



Brad D. Schimel
Wisconsin Attorney General

P.O. Box 7857
Madison, WI 53707-7857

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 2, 2017

**AG Schimel Provides \$27.4 million for Crime Victim Services
in Every County in Wisconsin**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Brad Schimel, previous recipient of the Wisconsin Victim Witness Professionals’ “Professional of the Year” Award, has been fighting on behalf of crime victims for 28 years as a prosecutor. Today, Attorney General Brad Schimel announced that the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Crime Victim Services (OCVS) is providing \$27.4 million to crime victim services in all 72 counties in Wisconsin through September 2018.

“One of my core duties as attorney general is to provide assistance to crime victims in Wisconsin,” said Attorney General Schimel. “But I can only provide this assistance with the help of hundreds of victim advocates in Wisconsin who are committed to improving the lives of survivors of unspeakable tragedies. This funding from DOJ will keep crime victims services at the local level available to citizens across the state, ensuring that those who have been violated, mistreated, and wronged are not left behind during what is likely one of the worst experiences in a person’s life.”

Grant funding through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) victim assistance grant money is allocated by DOJ to private and public agencies, including district attorney’s offices, to support direct services to victims of crime. Services provided under this program include safety planning, community service referrals, counseling, crisis intervention, and legal advocacy.

Victim services funded by DOJ are extended to any crime victim, including victims of elder abuse. For example, the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups is being awarded more than \$150,000 for their Elder Financial Empowerment Project, which assists victims over the age of 60 who are victims of financial crimes, such as power of

attorney abuse, identity theft and intrafamilial theft and fraud. DOJ also allocated more than \$1 million to Legal Action of Wisconsin's Elder Abuse Civil Legal Services project. This project provides civil legal services, personal advocacy, and information and referral to elder abuse victims in 39 southern Wisconsin counties.

VOCA grant funding provided by DOJ supports both large and small programs across the state, particularly those that serve victims of domestic and sexual violence. In the St. Croix valley, DOJ directed more than \$22,000 to the St. Croix Valley Sexual Assault Response Team for advocacy services by volunteers. These volunteers are critical to a community's response after sexual assault and often are the first support a victim receives at the time of a sexual assault forensic examination. Similar to this program in the St. Croix Valley, DOJ provided more than \$350,000 to ASTOP Sexual Abuse Center, serving Fond du Lac, Green Lake, and Waushara counties. ASTOP provides services to survivors of sexual violence, their family, crisis intervention, case management, individual counseling, and support and therapy groups.

A full list of programs that will be supported by VOCA funding from October 2017 through September 2018 is available [here](#).

DOJ also provides funding through the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) STOP grant to fund the statewide forensic nurse examiner training program and to support prosecutors, advocates, and law enforcement who are providing services to domestic and sexual violence victims in Wisconsin. In conjunction with this grant, DOJ trains law enforcement on the best practices for responding to and investigating domestic violence. These trainings emphasize officer safety, trauma-informed interview techniques, domestic violence dynamics, developing a coordinated community response, witness intimidation, and lethality assessments. DOJ has led 24 trainings since January 2015 as part of this effort.

Additionally, through the Sexual Assault Victim Services (SAVS) grant, DOJ provides nearly \$2.1 million to programs throughout the state that provide direct services to sexual assault victims, including support groups, 24-hour crisis lines, and medical and legal advocacy. As part of another grant program, DOJ also annually provides nearly \$500,000 to organizations around the state to fund services directly to victims annually.

DOJ routinely provides information and trainings to advocates and victim/witness services on victims' rights, crime victim compensation, and the sexual assault forensic exam (SAFE) fund. DOJ has also established, with collaboration from law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, and victim/witness services, a [plan through 2020](#) that is dedicated to supporting trauma-informed training and technical

assistance and encourages innovative approaches to responding to domestic and sexual violence.

DOJ also supports and administers *Safe at Home*, a program launched in April 2017 that provides victims of domestic abuse, child abuse, sexual abuse, stalking, trafficking, and those who fear for their physical safety with a legal substitute address and free mail forwarding service. Enrollment in *Safe at Home* allows victims of abuse and those who fear for their physical safety to maintain a confidential home, work, or school address and use a secure, legal address provided by DOJ.

To learn more about *Safe At Home*, visit www.SafeAtHomeWI.gov. To enroll in *Safe at Home*, call 1-800-446-6564.