

# FY17 GENERAL VICTIM ASSISTANCE DIRECT SERVICES Addendum

Submission Instructions: Email completed addendum file to [cjapplications@nctcog.org](mailto:cjapplications@nctcog.org) no later than  
5:00 pm EST on February 26, 2016

To download addendum: [http://www.nctcog.org/cs/cj/forms/registration\\_VAP.asp](http://www.nctcog.org/cs/cj/forms/registration_VAP.asp)

**COMPLETED ADDENDUM SHOULD NOT EXCEED 8 PAGES**

**Agency Name:** Collin County / Collin County Sheriff's Office

**Application title:** Sheriff's Office Crime Victim Advocate

**Application #:** 2877102

**CJD amount requested for this project:** \$126,000

## **AGENCY HISTORY:**

### **Location of Agency Headquarters:**

4300 Community Avenue, McKinney, TX 75071

### **Mission Statement:**

We, the men and women of the Collin County Sheriff's Office, believe that our fundamental duty is to serve and protect the citizens of Collin County with fairness, compassion, and respect. We demand excellence in the quality of our law enforcement, stressing professionalism, integrity, and timeliness, so that those we serve may feel secure. We provide equal enforcement and protection of the law without prejudice or favor. We promote the setting of goals in partnership with the community, and prioritize and address problems based on the concerns of the community. Committed to continuous improvement in law enforcement, we promote and utilize the most modern techniques available

### **Experience in providing direct victim services: Explain how your agency is qualified to provide proposed services.**

The Collin County Sheriff's Office was established in 1846. We are a full service law enforcement agency, responsible for patrol, criminal investigations, detention, warrants, and civil process as well as other necessary law enforcement functions for a county comprised of 841 square miles and over 850,000 persons. The primary law enforcement jurisdiction of the Collin County Sheriff's Office covers 551 square miles and an estimated service population of 61,540 persons in the unincorporated areas of our county. In addition, our office serves as the lead child abuse investigating agency for 12 cities in Collin County, and our officers are frequently called upon to assist other, smaller agencies for a variety of law enforcement concerns. As such, the Collin County Sheriff's Office and its staff are trained to work with the victims of crime. Our officers are first on-scene and are frequently the first interactions for victims with the criminal justice system, making our role in initializing victim services critical. We have been providing direct victim advocacy services, utilizing an educated and experienced Crime Victim Advocate, since FY 2013.

### **Describe how long your agency has been providing this service and what funding is currently used to operate the project. Describe what additional funds you have applied for to support the project, and why CJD funds are necessary at this time.**

The Collin County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) began providing victim advocacy in FY 2013 after receiving a General Victim Assistance Grant in coordination with the City of Frisco. Through this grant, the two jurisdictions were able to share a Crime Victim Advocate, each receiving advocacy support 20 hours weekly. As data has been collected over the past three years from this project, CCSO has been able to demonstrate the benefits of the program as well as the need for full-time victim advocacy services. CCSO sought and was awarded one year of grant funding through CJD for FY 2016 to continue and increase the program's capacity by hiring our own full-time Crime Victim Advocate. The Victim Advocate was hired approximately two months ago. We are seeking an additional two years' of CJD funding to continue full-time advocacy services. It is the intention of the Collin County Sheriff's Office to use the data collected

from this grant-funded project to justify the need for the program to continue as part of the county budget once the grant term has ended.

\*\*\*\*\*

**1. LOCAL PRIORITIES (Up to 20 points): Select which local priority(ies) this project will address.**

- Serving victims of sexual assault (adults and/or children)**
- Protective Order assistance for victims of crime**
- Crisis Intervention services for victims of crime**
- Counseling/Therapy for victims of crime**
- Shelter services**

**Thoroughly describe how this project addresses the priority(ies) selected.**

This project addresses all the local priorities listed to some degree. Until FY 2013, the Collin County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) did not provide victim assistance services. However, after receiving a cooperative grant, the City of Frisco hired a Victim Advocate who expended 20 hours weekly providing direct services for victims of crimes, primarily family violence, investigated by CCSO. The program has been successful in assisting victims through the short- and long-term trauma associated with victimization. With new grant funding for FY 2016, CCSO is able to expand this beneficial program to include victims of other violent crimes including **child abuse, sexual assault (child and adult)**, aggravated assault, and homicide. CCSO is seeking additional funding to continue providing these services to victims of serious and violent crimes.

Merriam-Webster defines crisis as "an emotionally significant event or radical change of status in a person's life", while Random House defines it as "a stage in a sequence of events at which the trend of all future events, especially for better or for worse, is determined; a turning point." A wide range of human emotions and behaviors can accompany crisis, particularly when the crisis relates to victimization. Beyond any physical injuries resulting from the actual crime, victims may also suffer from other physical symptoms such as insomnia, headaches, muscle tension, and nausea. However, the psychological impact of victimization is often the longest lasting and most difficult to overcome. People react differently to stress and crisis situations based on their own skills or behaviors, abilities to cope, and personalities. Commonly reported emotional symptoms directly related to the victimization include (but are not limited to) grief, despair, anger, guilt, fear, numbness, and loss of control. Additionally, crime victims have an increased risk of suffering any number of mental illnesses like clinical depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The importance of **crisis intervention** for victims of crime is paramount. Crisis intervention should be an immediate response designed to help victims cope with physical, emotional, and psychological trauma in the aftermath of a crime. The goal of crisis intervention is to help victims confront the reality of what happened, begin to deal with the crisis, and allow the victim to begin regaining control that was lost as a result of victimization. When possible, victims should not wait days to see a crisis intervention specialist. The challenge for crisis intervention programs is to provide effective crisis support and assistance as soon as possible following victimization, and to make resources and services available to meet the needs of victims by providing direct assistance or referrals to other agencies as quickly as possible.

Having the Victim Advocate as part of the law enforcement agency allows the Advocate to make contact at the earliest possible point in the criminal justice system, sometimes even immediately on-scene, and **provide crisis intervention services**. The Victim Advocate develops an empathetic dialogue with the victim, provides **short-term counseling**, assesses the victim's safety and creates safety plans, normalizes the victim's emotions, and assesses basic needs such as clothing, food, and **shelter**. Immediate crisis intervention may also include caring for the medical, physical, and mental health needs of the victim by providing information to the victim about local resources or services. Once the immediate needs have been managed, during subsequent interactions, the Victim Advocate continues to provide emotional support and help with recovery toward the future by keeping victims informed about their rights, acting as a liaison between various justice system departments, assisting with Crime Victim's Compensation applications (as needed), maximizing victims' social support networks, and improving their coping skills by providing information and referrals to local social service agencies while seeking to remove all potential barriers (physical, psychological, cultural, etc.) to services.

The CCSO victim assistance program seeks to help crime victims in achieving restoration of full physical, mental, and emotional health by providing for the unique needs of each individual citizen. While the basic process remains the same, each victim is handled according to their specific circumstances. For example, family violence victims may receive immediate **crisis counseling**, transportation to a medical facility or a place of safety, and referrals or information regarding local **sheltering and counseling options**, as well as safety planning, Crime Victims' Compensation, and **protective order information and assistance**. Unfortunately, in many family violence cases, services are also needed for the children who are also likely victims of **child abuse**. In these cases, the Victim Advocate seeks to stabilize the situation for the child victim, ensure the safety and well-being of the child, and coordinate services for their medical and emotional needs. In the case of **sexual assault victims**, the Advocate may provide immediate **crisis counseling**, coordination and communication with medical/hospital personnel, and referrals or information for **sheltering**, the local rape crisis center, and other non-profit and **counseling** options available.

There is no universal solution to meeting the needs of the victims of crime. However, Collin County can improve victim services by employing a full-time Victim Advocate to assist victims of violent crimes, protect and advocate the rights of victims, and provide necessary information. According to a study conducted by the National Institute of Justice, "when Advocates can offer coordinated, early, victim-focused interventions, victims are more likely to participate in court-proceedings, access community-based advocacy programs and report decreases in distress, post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms, depression and fear." Continuing a strong advocacy program in Collin County will help ensure that victims have the strength and support they need to rebuild their lives.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT (up to 20 points): Respond to the three sections below:**

### **Describe the target population.**

Any victim / survivor of serious or violent crime reported to and/or investigated by the Collin County Sheriff's Office and their families.

### **Describe the geographical target area to be served by the project.**

The target area is the unincorporated/rural areas of Collin County served by the Collin County Sheriff's Office, which is comprised of 551 square miles and an estimated service population of 61,540. Additionally, the CCSO has an agreement with 12 cities to investigate child abuse cases; these victims will also be served by this program. In addition, victim assistance services are available upon request to assist the other law enforcement entities within Collin County.

### **Describe the problem and its negative impact on the community to be served.**

The moment a violent crime happens the victim's life is forever changed. They are no longer the exact same person they were prior to the crime. The victimization doesn't stop when the actual crime is over, with crime victims suffering a tremendous amount of physical and psychological trauma, especially for victims of serious, repeated, or long-term crimes. For victims, the trauma of the crime itself is only the beginning of what can often be a lifelong struggle. Victims of crime can find their world in chaos for years to come and feel firsthand the crime's impact on their physical, financial, and psychological wellbeing.

Unfortunately, in the chaos which envelopes a crime victim during and immediately after the event, the criminal justice system can seem quite daunting and frightening. Lacking knowledge of the criminal justice system, victims often retreat to the background and their voices go unheard during investigation, prosecution, and sentencing. While our core mission is to pursue justice for criminal acts, which includes justice for the victims and witnesses of crime, how we treat those individuals has a huge impact on their confidence in the criminal justice system and their ability to heal and recover from crime. If a victim feels they are receiving inadequate or delayed services from the criminal justice system, they are less likely to participate in the process of prosecution, creating a higher level of victim attrition and reducing the rate of offender accountability. A victim's cooperation, assistance, and safety are not only essential to the effective detection, investigation, and prosecution of crimes, but also to their ability to recover from the crime.

A law enforcement agency is a natural entry point for victims to seek advocacy and assistance after they have been victimized. Whenever a crime is committed, law enforcement is usually the first to arrive on the scene and

interact with victims. This puts our office in a unique position to assist victims immediately after the crime and encourage and facilitate victim participation in the criminal justice system. The initial response to a victim will have a long-lasting impact on that individual's view of the justice system and has also been shown to be a key factor in whether or not a victim ultimately accesses needed services and assistance, such as crisis intervention, counseling, financial compensation, information, and referrals to community programs.

Barriers, such as lack of knowledge and/or ability to access available resources, can pose significant obstacles for victims to overcome in their recovery efforts. The Sheriff's Office investigates crimes in the unincorporated, rural parts of Collin County, which are greatly underserved areas with limited resources and almost non-existent social service providers. In many instances, until a criminal case is filed (which can take days to months), a Victim Advocate attached to the investigating law enforcement office may be the only direct link to services and assistance a victim has. Through a cooperative grant that recently ended, CCSO shared a Victim Advocate with the City of Frisco and has been able to provide victim assistance services for many of our family violence victims; however, most of the victims of other case types have not been able to be served on a part-time basis.

Crime victimization can impact an individual's ability to perform across a variety of roles, including those related to parenting, intimate relationships, and occupational and social functioning. Traumatized victims may have difficulty coping and become more isolated as time passes, making it difficult for a victim to communicate with criminal justice professionals, co-workers, friends, and even family. The problems faced by victims of crime are varied and numerous, and each victim's experience may differ greatly from another who suffered the same crime. We believe, that regardless of their situation, no victim should ever feel like they are facing these challenges alone.

**3. SUPPORTING DATA (up to 5 points): Provide at least three (3) years of locally relevant and verifiable statistical data. Describe how the data supports the problem to be addressed.**

Collin County's population increased 80% since 2000, from 491,772 to 885,241 persons. Correspondingly, family violence cases in unincorporated Collin County have increased 37.8% from 2009 (n=222) to 2015 (n=306).

<b>CCSO Family Violence Cases by Year</b>							
	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Family Violence</b>	193	227	234	232	214	237	228
<b>Felony Family Violence</b>	29	46	49	43	48	87	78
<b>Total FV Cases</b>	222	273	283	275	262	324	306

Collin County Sheriff's Office Reports, 2009 – 2015.

In an effort to support victims of crime in Collin County and reduce victim attrition for family violence cases in the justice process, the Collin County Sheriff's Office, in cooperation with the City of Frisco, obtained a three year grant (beginning in FY 2013) to share a Crime Victim Advocate, each jurisdiction receiving advocacy support 20 hours weekly. In 2012, prior to the Victim Advocate starting, 17% (n=47) of family violence offenses resulted in an "exceptional" clearance. An "exceptional" case clearance is when the identity and location of the offender is known and there is enough information to support an arrest; however, the offender cannot be taken into custody because circumstances outside the control of law enforcement prohibit the agency from arresting, charging, and prosecuting the offender. In many cases, this is caused by the victim's refusal to cooperate with the prosecution after the offender has been identified. However, after the Victim Advocate was hired, the "exceptional" rate was reduced to less than 2% in 2015 (n=6), as more victims continued to work with law enforcement.

<b>CCSO Family Violence (FV) Dispositions</b>					
	<b># FV Cases</b>	<b># Arrests</b>	<b>% Arrested</b>	<b># Exceptional</b>	<b>% Exceptional</b>
<b>2012</b>	275	204	74.2%	47	17.1%
<b>2013</b>	262	190	72.5%	9	3.4%
<b>2014</b>	324	219	67.6%	12	3.7%
<b>2015</b>	306	213	69.6%	6	2.0%

Collin County Sheriff's Office Reports, 2009 – 2015.

While working part-time, the Advocate provided 867 services for 285 clients in 2013 and 1,230 services to 326 clients in 2015 – an increase of 39.7% in services performed. Unfortunately, 36 (11%) family violence victims were unable to be served by the Victim Advocate. Additionally, as the position was constrained to 20 hours, the Coordinator primarily focused on family violence cases and was unable to provide services for many victims of other cases such as child abuse, sexual assault, homicide, robbery, and stalking. For instance, while the Collin County Sheriff's Office conducted 1,821 child abuse investigations for twelve jurisdictions throughout the county in 2015, most of these victims were not provided services by the Victim Advocate shared with the City of Frisco.

<b>Uniform Crime Reporting Data</b>				
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Murder</b>	1	0	1	0
<b>Rape</b>	16	6	12	11
<b>Robbery</b>	2	3	3	4
<b>Aggravated Assaults</b>	56	58	36	54
<b>Burglary</b>	249	317	169	117
<b>Larceny/Theft</b>	323	247	212	238
<b>Vehicle Theft</b>	54	43	32	53
<b>Total Crime Index</b>	701	674	465	477

Texas Department of Public Safety, Crime Records Service, Texas Crime Reports 2012 – 2014.  
2015 data obtained from CCSO records is preliminary and not yet certified by DPS.

Even with a lower crime rate, as the part-time Victim Advocate was not able to handle any additional CCSO victims, most of the victims of the crimes listed in the UCR data table above were not provided with assistance or services. Employment of a full-time Victim Advocate could help these victims, as well as family violence victims, recover from the trauma associated with the crimes.

**4. GOAL STATEMENT (up to 5 points): In 100 words or less, describe the overall project goal.**

The goal of the program is to provide victim advocacy services that ensure the rights of crime victims, preserve privacy, reduce trauma, promote safety, facilitate recovery, and encourage participation in the criminal justice process.

**5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION (up to 20 points):**

**Using the table below, list activity(ies) to be performed with grant funds. Describe the activity's planned flow of services for individuals served by the project.**

<b>eGrants Activity</b>	<p><b>Flow of Services – Describe the planned flow of services for individuals served by each activity. Descriptors may include but are not limited to: type of client to be served, explanation of target levels for new project, function of grant-funded staff and volunteers in carrying out the project, frequency services will be provided, length of time a person remains in the program, how long a client receives a specific service, involvement of other entities, how budget items associated with this activity are necessary and will be used in carrying out services.</b></p> <p><b>Within each activity's description, explain how the activity avoids duplication or overlapping of existing resources or programs available within the project's proposed service area and target population.</b></p>
Crisis Services	<p>The CCSO Victim Assistance Program seeks to help crime victims in achieving restoration of full physical, mental, and emotional health by providing for the unique needs of each individual citizen. The Victim Advocate serves as a contact person for victims / survivors of serious or violent crime reported to and/or investigated by the Collin County Sheriff's Office and their families. Victims are primarily identified through offense reports taken by CCSO employees. In some cases, such as homicide, aggravated assault or robbery with serious bodily injury, fatal collisions, child deaths, suicides, sexual assault, and/or hostage/barricade incidents, the Advocate may be requested to the scene to provide immediate assistance.</p>

Following identification, each victim receives program information through mail, email, or in person. In addition to generic information, the Victim Advocate also provides more individualized information, advocacy, and/or referrals based on the specific situation. For example, family violence victims may receive immediate crisis counseling, transportation, referrals or information regarding local sheltering options, safety planning and Crime Victims' Compensation assistance, and protective order information. While for sexual assault victims, the Advocate may provide immediate crisis counseling, coordination and communication with hospital personnel, and referrals or information regarding the local rape crisis center and other non-profit and counseling options available.

As well as providing services such as on-scene crisis intervention and advocacy, short-term counseling, safety plan development, Crime Victims' Compensation claims assistance, and referrals to emergency and social service agencies for additional support, the Advocate also provides victims with reassurance, emotional support, guidance for resolving problems, and case status and progress information. Additionally, as research has shown that participating in the criminal justice process can aid victims in rebuilding their lives, the Victim Advocate will, on behalf of victims, act as a liaison between the victims and a variety of justice system departments and personnel; advocate for victims' needs and wishes within the system; recognize the impact crime has had on victims and support the important role victims play in criminal justice processes; work to ensure victims are treated fairly and respectfully; and seek to remove all potential barriers (physical, psychological, cultural, etc.) to services.

Each case is unique, and each victim's response may vary greatly - even from another who suffered the same crime. Therefore, victims are provided with the services they individually need and are assisted for as long as they require services. In some cases, interaction with the Victim Advocate is concluded over a short time period; while, in more serious cases, prolonged interaction and assistance may be required. For example, for extremely traumatized victims or cases that are never solved, a victim may be provided with services for years. If a case is turned over to the Collin County District Attorney's Office for prosecution, the victim will often be transferred to their Victim Assistance Program for continued services.

As the CCSO and the Victim Advocate cannot be the sole providers of necessary services, the program continues to build formal and informal community partnerships, creating and strengthening our relationships with local organizations and resources that serve crime victims' needs. We currently work with the Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County, Hope's Door (women's shelter and comprehensive intervention and prevention services for domestic violence), The Turning Point Rape Crisis Center of Collin County, Family Place, and LifePath Systems, as well as other non-profit, medical, and social service organizations. Through countywide collaborative efforts, such as the Collin County Social Services Association and the Collin County Council on Family Violence, we build strong networks, identify gaps in services, provide training, and minimize duplicative efforts. Additionally, Advocates in the District Attorney's Office, the local Rape Crisis Center, Children Advocacy Center, police departments, and social services agencies work together to help victims through their trauma.

Grant monies will be used to continue funding the full-time CCSO Victim Advocate to provide direct victim services. To maximize use of grant funding, this project will be supported with time from existing staff, along with county funding for training, travel, and supplies. Additionally, trained volunteer "Citizens on Patrol" may further assist the project by

1. providing transport assistance for crime victims to victim assistance services, shelters, medical appointments, or to law enforcement or prosecutorial services, and/or
2. assisting with community awareness campaigns and public service initiatives designed to increase awareness to victim advocacy.

The Sheriff's Office also maintains a volunteer chaplaincy program, comprised of several local area religious leaders of various denominations. These chaplains often assist victim advocates and law enforcement with incidents of deaths, intense interpersonal violence, or accidents.

CCSO desires to ensure that at least 95% of victims seeking assistance are served and anticipates providing services to over 700 victims / survivors, with approximately 200 being provided with CVC information and assistance, 80 with crisis counseling, and 100 with safety planning services.

Using the table below, describe proposed grant-funded staff (including contracted services): provide title, and indicate new or existing position. Describe the experience, education, and knowledge required of the grant-paid position.

Title	New/Existing Position (N or E)	<i>Describe experience/education/knowledge required of grant-paid position (not of the person currently in that position).</i>
Victim Advocate	E	The Advocate will provide crisis services to victims of violent crimes investigated by the Collin County Sheriff's Office. Requirements: Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, Behavioral Science, Counseling or related field, and two (2) years victim services, law enforcement, probation/parole or counseling experience, which includes training or experience with family violence; or equivalent combination of education and experience. Possession of a valid Texas Driver's License. Knowledge of counseling practices, procedures, methods and techniques related to the identification, interviewing, crisis intervention and support of victims and/or witnesses of domestic violence or criminal activities. Knowledge of Federal, State, regional and local social services agencies and non-profit organizations, including application/qualifications and types/scope of services provided. Knowledge of assessment, evaluation and analysis of individual needs. Skill in counseling and interviewing witnesses and/or victims of criminal activity.

COMPLETED ADDENDUM SHOULD NOT EXCEED **8** PAGES

**DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SECTION**

- 6. **MEASURES, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DATA MANAGEMENT (up to 10 points): DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SECTION – COG WILL INSERT INFORMATION FROM EGRANTS IN ADDENDUM**
- 7. **BUDGET (up to 15 points): DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SECTION - COG WILL INSERT EGRANTS BUDGET IN ADDENDUM**