

## Our Mission Statement

The primary goal of AHVWAP is to provide direct services to victims of crime. These services are defined as those efforts that respond to the physical and emotional needs of crime victims, assist victims of crime to stabilize their lives after victimization, assist victims to understand and participate in the criminal justice system, and to provide victims with information and referrals for many needed services. This program advocates for each victim to assure that they are treated with fairness, dignity and respect by all entities involved in the prosecution of the crime.

### Contact the Victim/Witness Program if you...

- Are a victim and have questions regarding your case;
- Have a question about your role as a witness;
- Would like an explanation of court procedures or a tour of the courtroom before you testify;
- Would like to meet with Commonwealth's Attorney prior to court;
- Have personal property that is being held as evidence;
- Want information about qualifying for VVF compensation for personal injuries or counseling;
- Are not receiving restitution payments that were ordered by the Court;
- Would like assistance in preparing a Victim Impact Statement;
- Need to notify us or the courts of a change of address or telephone number.

## Confidentiality

All information discussed and pertaining to cases being handled by this program will be kept confidential and only discussed with persons needing to know in order to properly prosecute the case or to whom justice or public interest requires disclosure. We understand that information discussed is often personal and private and is not to be disseminated to uninvolved persons or agencies without victim permission.

## Directory of Services

A directory of services is available upon request. This directory includes local and state services which may be available depending on individual needs. If a crime victim has other needs for services not identified in this brochure, please discuss them with the program staff so proper assistance may be provided.

## Important Numbers In Case of Emergency Dial 911

Alleghany Co. Sheriff's Office	(540) 965-1770
Clifton Forge Police Dept.	(540) 863-2513
Covington Police Dept.	(540) 965-6333
Bath Co. Sheriff's Office	(540) 839-2375
Highland Co. Sheriff's Office	(540) 468-2210

# Alleghany Highlands Victim/Witness Assistance Program



Providing Advocacy and Assistance to  
Victims and Witnesses of Crime

Serving the Counties of Alleghany, Bath and  
Highland, inclusively.

Alleghany County Courthouse  
(Program office location)

266 W. Main Street

P.O. Box 913

Covington, VA 24426

Phone (540) 965-6366

Fax (540) 965-1377

E-mail: [all\\_victim\\_witness@co.alleghany.va.us](mailto:all_victim_witness@co.alleghany.va.us)

Website: [AHVictimAssistance.org](http://AHVictimAssistance.org)

This project is supported by grant #19-U3033VW17  
awarded by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice  
Services funded by the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S.  
Department of Justice.

## Definition of Victim

The Crime Victim and Witness Rights Act (Code of Virginia §19.2-11.01), usually referred to as the Victims Bill of Rights, and most other victims' rights laws recognize the following individuals as crime victims in Virginia: *Anyone suffering physical, emotional or financial harm as a direct result of a felony or certain misdemeanors.*

The definition of victim includes:

- Spouses and children of all victims;
- Parents and guardians of minor victims;
- Parents, guardians, and siblings of mentally or physically incapacitated victims or victims of homicide;
- Foster parent or other caregivers, under certain circumstances.

The Victims Bill of Rights is intended to ensure that crime victims:

- Are informed of their rights;
- Are treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity and that their privacy is protected;
- Receive all authorized services; and,
- Are heard at all critical stages of the criminal justice process;
- Have opportunities to make the courts aware of the full impact of crime.

## Victim/Witness Services

### **Victim Safety and Protective Orders**

The program staff can assist victims in attaining available protection from the appropriate authorities when harm or threats of harm arise. Appropriate authorities may include law enforcement, court services units, magistrates and the Commonwealth's Attorney.

## **Update on Case Status**

Victims have the right to be notified of bond hearings, preliminary hearings, trials and sentencing. Additionally, victims, or other persons designated by the victim, can be notified of the release, transfer, escape or change of name of an incarcerated offender. Notification forms can be filed by speaking with program staff.

## **Rights Accorded to Crime Victims and Witnesses**

Victims have the right to be present and remain in the courtroom during the trial and during all hearings which the defendant may attend, unless the judge deems otherwise. These hearings include bail or bond hearings, preliminary hearings, trials, sentencing hearings, etc. The program staff is available to provide prior court services and to be a support to victims throughout the criminal justice process. This includes escorting the victim/witness to court.

## **Victim Impact Statement**

In certain cases, after a defendant is found guilty, the judge may consider a Victim Impact Statement in determining the appropriate sentence for the defendant. The statement gives victims the opportunity to tell the court, in writing, the full impact of the crime upon them. This may include any physical or emotional injuries, any financial losses, and any major life changes that resulted from the crime(s). The program staff is available to assist victims and their families in the preparation and filing of Victim Impact Statements.

## **Virginia Victims Fund**

Victims of violent crime in Virginia, or their survivors, may be eligible for financial compensation to cover out-of-pocket medical expenses, psychological counseling, lost wages or funeral expenses. Expenses covered by insurance and damage or loss of personal property are not covered. You may contact this program for more information or call VVF at 800-552-4007.

## **Restitution**

If you are a crime victim, the defendant may be ordered to repay you for your financial loss under certain circumstances. This is called restitution. Restitution may also include interest. The program staff may assist with the filing for criminal restitution and any violations for non-payment.

## **Return of Property**

In the investigation and prosecution of certain crimes, law enforcement authorities may hold victim's property as evidence until the case is completed and all appeals have been exhausted. If the withholding of your property to be used as evidence constitutes a hardship, please contact the program staff for assistance with this service.

## **Employer Intercession**

Under current Virginia law, a person cannot be fired for being subpoenaed to court. In addition, your employer may not discipline you, or require you to use vacation or sick leave in order to go to court. However, your employer is not required to pay you for your time in court.