

WDPA Victim Service Provider Newsletter

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DOJ News



Justice Department Announces Total Distribution of Over \$4 Billion to Victims of Madoff Ponzi Scheme

“The Criminal Division is proud to continue providing compensation to victims through the largest remission process the Department has overseen,” said Assistant Attorney General Kenneth A. Polite, Jr. of the Justice Department’s Criminal Division. “The billions distributed worldwide is a testament to the department’s sustained efforts to ensure justice for the victims of Bernard Madoff’s massive fraud.” **More information about MVF and its compensation to victims of BLMIS is available on the MVF website at www.madoffvictimfund.com**, such as eligibility criteria, process updates, and frequently asked questions. [Read more](#)

Justice Department Expands Transnational Elder Fraud Strike Force to Protect Older Americans from Fraud

“We are intensifying our efforts nationwide to protect older adults, including by more than tripling the number of U.S. Attorneys’ offices participating in our Transnational Elder Fraud Strike Force dedicated to disrupting, dismantling and prosecuting foreign-based fraud schemes that target American seniors,” said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. “This expansion builds on the Justice Department’s existing work to hold accountable those who steal funds from older adults, including by returning those funds to the victims where possible.” **If you or someone you know is age 60 or older and has been a victim of financial fraud, help is available through the National Elder Fraud Hotline: 1-833 FRAUD-11 (1-833-372-8311). More information about the Department’s elder justice efforts can be found on the Department’s Elder Justice website, www.elderjustice.gov.** [Read more](#)

A Conversation with Roberta Roper (Office for Victims of Crime)

To commemorate the annual observance of the National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims on September 25, OVC Director Kristina Rose speaks to Roberta Roper in the latest edition of the Justice Today podcast. Roberta’s daughter, Stephanie, was murdered in 1982 and, in this podcast episode, she shares her story and the challenges she and her family faced navigating the justice system. [Listen here](#)

USAO-WDPA News



U.S. Attorney Designates Two Assistant U.S. Attorneys to Coordinate the Office’s Environmental Justice Efforts

United States Attorney Cindy Chung has named two Assistant U.S. Attorneys to oversee the office’s Environmental Justice work. Criminal Division AUSA Nicole Vasquez-Schmitt and Civil AUSA Jacqueline Brown are serving as the office’s Environmental Justice Coordinators to enhance and advance the office’s Environmental Justice efforts. Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origins, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. “These designations will serve to enhance our longstanding commitment to vigorously enforce environmental laws, with a particular emphasis on minority and lower-income communities,” said U.S. Attorney Chung. “We will continue to protect western Pennsylvania’s vast natural resources while holding those who violate federal environmental laws accountable.” The Office

has established a procedure for members of the public to report Environmental Justice concerns. **Citizens may call (412) 894-7551 or send an email to USAPAW.Environment@usdoj.gov.** [Read more](#)

Western District of Pennsylvania Takes Part in Department's Wide-Ranging Efforts to Protect Older Adults

"My office is committed to ensuring that the elderly and other vulnerable citizens avoid falling victim to financial exploitation," said U.S. Attorney Cindy K. Chung. "In addition to prosecution, prevention is an important component of our work. I encourage citizens of all ages make use of the Department's resources and educate themselves on how not to fall prey to a scammer." [Read more](#)

Jeannette Man Pleads Guilty in IRS Impersonation Fraud Scheme

In connection with the guilty plea, the court was advised that from in or around March 2016 to in or around August 2017, Ronnell Taylor, Jr. participated in an IRS impersonation fraud conspiracy. The IRS impersonation fraud scheme involved call centers located in India that would use phone numbers to make their calls appear to originate in the United States. The calls would provide recorded information to individuals in the United States and fraudulently claim that the call was from the IRS concerning the individual's failure to pay taxes. The call would provide a U.S.-based telephone number for the individual to call in order to resolve the matter. Calls to these U.S.-based telephone numbers would be automatically forwarded to call centers in India, and those who answered would tell callers that they owed money to the IRS and demand immediate payment via gift card or other means. [Read more](#)

Pittsburgh Man Indicted on Sex Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation Charges

According to the seven-count Indictment, from in and around June 2019 to in and around April 2022, Jefferson attempted to and did by force, threats of force, fraud or coercion, cause four different adult females, who are known to the grand jury, to engage in commercial sex acts. Additionally, the Indictment alleges that from in and around February 2021 to in and around May 2022, Jefferson used the internet and cell phone to promote, manage, establish, carry on, and facilitate the promotion, management, establishment, and carrying on of a business involving prostitution, in violation of state and federal law. The Indictment also alleges that on or about May 29, 2017, Jefferson produced a visual depiction of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct. Lastly, the Indictment alleges that, on or about May 18, 2022, Jefferson possessed material depicting the sexual exploitation of minors who were under the age of 12. [Read more](#)

Turtle Creek Man Sentenced to 5 Years for Using Stolen Credit Cards at Area Retail Stores

According to information presented to the court, the evidence at trial established that in the summer of 2017, the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police and the Allegheny County Police investigated a series of vehicles that had been broken into while parked at various entertainment venues, including the Boyce Wave Pool, the Pittsburgh Zoo and similar venues. The victims reported the theft of their credit cards and means of identification and the use of the credit cards, typically on the same day as the break-ins. Investigators secured video of Davis using and attempting to use some of the stolen credit cards at various retail establishments. The later investigation revealed that an individual named Terry Porterfield broke into the vehicles and then transferred the credit cards to Davis and others, who then used the credit cards to purchase primarily gift cards and electronic equipment. [Read more](#)

Freedom, PA Man Charged with Attempted Sex Trafficking of a Child and Receiving Images of a Minor Engaging Sexually Explicit Conduct

According to the Indictment, on or about May 22, 2021, Kriss did knowingly receive a visual depiction of a minor using any means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce, namely, the Internet and a

cellular telephone, the production of which visual depiction involved the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct, and that depicted a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct. Further, Kriss knowingly attempted to solicit the child to engage in a commercial sex act. Specifically, the indictment alleges Kriss was engaged in a text message conversation with the minor and asked the child to send him sexually explicit images of herself. Kriss received the images and also solicited the child to have sex with him for money. Kriss later picked up the child in a church parking lot before taking her to a motel room and sexually assaulting her. [Read more](#)

Pittsburgh Man Pleads Guilty to Child Sexual Exploitation Charges

In connection with the guilty plea, the court was advised that from Feb. 25, 2021, until July 26, 2021, McNutt used the Internet and a cellular telephone to knowingly attempt to persuade, induce, entice, and coerce an individual who had not attained the age of 18 years to engage in sexual activity. Specifically, McNutt engaged online with law enforcement acting in an undercover capacity and purporting to be a parent and child. McNutt expressed interested in meeting the child for sexual conduct and sent the purported minor's parent money to enable the parent and child to travel to Pittsburgh to meet McNutt for sexual conduct. McNutt planned to meet the purported minor and parent at a hotel in Pittsburgh that he booked. On July 26, 2021, law enforcement intercepted McNutt when he arrived at the Pittsburgh-area hotel to meet the minor. [Read more](#)

Grants



Register Now! JustGrants Team Provides Real-Time Technical Assistance

Attend a Virtual Q&A session with the JustGrants team for real-time technical assistance and support on how to use JustGrants. Browse the Virtual Q&A webpage for information about upcoming sessions and to review session resources and training materials. Recurring weekly sessions include—

- Post-Award Management: Mondays, 1:00–2:30 pm
- Entity Management: Tuesdays, 2:00–3:30 pm
- Application Mechanics: Wednesdays, 2:30 – 4:00 pm
- Award Acceptance: Thursdays, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

You do not need to attend the entire session. If you have questions about Entity Management and Post-Award Management functionality in JustGrants, drop into the applicable session listed above to receive real-time support, answers, and demonstrations. Feel free to drop in and out of the session as your questions get addressed, attend sessions more than once, or attend an entire session to learn more about JustGrants functionality. Registration is limited to 350 attendees per session. [Register](#)

Justice Department Announces \$21.72 Million to Reduce Sexual and Domestic Violence on Campus, Support Children and Youth and Engage Men and Boys as Allies

“Studies show that approximately one in five women surveyed have been victimized by sexual assault while in college,” said Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta. “We need to support college campuses with the resources to create a campus culture that is not tolerant of sexual assault or dating violence. These grants will help colleges and universities develop prevention policies, offer survivor-centered services, and train campus police to meet the needs of their students. These grants also provide critical

intervention services to children and young adults, in addition to engaging them to be leaders in combatting violence.” [Read more](#)

Justice Department Will Award \$57 Million to Support Justice System Reforms and Racial Equity

“Equal justice is not a self-executing proposition — it takes work to make it real — and it will take a collective commitment from all of us at the federal, state and local levels to bring that ideal to life,” said Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta. “These investments make good on a pledge by the Justice Department to promote public safety and realize the promise of a just society that recognizes the dignity and humanity of everyone.” [Read more](#)

Justice Department Awards \$100 Million to Reduce Community Violence

“The grants announced today, which will go directly to supporting community violence intervention efforts, are an important part of our strategy to leverage the full force of the Department – including all 94 U.S. Attorney’s offices, our law enforcement agencies, and grant-making components – to combat violent crime and keep communities safe,” said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. [Read more](#)

Upcoming Trainings and Events

OVC From the Director’s Desk (Office for Victims of Crime)

October 13, 2022, 3:00 pm – 3:05 pm

During this monthly briefing, OVC Director Kristina Rose will update the field about OVC programs and initiatives and share OVC ideas to advance the field to improve options, access, and information for all crime victims and survivors. Anyone interested in OVC’s work is welcome to attend. Registration is not required. [Learn more](#)

Fourth Virtual National Town Hall on Mass Violence Recovery and Resilience (National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center)

October 13, 2022, 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Join the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center for a timely discussion on victim-centric mass violence incident response. Participants will be able to— (1) identify the long-term impact of mass violence crimes on victims, survivors, and communities; (2) define effective resiliency strategies to support communities in long-term recovery; (3) identify the mission, goals, and scope of programs and services of a Resiliency Center; (4) identify sustainability strategies to support ongoing resiliency efforts; and (5) describe "lessons learned" from the Center's Forums of Resiliency Center Directors and Administrators, including the role of Victim/Survivor Navigators. [Register](#)



National Victim Assistance Academy: Building and Managing Volunteer Programs (Office for Victims of Crime)

October 24 – November 10, 2022

Volunteers bring a passion to victim service organizations, and their mindful management can be a key strategy in extending an organization’s mission and scope of services. This training will focus on the importance of volunteers; how to recruit, screen, onboard, and retain them; and how to determine the costs associated with managing volunteers. [Apply](#)

Leave No Victim Behind VI

October 25 – 27, 2022 (San Marcos, TX, \$575)

Leave No Victim Behind VI, the only national conference to focus on mass violence response, will be held at Texas State University on October 25–27, 2022. This year’s conference features presentations from multidisciplinary responders to mass violence incidents in New York, Texas, Michigan, California, and Pennsylvania; Resiliency Center directors; public officials; national experts on trauma-informed care, gun violence, and hate crimes; crisis response teams; and victims and survivors. [Register](#)

Buddy to Boss: Going From Supervisor to Superhero (Justice Clearinghouse)

October 25, 2022, 1:00 pm – 2:15 pm

“Congratulations, you’ve been promoted! Good luck.” Those are great words to hear, but once the excitement wears off and reality sets in, you can’t help but think, “Ok, now what do I do?” Transitioning from a first-line superhero to a first-line supervisor is where many people stumble, and some fall flat on their face. Learn tips, tactics, and the proper mindset to ensure superhero-like success in your new role.

[Register](#)

Women in Leadership – A Discussion about Opportunities, Hurdles, and Benefits (Justice Clearinghouse)

November 3, 2022, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Listen to a panel of women from a variety of professions discuss the opportunities and hurdles women face in the workplace today. This forward-thinking discussion will include stories of personal struggles and the wins that followed, recruiting and retention ideas, and how we can better help ourselves and the women in our lives to thrive so our organizations can succeed. [Register](#)

Intervening with Trauma and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (IDD) in Families (Justice Clearinghouse)

November 3, 2022, 1:00 pm – 2:15 pm

This webinar will focus on the intersection of trauma and intellectual and developmental disabilities (e.g., autism, ID, FAS, etc.). This talk will focus on three main areas. The first will be “myth-busting” of common myths surrounding this population (e.g., the myth that kids who have autism don’t actually feel the trauma). The second will examine specific interventions and practices that are used for this population and why they are effective. The last will be resources and in-the-pocket tools you can use to help this population in whatever role you have (e.g., therapists, school providers, legal advocates, etc).

[Register](#)

Trauma-responsive CVI Practice: What Does It Mean and What Does It Look Like? (Office of Justice Programs)

November 9, 2022, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Implementing Community Based Violence Intervention (CVI) Strategies is a 5-part webinar series which will deliver information on a wide range of issues important to successfully implementing CVI strategies. The webinar series will be hosted on the second Wednesday of each month from September 2022 to January 2023. Using the Bureau of Justice Assistance's CVI Checklist as a framework, the series will walk through the stages of planning and implementation of CVI strategies and take a deeper dive into several

important issues. This webinar will explore what it means for a CVI program to be trauma-responsive for both participants and staff. It will provide examples of programs that are doing this well. [Register](#)

Professional Building Collaborative Responses to Trafficked Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Multi-Day Institute (Futures without Violence)

November 15 – December 8, 2022

Futures Without Violence invites multidisciplinary teams to participate in the Building Collaborative Responses to Trafficked Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Institute. The Institute will focus on improving collaborative responses for domestic violence and sexual assault survivors who have also experienced human trafficking. [Register](#)

Child and Family Advocacy Academy (National Organization for Victim Assistance)

November 29 – December 15, 2022 (\$350)

This 18-hour online training academy is designed to provide evidence-based best practices, enhance valuable skills and share prevention models and systems-based approaches for professionals working with child and adolescent victims of crime and their families. Topics covered: Trauma-Informed Family Advocacy, Intergenerational Trauma, Serving Deaf Child Survivors, Serving Neurodivergent Children, Law Enforcement & Agency Collaboration, Reaching Underserved Communities, Community Impact & School System Response, Child and Adolescent Suicide Intervention, Communicating with Families, Vicarious Trauma & Self-Care, Family Engagement & Connection, Survivor Engagement & Voices. [Register by October 31](#)

Let us know if you are hosting a local training or awareness event that we can assist with by participating in or advertising here!

October is Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month

Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) was launched nationwide in October 1987 as a way to connect and unite individuals and organizations working on domestic violence issues while raising awareness for those issues. Over the past 30+ years, much progress has been made to support domestic violence victims and survivors, to hold abusers accountable, and to create and update legislation to further those goals. This year's there is #WeAreResilient. Get the toolkit [here](#). Don't forget to wear purple on October 20th for #PurpleThursday!

See also: [A Proclamation on National Domestic Violence Awareness And Prevention Month, 2022](#)

Local Spotlight: The 2022 DV And... Series (Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh)

October 12 – 26, 2022, [Register](#)

- **DV and... Gun Violence (October 12, 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm):** Guns pose a particular risk for those trapped in violent relationships. Learn the facts about gun violence in the home, current trends, and what common sense gun laws have been passed and proposed to keep victims of domestic violence safe.

- **DV and... Substance Use (October 18, 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm):** Both survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence often struggle with alcohol and substance use. Learn about the link between DV and

substance use, why survivors turn to substances, and how DV programs help survivors struggling with substance use find safety.

- **DV and... Youth (October 26, 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm):** Witnessing domestic violence is traumatic for children, affecting their childhood development and impacting their future relationships. Learn how WC&S works with children and teens to help them recover from their trauma, learn about healthy relationships, and break the cycle of abuse.

Local Spotlight: Hearing the Whispers and Roars (Crisis Center North)

October 14, 2022, 6:30 – 8:30 pm (Pittsburgh, PA)

Join Crisis Center north and North Hills Art Center for the opening night of Crisis Center North's 8th annual domestic violence art show, an evening of artistic expression honoring and celebrating survivors of domestic violence. Experience art by local artists, community members, and survivors to share their own experiences with domestic violence and the healing power of art. Enjoy free refreshments, live music and stories. Art on display through October 28. [Learn more](#)

Context is Key: Recognizing and Responding to Stalking (Stalking Prevention, Awareness, & Resource Center)

October 17, 2022, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Stalking is criminal, traumatic, dangerous and often misunderstood. This webinar provides an introduction to the crime of stalking, focusing on the definition, prevalence, dynamics, behaviors and intersections with other crimes (including intimate partner violence). [Register](#)

Domestic Violence Murder Suicides (Battered Women's Justice Project)

October 19, 2022, 2:00 pm

Murder-suicide incidents account for a disproportionate rate of domestic violence-related deaths nationwide, however services for survivors are limited and rare. After nearly a decade of studying the homicide-suicide connection in fatal incidents of abuse, the State of Georgia has implemented services unique to this population of often overlooked survivors. This workshop will highlight data on murder-suicide, discuss the close ties between domestic violence-related homicide and suicide for the purpose of bolstering prevention efforts, explore the unique needs of survivors, and provide an overview of supportive interventions being cultivated in Georgia and a roadmap for similar implementation in attendees' home communities. [Register](#)

Promising Practices for Serving Domestic Violence Survivors with Disabilities (National Center on Ending Abuse of People with Disabilities)

October 25, 2022, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Featuring a panel comprised of service providers addressing gaps in their own organizations, this webinar will explore the unique barriers that people with disabilities have to navigate when seeking healing and the strategies that advocates can employ to proactively remove those barriers. Specifically, the panelists will explore the civil-legal needs of survivors with disabilities, the needs of survivors who acquire a disability through domestic violence, and the unique needs of Deaf survivors. The panelists will provide practical guidance from their own experience that will help you ensure that survivors with disabilities feel respected and supported within your programs. [Register](#)

Safe Housing Capacity Center Policy and Research Briefing (National Resource Center on Domestic Violence)

October 26, 2022, 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Commemorating Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRC DV) presents its biannual Policy and Research Briefing. Topics include expanded findings from NRC DV's 2022 Housing Needs Assessment, along with findings from a 5-year study on Domestic Violence Housing First and the effectiveness of culturally specific responses to violence presented by Cris Sullivan, Ph.D.

Community partnerships will be featured, including STTARS Indigenous Safe Housing Center and FreeFrom, and the Briefing will conclude with a policy overview. [Register](#)

Intimate Partner Stalking (Stalking Prevention, Awareness, & Resource Center)

October 27, 2022, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Recognizing and responding to stalking within abusive relationships is critical and urgent. Though abusive intimate partners who stalk are also more likely to be sexually violent, physically violent, and/or commit homicide than those who do not stalk, stalking victimization is often overlooked within abusive relationships. In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month (DVAM), this webinar highlights the significant connections between stalking and intimate partner violence and provides strategies to screen for stalking, safety plan, and hold offenders accountable. [Register](#)

Let us know if you are hosting a local training or awareness event that we can assist with by participating in or advertising here!

Featured Resources

Cybersecurity Awareness Month

For resources to help your organization commemorate Cybersecurity Awareness Month, visit the [Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency website](#). Learn about this year's theme—See Yourself in Cyber—and areas of focus throughout the month. Explore their site further to learn about the STOP.THINK.CONNECT.™ Campaign, a national public awareness campaign aimed at increasing the understanding of cyber threats and empowering the American public to be safer and more secure online.

See also: [A Proclamation on Cybersecurity Awareness Month, 2022](#)

VictimConnect Resource Map

The [Victim Connect Resource Map](#) is now live! This map is a searchable tool with national and local resources commonly used by our visitors. You can view resources across the nation filtered by categories, services, location, and keywords. The Victim Connect Resource Center serves victims of any crime anywhere in the United States and its territories. Our map is constantly being added to with resources and available options for victims. If you are an eligible service provider and would like to be included on the VictimConnect Resource Map, please complete and submit this [form](#).

DocuSAFE: Documentation and Evidence Collection App

[DocuSAFE](#) is a free app that helps survivors collect, store, and share evidence of abuse, such as domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, online harassment, and dating violence. Survivors can document abuse by logging individual incidents, including any photos, screenshots, or video documentation of threatening messages, harassing social media posts, unwanted repeat calls, or online impersonation, among other abusive behaviors.

Employment Opportunities

Victim Witness Specialist (USAO – Eastern District of New York)

Serves as a Victim Assistance Specialist in the United States Attorney's Office (USAO) Victim Assistance Program of the Eastern District of New York (EDNY). Provides training to management, staff, and Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs) within the District to assure compliance with federal laws and policy concerning federal crime victims, with an emphasis on laws and policy addressing the opioid crisis. [Apply by October 19, 2022](#)

Victim Assistance Specialist (USAO – District of Maine)

At the full performance level, you will provide a variety of services related to the victim witness program. If selected, you will receive formal and/or on-the-job training as needed. [Apply by October 28, 2022](#)

Management and Program Analyst (Office on Violence against Women, Location TBD)

This position is located in the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), OVW, in Washington, D.C. The primary purpose of this position to execute duties related to policy and programmatic development, oversight, planning, implementation, and assessment of federal grants supporting research and evaluation of programs addressing gender-based violence. [Apply by November 10, 2022](#)

USAO-WDPA Points of Contact

Victim/Witness Program:

Adrienne Howe, Adrienne.Howe@usdoj.gov

Molly Williams, Molly.Williams@usdoj.gov

Criminal Case Referrals:

Civil Rights – AUSA Eric Olshan, usapaw.civilrights@usdoj.gov

Child Sexual Exploitation – AUSA Heidi Grogan, Heidi.Grogan@usdoj.gov

COVID-19 Fraud – AUSA Jeff Bengel, usapaw.covid19@usdoj.gov, 1-888-C19-WDPA

Domestic Violence – AUSA Nicole Vasquez Schmitt, Nicole.Vasquez.Schmitt@usdoj.gov

Elder Justice – AUSA Jeff Bengel, Jeffrey.Bengel@usdoj.gov

Environmental Justice – AUSA Nicole Vasquez Schmitt, USAPAW.Environment@usdoj.gov, (412) 894-7551

Human Trafficking – AUSA Rebecca Silinski, Rebecca.Silinski@usdoj.gov

Other Violent Crime – AUSA Jerry Moschetta, Jerome.Moschetta@usdoj.gov

WDPA Substance Use Disorder Recovery Resources: <https://PressPlayPA.com>

U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Pennsylvania, Victim Witness Program, 700 Grant Street, Suite 4000, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 | 412.894.7400

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