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## **NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **AG Kaul Highlights Victim Services Remain Available During Safer at Home Order**

MADISON, Wis. – As residents around the state comply with the Governor’s emergency Safer at Home order, AG Kaul is highlighting exemptions in the Governor’s order for victims of domestic abuse and sharing the available resources for victims.

“It is an unfortunate reality that home doesn’t mean safety for everyone,” said AG Kaul. “Social and physical isolation can amplify dynamics of abuse, which is why it’s critical that survivors and advocates for survivors know about the exemption in the Safer at Home order for survivors to obtain services and stay somewhere safe, and that services for survivors continue to be provided during this public health emergency.”

The Safer at Home order acknowledges that “individuals whose homes or residences are unsafe or become unsafe, such as victims of domestic violence, are permitted and urged to leave their home and stay at a safe alternative location. For purposes of this Order, homes or residences include hotels, motels, shared rental units, dormitories, shelters, and similar facilities.” The order further clarifies that “individuals may leave their residence to work for or obtain services at any state, institutional, or community-based setting providing human services to the public...including residential settings and shelters for...victims of domestic abuse.”

Throughout the State of Wisconsin, domestic abuse shelters remain open and victim service providers adapt to meet the changing safety needs of their communities. The Wisconsin Department of Justice Office of Crime Victim Services is committed to

supporting these vital efforts through continued funding, technical assistance, and safety planning resources.

Executive Director of the Office of Crime Victim Services Michelle Viste commented, “During this unprecedented and challenging time, it is essential that victims continue to have access to services they need. The Office of Crime Victim Services is open and available to provide support and resources to victims and victim service providers.”

Among the safety planning resources provided by the Office of Crime Victim Services is [Safe at Home](#), Wisconsin’s address confidentiality program. Although the name of this program is similar to the name of the recent order, they are not related. [Safe at Home](#) provides victims of abuse and individuals who fear for their physical safety with an assigned legal address and free, secure mail forwarding.

Additional information about Safe at Home and the other victim services offered by the Office of Crime Victim Services may be found at [www.doj.state.wi.us/ocvs](http://www.doj.state.wi.us/ocvs). Crime victims may also contact the Office of Crime Victim Services toll-free at 1-800-446-6564 (7:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday).

To locate a victim service provider in your community, please visit [www.doj.state.wi.us/ocvs/find-local-crime-victim-resources](http://www.doj.state.wi.us/ocvs/find-local-crime-victim-resources).