



April 20, 2015

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## MADIGAN RECOGNIZES NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

**Chicago** — In honor of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, Attorney General Lisa Madigan today encouraged survivors of violent crime to contact her office to learn more about their rights and resources available to assist them in their recovery process.

"For survivors of violent crimes, the road to recovery is often long and challenging. National Crime Victims' Rights Week is a fitting time to remember the importance of making sure we provide survivors with the support and resources they need to rebuild their lives," Madigan said.

Attorney General Madigan's Crime Victim Services Division manages several programs that provide assistance to crime victims and service providers, including the:

- [Illinois Crime Victim Compensation Program](#), which provides direct financial assistance to innocent victims of violent crime to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses related to the crime.
- [Domestic Violence Fund](#), which provides funding for legal advocacy and legal services to victims of domestic violence who are married or formerly married, or who are or have been in a civil union. This fund is awarded from a portion of marriage license fees and a portion of civil union license fees. Any public or private not-for-profit agency that provides services to victims of domestic violence may apply to the Illinois Attorney General for DVF funding.
- [Violent Crime Victim Assistance Program](#), which provides grants to victim and witness assistance programs throughout the state.
- [Automated Victim Notification System](#), which allows crime victims throughout Illinois to obtain timely and reliable information about the status of criminal cases and the custodial status of offenders 24 hours a day via phone or e-mail.
- [Statewide Victim Assistance Program](#), which provides services to crime victims and witnesses whose cases are prosecuted by the Office of the Attorney General, including Sexually Violent Persons petitions. The program is also available to the 102 state's attorneys across Illinois.
- [Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program](#), which trains registered nurses and other professionals who treat and assist sexual assault survivors to provide a higher level of care and reduce re-traumatization.
- [Illinois Victim Assistance Academy](#), which is a 40-hour intensive course of study for crime victim service providers and law enforcement personnel. The IVAA is designed to improve the quality and consistency of victim services in Illinois.

The Attorney General's Crime Victim Services Division also hosts regular workshops, trainings and conferences to update service providers about available resources and information to better support crime victims in Illinois.

In addition to her office's program assistance, the Attorney General is working on several legislative measures to address challenges in the criminal justice system that pose as obstacles to crime victims. Last week, the House of Representatives voted unanimously to pass legislation initiated by the Attorney General which will ensure that sexual assault survivors are not billed for healthcare services related to their assault. Sponsored by Rep. Michelle Mussman (D-Schaumburg), House Bill 3848 ensures Illinois' compliance with the Violence Against Women Act by requiring healthcare providers to bill public aid and insurance directly for rape services and prohibits sending a bill to the survivor.

Madigan is also convening summits around the state to discuss the Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education act, currently being considered by the Illinois General Assembly. House Bill 821, sponsored by Rep. Greg Harris (D-Chicago), was initiated by the Attorney General to improve higher education institutions' response to sexual violence by requiring schools throughout Illinois to set standards to prevent and address sexual violence.

The Attorney General also announced a partnership last month with the Cook and St. Clair County State's Attorneys, as well as the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault aimed at improving prosecution rates of sexual assault cases throughout Illinois. Madigan's

Sexual Assault Working Group was created to address the challenges in Illinois' criminal justice and healthcare systems that discourage victims from reporting cases of sexual assault. Statistics show that only between 5 and 20 percent of all rapes are reported to law enforcement.

For more information about the rights afforded to survivors of crime, or for help dealing with the effects of violent crime, Attorney General Madigan encouraged individuals to call her office's toll-free Crime Victims' Assistance Line: 1-800-228-3368 or 1-877-398-1130 (TTY), or [visit](#) the Attorney General's website to download a variety of brochures and fact sheets about the Crime Victims Services Division.

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