

Maryland State Board of Victim Services Meeting
Staffed by the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy
Wednesday, April 23, 2025
100 Community Place, Crownsville, MD 21032
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Participating Members:

Heather Amador for Executive Director Dorothy Lennig, Esq, Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy
Anne Bean, Cecil County Department of Community Services
Gina Cirincion, Esq., State's Attorney for Washington County
Laura Clary, Greater Baltimore Medical Center
Dawn Collins, Survivor Advocate
Anne Colt Leitess, Esq., State's Attorney for Anne Arundel County
Jessica Dickerson for Secretary Vincent Schiraldi, Department of Juvenile Services
Lou Gieszl, Administrative Office of the Courts
Jonah Hornum, Survivor
Laurie Kimbles for Sheriff Gary Hofmann, Queen Anne's County Sheriff's Office, Maryland Sheriff's Association
Mildred Muhammad, Survivor and Certified Domestic Violence Advocate
Tara Newcomer for Secretary Rafael Lopez, Department of Human Services
Jill Ritter, Washington County State's Attorney's Office
Alonzo Robertson, Esq., Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center
Shardal Rose, Baltimore Police Department
Lisa Spicknall, Donate Life Maryland
Patricia Stevens for Secretary Carolyn Scruggs, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Peaches Wilson, Montgomery County Trauma Services

Guests:

Stephanie Erdice, Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy Staff:

Rebecca Allyn, Marianne Camino, Caitlin Kearney, Tracy Majors, Terri Ricks, Erika Wilson Wells

I. Introductions and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. Ms. Allyn conducted a roll call and guests introduced themselves.

II. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Spicknall made a motion to approve the January 2025 meeting minutes, which were seconded by Ms. Dickerson. All members were in favor and the minutes were approved.

III. Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy Updates

Ms. Allyn shared the Office is currently accepting applications for several grant programs including:

- Survivors of Homicide Program (SOHG) - Due 5/21
- Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Program (SARC) - Due 5/19
 - Only comprehensive rape crisis centers are eligible to apply
- Domestic Violence Program (DOMV) - Due 5/2
 - Only comprehensive domestic violence programs are eligible to apply
- Regional Navigator Program - Due 5/2
 - Only current navigators are eligible to apply
- Maryland Victims of Crime (MVOC) - Due 4/28
- Legal Services for Crime Victims (LSCV) - Due 4/28
- Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (VIPP) - Due 4/25

The open grant opportunities can be found [here](#). The Office is actively reviewing Victims of Crime (VOCA) applications and anticipate providing award notices in June.

Ms. Allyn also shared FY26 Legislative Funding Actions which included \$60,000,000 combined State and Federal funding for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and \$1,000,000 for the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault to distribute to rape crisis centers.

IV. MSBVS Initiatives

- *2025 Crime Victims' Rights Week Events*

Ms. Allyn thanked members who attended the 2025 Annual Memorial Services for Crime Victims and Their Families, hosted by Charles, Frederick, Howard, and Talbot County State's Attorney's Offices on April 6. Next year the hosts will be Anne Arundel, Prince George's, Washington, and Queen Anne's County State's Attorney's Offices.

Ms. Allyn also thanked members who attended the 2025 Maryland Crime Victims' Rights Conference held on April 9. Approximately 450 attendees attended. 90% of the conference evaluations indicated the conference was good or excellent and 89% said the content of the conference was extremely or very relevant.

- What attendees valued most about the conference
 - Powerful keynote/survivor speakers
 - Practical topics (legislative updates, compensation)
 - Networking opportunities
 - Venue (central location/easy parking)
- Pain points
 - Venue logistics—crowded rooms, seating shortages, temperature control
 - A few breakout sessions that didn't meet expectations
- Key takeaways
 - New tools and resources (e.g., trafficking dashboard, compensation changes)
 - Red-flag recognition and trauma-informed practices

- Importance of collaboration
- Suggested Topics for Next Conference
 - Interagency Collaboration: SAO ↔ advocates ↔ DPSCS
 - Case Studies and “How-To” Sessions: DV/strangulation, human trafficking, trial prep; trauma-informed courts
 - Special Populations: Elder abuse; DV in military & law enforcement; LGBTQ+ victims; undocumented victims; victims of financial crimes
 - Children and Youth: Schools, juvenile court, child abuse, CACs, teen dating violence
 - Mental-Health Focus: Victims’ trauma, self-care, burnout prevention
 - Legislation/Policy Updates: Deeper implementation on new laws
 - Prevention and Bystander Intervention: Engaging men; community prevention
 - Restorative Justice and Reentry: Victim perspectives on defendant treatment and reentry
 - Victims’ Rights: Restitution, victim notification

Members shared that the conference is a great opportunity for communication between programs and advocates. Members also discussed that while the keynote speakers were impactful, it was eye-opening that presentations on the signs of domestic violence from parents and community members are still relevant and needed. Members discussed the need for public service announcements regarding domestic violence. Ms. Muhammad shared that the Board could look into utilizing [White Ribbon](#) at the conference since there were many suggested topics around engaging men and men as bystanders.

- *Maryland Victims of Crime (MVOC) & Legal Services for Crime Victims (LSCV) Grant Programs*

Ms. Ricks provided members with an overview of the MVOC and LSCV grant programs and solicited members to assist with reviewing grant applications. Ms. Ricks shared that applications are due on April 28.

- MVOC: \$500,000 available; max award amount \$40,000
- LSCV: \$40,000 available; one award

- *Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE)*

Ms. Allyn shared that Equifax and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services believe they are violating state statutes by sharing offender release date through VINE as it is privileged information to the victim but not the public. The Office will continue to work with the Department on addressing this issue and report to the Board.

- *Crime Victim Notification Request (CVNR) Form*

Ms. Allyn provided members with an overview of the CVNR form meetings that have been held with stakeholders and discussed the issues that have been identified, including Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) access level (viewing issues among other state agencies) and the form not getting to the correct staff within state agencies. The Board will hold another statewide meeting in May/June to update the form instructions.

- *Restitution Workgroup*
Ms. Allyn shared that the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services plans to implement an electronic payment system for restitution in May 2025. The next workgroup meeting is on Tuesday, April 29 at 10:00 a.m.
- *Victim Response to Mass Violence Subcommittee*
Ms. Allyn shared that the Active Assailant Interdisciplinary Workgroup (AAIWG) Pilot Training was postponed and she will send out the information again once a new date is scheduled. Members discussed providing a statewide training on crisis response training for victim services professionals and were in support of this.
- *Victim's Guide And Service Provider Directory*
Ms. Allyn shared the draft Maryland Victim Service Provider Directory and draft Victim's Guide to the Maryland Criminal Justice System. Members were asked to review and provide feedback for both draft documents. After Board members provide feedback, the draft documents will also be shared with external stakeholders for feedback.

V. Legislation

Members discussed legislation that passed during the 2025 Legislative Session, including the Maryland Second Look Act ([House Bill 853](#)) which allows an individual to file a motion to reduce the duration of a sentence if the individual was convicted between the ages of 18 and 25. There are limitations, including the individual can not have been sentenced to life, can not be a sex offender, must serve at least 20 years of the term of confinement, and was not convicted of murder involving a victim who was a first responder who was killed in the line of duty. Members were vocal about the impact this will have on victims. Members discussed that they anticipate a bill addressing reduction of a sentence for individuals sentenced to life without parole will be introduced during the next legislative session.

Ms. Erdice shared the [Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault \(MCASA\) 2025 Legislative Final Report](#) with members. She also shared that House Bill 151 passed which will address healthcare education for grades K-12.

VI. Old/New Business

Ms. Collins shared that the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law has a resource guide for hate crimes. The guide can be found [here](#).

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:33 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, July 23, 2025
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

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