestic violence, human trafficking, and financial crimes.

Since inception, the program has supported thousands of victims through every stage of the court process including post-conviction appeals. In 2023, alone they assisted almost 5,000 crime victims through court accompaniment, assisting with impact statements, restitution, filing of Victim Compensation Claims, notification of court proceedings, emotional support and information and referral for services.

“At the York Victim/Witness Unit strongly we strongly believe every crime victim has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to have their voices heard,” said **Faith Uhler-Myers Deputy Administrator of the York Victim/Witness Unit.**

Hanover YWCA Safe Home Program

The [Safe Home Program](#), developed by the YWCA Hanover in 1981, upholds the strong belief that individuals have a right to control their lives and make decisions without fear of assault or degradation. Safe Home offers a range of services, including crisis response, medical accompaniment, case management, and legal advocacy, including assistance with filing protection orders. They also provide trainings and education, including curriculum for school-aged children. Additionally, Safe Home offers emergency safe housing, referrals to local shelters, and a 24-hour hotline for support.

Over the last four decades Safe Home has served thousands of survivors, including responding to more than 1,400 hotline calls and assisting over 1,800 individuals in 2023 alone.

“YWCA Hanover Safe Home proudly serves individuals being impacted by domestic violence in York and Adams Counties. With over 40 years of service provision, we know from experience that VCAP is an incredibly important piece of restoration for survivors in the aftermath of their victimization,” said **Sarah Harvey, Director of the YWCA Hanover Safe Home Program.** “We are thankful for this investment in healing for survivors by the Shapiro-Davis administration, and their support of survivors across the commonwealth.”

York YWCA Victim Services

[YWCA York](#) provides free and confidential comprehensive services to those impacted by violence in York County. YWCA York has expertise in working with victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other violent crimes. The program provides counseling, emergency shelter, anti-human trafficking resources, legal services, medical advocacy, transitional housing, safety planning, and more.

Through the duration of the 2023-24 fiscal year, more than 1,000 York County residents received services from the York YWCA— averaging three new victims daily— with more than 850 of these new clients receiving domestic violence-specific services.

“Our counselors, and advocates work tirelessly to offer confidential services to our clients, striving to be present and available to all that are in need. While we sit with our clients in private, we must also have a public face and be known in the community so those in need can find us at a moment’s notice,” said **Paula Copeland, Chief Services Officer for the York YWCA**. “It is important that we raise awareness, train advocates, and actively work with those seeking our services to ensure that all victims have an opportunity to thrive.”

If you or someone you know was affected by a crime, visit the [PA Crime Victims website](#) for information and resources.

Photos/video from today’s press conference can be found on [PAcast.com](#).

###