This workshop was held at the 2019 Equal Justice Conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

Title:

The Use of Technology and Innovative Collaborations to Improve Victim Access to Legal Services

Presenters:

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This session highlights innovative collaborations that use technology to improve crime victims’ access to legal information and resources. Panelists from New York and Colorado will share what they have learned developing and implementing victim legal assistance networks that address the various needs faced by individuals in the aftermath of victimization.
Creating Legal Assistance Networks to Improve Victim Access to Services

Equal Justice Conference
May 11, 2019
Presentation Outline

• OVC’s Victim Legal Assistance Networks
• Overview of the NY and Colorado networks
  o Innovative collaborations
  o Role of technology in our networks
• Developing network’s technology
• Lessons learned
• Questions
Office for Victims of Crime

VICTIM LEGAL ASSISTANCE NETWORKS
Office for Victims of Crime
Vision 21 Initiative

“Every state will establish wraparound legal networks that will help ensure that crime victims’ rights are enforced and that victims of crime receive the broad range of legal services needed to help rebuild their lives in the aftermath of the crime.”

https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/vision21/
The National Networks

- Alaska
- California (LA)
- Colorado
- Georgia
- Illinois (Cooke County)
- Minnesota
- Montana
- New York
- Texas (Houston area)
- DC
NEW YORK CRIME VICTIMS LEGAL NETWORK
Funded by the federal Office for Victims of Crime, the NY CRIME VICTIMS LEGAL NETWORK is a partnership of organizations working together to address the civil legal needs of crime victims.

NYS Office of Victim Services
Pro Bono Net

The Safe Center, L.I
Schuyler Co. D.A.
Monroe Co. Sheriff’s Office
The Legal Project
Legal Services of the Hudson Valley
Neighborhood Legal Services

Empire Justice Center
Center for Human Services Research

Center for Elder Law & Justice
Worker’s Justice Center
Disability Rights NY
Legal Society of Northeastern NY
Legal Assistance of WNY
NY CRIME VICTIMS LEGAL HELP is the Network’s online resource. It was developed to provide crime victims with civil legal information and connect them with assistance.
NYCVLN Needs Assessment: Utility of an Online Resource

- Majority of victims indicated a willingness to use an online tool.
  - 64% said they would consider using an online tool to identify their civil legal needs; an additional 23% said they may be willing to use an online tool.

- Majority of service providers indicated that all online tools will be helpful, particularly a victims services screening tool and an online directory of civil legal services.
  - Over 80% of service providers said they would refer victims to online resources.

- There is a clear indication for an online tool to fill in service gaps.
  - Over 60% of victims reported willingness to use online self-help information, an online directory of services or an online program to prepare legal forms.
  - Most service providers reported that almost all online services will be a useful resource to victims.
If you had a legal problem, would you be willing to use the following:

- Phone to talk to attorney: 66%
- Online self-help information: 63%
- Online directory of services available in my area: 59%
- Online program To prepare legal forms: 47%
- Email based inquiry service: 43%
- Live chatting service online: 37%
- Virtual help prog. To speak to an attorney: 33%
- None of these: 8%

(N=248; percentages do not add up to 100, as responses are not mutually exclusive)
Service Providers support the use of online resources for victims of crime

Online tools that service providers believe would be a helpful resource to crime victims:

- Victims' Services Screening Tool: 76%
- Online directory of legal/social services: 76%
- Online self-help information: 64%
- Remot e-filing of orders of protection for...: 63%
- Virtual help program: 58%
- Live chat service online: 58%
- Interactive online program To help with...: 51%
- Others: 8%

(N=280; percentages do not add up to 100, as responses are not mutually exclusive)
What will it do?

The Network’s online resource, NY Crime Victims Legal Help, will connect victims of crime to a variety of services via a dedicated website with the following features:

**Triage Screening Tool**

The Triage Screening Tool can help you identify what your legal needs are. Just answer several questions and you will be directed to specific resources that can help you.

**Legal Services Help Directory**

If you know the kind of legal assistance you need, the Legal Services Help Directory can direct you to the right information and service providers.

**Know Your Rights**

The Know Your Rights library has information about your rights as a crime victim and other information that may help you understand your options. You can also find a number of DIY forms that may help you take the next step to resolve your legal issue.

**Live Help**

If you need help finding information on this website, you can use LiveHelp to chat with someone who can direct you to the right resource. The LiveHelp staff cannot give you legal advice, but they can help you find the information you need to address your legal concerns.

**Advocate Gateway**

Advocates have access to additional resources through the Advocate Gateway, a secure portal for professionals.
Adjustments to tone of imagery
Adjustments to tone of imagery
Use of color to assist with recall and guided navigation
New York Crime Victims Legal Network
Clarifying purpose and scope of assistance available via LiveHelp

- Enhance visibility of button
- Clarify availability (hours) via an FAQ
- Provide specialized training for LiveHelp volunteers on trauma-informed services
User Testing: Legal Help Directory

Legal Help Directory

Choose a Location

Choose a Legal Issue

Help with Other Needs

Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.

Legal Aid Society of Rochester

New York State Association

Results for Erie County: Victim's Rights

Criminal Defense Lawyer

Volunteer Lawyers Project, Inc.

Erie County Bar Association

Legal Help Directory

Choose a Location

Choose a Legal Issue

Help with Other Needs

Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.

Legal Aid Society of Rochester

New York State Association

External Link

External Link

External Link

External Link

External Link
User Testing: Legal Help Directory
New York Crime Victims Legal Network

LESSONS LEARNED
What you need to know to start a VLAN

• User testing!
• Importance of training and promotion
• Data analytics to get insight into user behavior on the platform
• Getting the right people involved at the right time
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Mission:
Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center elevates victims’ voices, champions victims’ rights, and transforms the systems impacting them.

Programs:
• Victim Rights Legal Services
• Title IX Legal Services
• Legal Information Network of Colorado
• Training and Technical Assistance
LINC is a collaborative network of community organizations, which facilitates comprehensive legal information services for crime victims in Colorado.
Steering Committee

• Colorado Bar Association
• Colorado Legal Services
  • Denver CASA
• Denver City Attorney’s Office
• Denver District Attorney’s Office
  • Project Safeguard
• Rocky Mountain Children’s Law Center
• Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center
  • University of Denver
Navigator Sites

- Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado (BIAC)
  - Brighton/Commerce City Police Department, Victim Services Unit
- Deaf Overcoming Violence through Empowerment (DOVE)
  - Denver CASA
  - Denver City Attorney’s Office
  - Denver District Attorney’s Office
  - Denver Police Department, Victim Assistance Unit
  - The Blue Bench
- Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center
- Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Non-violence (SPAN)
- Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance (COVA)
- Denver Indian Family Resource Center (DIFRC)
- Denver Sexual Assault Interagency Council (SAIC)
- Domestic Violence Initiative (DVI)
- Moving to End Sexual Assault (MESA)
  - Project Safeguard
- Rocky Mountain Children’s Law Center
Data from a multi-method assessment converged on four primary problems that reflect **inadequate:**

- Information/knowledge about legal issues;
- Resources and funding;
- Trauma-informed and victim-centered approaches; and
- System coordination.
Helpline for victims and service providers 720-583-2929

Network of specially-trained Navigators

Informational website and issue-spotting tool www.coloradolinc.org
Legal Information for Victims

The Legal Information Network of Colorado (LINC) is a collaborative network that provides confidential, no-cost, comprehensive legal information services for crime victims in the Denver metro area. LINC brings together all of the legal resources available to victims and streamlines the process so victims can focus on their recovery and well-being.

TRY OUT OUR HELP TOOL

or jump to information about

Legal Assistance
Common Reactions After Crime
Basic Needs
Immediate Assistance
Welcome to The LINC Online Navigator

Get Started

What is the LINC Online Navigator?
People often have many different legal needs after a crime. This tool is designed to help people who have been the victim of a crime get the legal information and resources that are most helpful for their situation. The tool can be used on a desktop computer or mobile device (phone/tablet).

What things can I get help with?
We can provide information and resources on dozens of topics, including family and domestic issues, what to expect in court, and help with civil issues.

How does it work?
We'll ask you a series of questions, and based on your answers, will provide you with a customized report that has the legal information and resources that best meet your needs.

Is it safe?
Absolutely. We'll never ask you personally identifying information. However, you can call (720) 583-2929 if you'd feel more comfortable talking to a person.
Do you feel the person who harmed you may try to harm you again?

- Yes
- No
- I don’t know

Continue
Here's your Results Summary
Your results are not saved. Please e-mail or print them for later access.

These resources and help topics were pulled together based on the questions you've answered. You can email your report, or print it for your records. If this isn't the help you need, just call and talk to us in person at 720-363-2929 (Fax: 720-363-2929).

Help Topics

Legal Assistance (/need-help/legal-assistance-0)
www.coloradolinc.org/need-help/legal-assistance-0

Victim Rights (/resources/victim-rights-0)
www.coloradolinc.org/resources/victim-rights-0

Criminal (/need-help/legal-assistance/criminal-0)
www.coloradolinc.org/need-help/legal-assistance/criminal-0

Safety Planning (/resources/safety-planning-0)
www.coloradolinc.org/resources/safety-planning-0

Civil Protection Orders (/need-help/legal-assistance/civil/civil-protection-orders)
www.coloradolinc.org/need-help/legal-assistance/civil/civil-protection-orders
A protection order is also sometimes called a "restraining order." People who are afraid for their safety can ask the court for a civil protection ord...

Mandatory Protection Order (Restraining Order) (/need-help/legal-assistance/criminal/mandatory-protection-order-restraining-order)
www.coloradolinc.org/need-help/legal-assistance/criminal/mandatory-protection-order-restraining-order
A Mandatory Protection Order happens in a criminal case and is also sometimes called a restraining order or "MPO." When a defendant (offender) has bee...

Domestic Violence & Domestic Abuse (/need-help/legal-assistance/criminal/domestic-violence-domestic-abuse)
Lessons Learned

• Marketing a different type of legal service (information vs. representation)
• Use a multidisciplinary model
• Working with private contractors outside the victim services field (learning each others’ language)
• Overcoming technological challenges (hosting)
• Balancing safety and innovation (cookies, freestanding applications)
Take Away Points:

Legal Information Matters

You can do tech, even if you don’t do tech

Always consider the next step to filling gaps and meeting needs (use research)