	Newington Police Department General Order	Number 55.1
Victim / Witness Assistance		
Chapter 55 – Victim / Witness Assistance		
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1. Victim / Witness Rights

- A. The victim/witness of a crime has rights and expectations which all personnel of the Newington Police Department are obligated to uphold. It shall be the policy of the Newington Police Department to treat all victims/witnesses fairly, compassionately, and with dignity. The department is committed to assisting in the development, implementation, and continuation of Victim/Witness Assistance Programs and activities. Victim/witness rights include:
 - 1. The right to assistance in obtaining immediate medical care if required.
 - 2. The right to request to be notified of court proceedings including arrest, arraignment, and release of the offender.
 - 3. The right to be protected from harassment from an employer for appearing as a witness if a subpoena has been issued and received.
 - 4. The right to have property returned if it was seized by police in the investigation or prosecution of a crime committed against the victim.
 - 5. The right to make application for compensation for any bodily injuries.
 - 6. The right to request to be informed of services and agencies that may help, including the assistance of a Victim Advocate.
 - 7. Subject to the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), the victim of sexual assault or domestic violence can expect certain records to remain confidential.

2. Administration and Coordination


- A. Victim/Witness Assistance Programs are administered through the State of Connecticut, Commission on Victim Services. The Patrol Division Commander has the responsibility for coordinating the police department's role in Victim/Witness Assistance Programs.
- B. The Patrol Division Commander, with the assistance of all supervisors, shall ensure that each officer who assists a victim of any crime that results in personal injury, inform the victim of the services available. This shall be accomplished through the distribution of material designed for that purpose. All officers shall note in the case/incident report that the victim(s) has been advised of the services available.

3. Victim/Witness Assistance Goals/Objectives/Structure

- A. To prevent unnecessary duplication of effort, it shall be the policy of the Newington Police Department to defer to the State Commission on Victim Services for delivery of victim/witness services. Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) 54-203 mandates that victim services be provided by this commission.
- B. The goals and objectives of the Newington Police Department are to cooperate with the State Commission on Victim Services and related programs, and endeavor to fulfill statutory obligations to keep victims fully apprised of their rights and available services. Refer to 54-222a CGS.


4. Victim/Witness Assistance Policies and Procedures

- A. Victims of crime usually experience a sense of vulnerability immediately following the incident. To help reduce this trauma, officers should treat all victims and witnesses of

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crime with dignity, respect, and compassion. The following procedures are established to help ensure the needs of victims and witnesses are met:

1. Implementation and delivery of services:
 - a. It shall be the responsibility of the first officer(s) at a crime scene to render first aid to the victim and summon other necessary medical services.
 - b. Victims and witnesses should be advised of their rights and services available to assist them. All victims of crime who sustain personal injury shall be given a card prepared by the State Commission on Victim Services.
 - c. Officers may act as a liaison to support groups and other referral agencies if requested or deemed necessary.
 2. Confidentiality of records:
 - a. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of victims of sexual assaults and domestic violence shall not be disclosed except as provided by law pursuant to 54-86(e) and 54-86(d) CGS.
 - b. The identity of victims and witnesses of other crimes shall be withheld from public disclosure in accordance with General Order 54.1.
 3. Informing the public on victim/witness services:
 - a. The police department shall make available to the general public informational brochures on victim/witness rights from the State Commission on Victim Services.
5. Liaison with Victim/Witness Organizations
- A. All sworn members of the department shall support the victim/witness assistance efforts of the State's Attorneys Office, Adult Probation, and the Victim's Advocate. The Patrol Division Commander or his/her designate shall be the point of contact for the police department and those agencies. This should provide an ongoing channel of communication by which to offer and receive suggestions about how the police department and those agencies can more effectively work together to better serve victims/witnesses.
6. Civilian Personnel Information
- A. Information pertaining to the activities of the State Commission on Victim Services shall be made available to all civilian personnel of the police department.
7. Training
- A. All police officers and civilian dispatchers shall receive roll call training related to statutory requirements pertaining to victim/witness assistance.
8. Review
- A. The Chief of Police or his designee will complete a review of the participation, activities, and liaison in the local or state victim/witness assistance program every three years.

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By Order of: _____

Christopher Perry
Chief of Police

_____ Date