

PROJECT SUMMARY

IMPROVING SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF CRIME - THE NEXT LOGICAL STEP IN COMMUNITY POLICING

The Mundelein Police Department has embraced community policing since the early 90's. It is the future of law enforcement and the "right thing to do". We have not changed our belief in community policing but we have adjusted our focus to highlight our commitment to crime victims. Crime victims account for a majority of the contacts the police encounter each day, therefore, enhancing law enforcement's response to crime victims is the next logical step in community policing.

Traditionally, law enforcement views its role as detecting, finding and apprehending criminals. Crime victims were used as a "tool" to achieve those goals. Unfortunately, many crime victims felt left out of the process and in some instances were re-victimized as well.

In 2006, we were selected to participate in the Enhancing Law Enforcement's Response to Crime Victims through the IACP. Focusing on four core areas: Leadership, Partnerships, Training and Performance Monitoring we examined how we do our day to day business as it pertains to responding to the needs of crime victims. We sought input from all levels of our organization, plus reached out to our citizens, community partners, victim service advocates and victims of crime. Baseline data was gathered through the use of focus groups and mail surveys. Based on what we found, enhancements were

made to existing policies as well as creating new policies and practices. Enhancements to our training protocols and partnering with the largest basic police training academy in Illinois will reinforce our philosophy with officers at the start.

Victims of all crimes need our assistance in an attempt to keep them from becoming victims again and just as important, that they do feel re-victimized by the police response they received.

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STEP IN COMMUNITY POLICING**

A. SCANNING:

The Mundelein Police Department has embraced community policing since the early 90's. It is the future of law enforcement and the "right thing to do". We have not changed our belief in community policing but we have adjusted our focus to highlight our commitment to crime victims. Crime victims account for a majority of the contacts the police encounter each day, therefore, enhancing law enforcement's response to crime victims is the next logical step in community policing.

Traditionally, law enforcement views its role as detecting, finding and apprehending criminals. Crime victims were used as a "tool" to achieve those goals. Unfortunately, many crime victims felt left out of the process and in some instances were re-victimized as well. The Mundelein Police Department was confident that we were doing a good job providing assistance to crime victims. We found out that we had to make improvements to prevent re-victimization and build a partnership with our core constituency, victims of crime.

B: ANALYSIS:

Although the Mundelein Police Department's core philosophy is community policing, we are always looking for fresh ideas and ways to improve how we do business. In 2006, the Mundelein Police Department was selected to participate in the Enhancing Law Enforcement's Response to Crime Victims through the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Our involvement required an in depth review of how we respond to and treat victims of crime. Focusing on four core areas: Leadership, Partnerships, Training and Performance Monitoring, we formed a leadership team consisting of every level and unit (sworn and non-sworn) within our department. We examined how we do our day to day business as it pertains to responding to the needs of crime victims as well as ideas and solutions to improve our response to crime victims. At our first Leadership Committee meeting, we recognized the need to seek input from our citizens, community partners, victim service advocates and victims of crime. A Steering Committee was developed and consisted of over 70 members including representatives from the Illinois Attorney General's Office, Lake County State's Attorney's Office, Victim advocates and service providers, our local circuit court, local schools, hospitals, faith based groups and local businesses.

The first step was to establish a baseline of information gauging how we as a police department respond to and assist victims of crime. While establishing our baseline of data, we held focus groups with crime victim advocates and service providers as well as a mail out survey to a random group of residents living in Mundelein.

Focus groups were formed, internally with sworn and non-sworn personnel, and externally with health care service providers, business owners, educational officials, community members, and crime victims. The intent was to answer two questions: “How are we doing?” and “What can we do to improve our service to crime victims?” Before the focus groups, we believed that we were meeting the needs of our Hispanic community, which is 24% of our population. However, we learned our Hispanic crime victims often didn’t understand what services were available to them due to the language barrier, and we needed to improve our response to all non-violent crime victims.

The focus groups also revealed the limited knowledge base of our staff concerning what service providers are available in our area and the extent and types of services they offered. Additionally we found that service providers didn’t know how our officers and investigators responded to a crime scene and crime victims. A reciprocal training program was introduced so our service providers and our employees could learn what each other’s roles are; for example service providers conducted roll-call training for all employees and in return were given an opportunity to ride along with our officers. This improved communication equated to better service to our crime victims. (Appendix 1)

Finally, our officers expressed a concern of whether or not crime victims were seeking assistance from other resources and providers and/or were the correct resources and providers given to crime victims.

This information supported our original objectives of creating an environment that encouraged victims to report crime, empowering them with information and resources to avoid victimization, and educate officers on what is available to victims and how to properly address the needs and concerns of victims while handling calls for service. This included supplying information, making referrals for services, following up with victims after cases and acting as the bridge between the victim and the justice system.

A survey was developed and randomly sent to 2,000 Mundelein residents looking for input from victims of crime, especially those who did not report their crime to the police. We wanted to determine why they chose not to report, and if there was a perceived problem with the department. Six hundred and ninety-two (692) surveys were returned (34.6%). Those residents who reported being the victim of a crime and didn't report it to police did so because they felt their loss was so minor it didn't warrant police involvement. Any specific negative comments from the surveys were looked at and addressed through training and, in a few cases, coaching and counseling of officers. (Appendix 2 / Graph 1)

Committee meeting revealed a need to improve communication with not only crime victims, but service provider and victim advocates. Training needs were also identified, not only to police officers, but all police department staff members.

C: RESPONSE:

From our first leadership and committee meeting, improving communication with our crime victims and improving training was identified as priorities. Focus group and survey results indicated crime victims lacked information about their case, which made them feel left out of the entire criminal justice process. Victims of crime also were not aware of what services were available to them and/or how to contact them.

Our police officers developed a Victim Assistance Notification Form (VAN) listing pertinent information about the criminal case, the victim's name, and a list of possible service providers for referrals. The form was designed to improve communication between our police department and crime victims and replaces a business card from the reporting officer with a case number. Having a list of service providers, their contact information, and a brief description of their services helped our officers make a proper referral for follow up and care to the victim. As the form is multiple pages, one copy is provided to the victim, one stays with the case report to track status of the investigation and one is forwarded to our Records Unit. Additionally, a Spanish version of the form is used to better assist our Hispanic residents with limited English proficiency. The VAN form has now gone through three internal audits by our staff and one external audit by our service providers and each time enhancements have been made to the form that have increased its usefulness. When the VAN form is received by our Records Division, it is entered into a database that serves as a reference point for future data collection and a means of monitoring our performance. (Appendix 3)

From the partnerships formed with our steering committee, our department entered into a collaborative agreement with an area domestic violence service provider called “A Safe Place”. This partnership agreement focuses specifically on improving police officers’ response to victims of domestic violence and ensuring an opportunity for early intervention and support. The program consists in part of “A Safe Place” employees conducting regular (monthly) ride-alongs with our police officers, which provides the opportunity for immediate interaction among domestic violence victims and advocates. In addition, our police officers fax the VAN form to “A Safe Place” immediately following any arrest for domestic violence or domestic-disturbance-related arrest and within 24 hours of the domestic violence incident, a crisis counselor contacts the victim.

As we accumulated our baseline data, we began to review our policies dealing with Victim Assistance, Investigations, Communications and other policies covering interaction with our residents. Specific language was added to our mission statement and general orders placing an emphasis on being more attentive to the needs of crime victims and maintaining communication through the legal process. New policies covering stalking, dealing with the mentally ill, and human trafficking have been issued.

Training needs were also reviewed and an expansion of current training was implemented for all employees. We quickly realized that to achieve “sustained organizational change” training would play a major role. Our first focus was to enhance our Field Training Program to encompass victim services into the already established 14-week program.

During the Field Training Program the officers are evaluated daily on 10 different categories and are required to learn and accept responsibility for 45 different tasks. Task Sheet #45 was added and covers the review of all policies and standard operating procedures related to victim response and victim services. (Appendix 4)

We then looked at incorporating our victim-related policies into our 30-minute daily roll call training. Each day all patrol shifts attend a mandatory 30-minute roll call where daily business is discussed and then one predetermined training topic is reviewed. This has proven to be an excellent way to familiarize and refresh officer knowledge on various policies and procedures. Through partnerships strengthened with our participation in the pilot study, our service providers agreed to conduct roll call training and these have been incorporated into our in service training schedule.

Our established schedule of annual in-service training was expanded to include topics such as: Customer Service, Elder Abuse, Autism and Mental Disorders, Hearing Impaired, and Victim Compensation. These training enhancements are designed to include all employees.

In 2008-2009, we partnered with the International Association of Chiefs of Police to introduce the victim component at the basic training academy level. To achieve this, we met with representatives from the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board. This meeting also included representatives from the five major police training academies within the State of Illinois. As a result of this initial meeting, an agreement

was reached to implement curriculum changes to include victim response. A pilot program was initiated at the Champaign/ University of Illinois Police Training Institute (PTI) and the enhanced curriculum started in the training class that began on March 30, 2009. The curriculum changes are now a permanent part of Police Training Institute's basic academy program. The Police Training Institute is the largest basic training academy in Illinois and trains 85% of the State's new police officers.

D: ASSESSMENT:

In 2009, the same survey was sent to another random 2,000 residents. Six hundred and twenty eight (628) were returned (31.4%). The 2009 survey showed an increase in reported crime while the Village of Mundelein enjoyed a 6.2 percent decrease in crime. (Appendix 2 / Graph 2) We attribute this to our residents having an improved sense of confidence in our police department's response to crime victims. This improved sense of confidence also equates to building trust between the residents we serve and our police department.

Additionally, we created a customer satisfaction survey to be sent to victims of crime and will be used to assess how we are doing, identify areas of concerns and seek suggestions as to how to improve what we do. We also use customer satisfaction cards as a quality control instrument.

Our staff has risen to the challenge. Since our initial involvement with this project, our agency has embraced major changes including rewriting our mission statement, policies, procedures, training, and the way we conduct ourselves on a daily basis. We have begun to experience the “sustained organizational change” that was discussed earlier in this project overview including members from all levels of our agency contributing to the positive buy in necessary to solicit cooperation and affect changes. We have enjoyed a heightened level of cooperation from our staff instead of resistance to the change. Our employees also enjoy a greater sense of job satisfaction as they are able to provide service provider information to crime victims immediately.

We have seen a renewed interest and improved partnerships from our service providers. Our project steering committee consists of victim-service providers, victim rights advocates, faith-based community members, and crime victims. When approached with the opportunity to enhance our response to victims, it was viewed as an opportunity to be on the forefront of change in our profession. This was our opportunity to make improvements and changes to how we do business instead of direction coming from external sources such as the courts or legislative mandates. Departments need to be willing to let go of traditional policing practices and to see this as the next logical step in community policing. Even the most proactive departments stand to gain by employing this philosophy. Community policing focuses on obtaining information and creating communication with citizens in an effort to prevent crime before it takes place. Yet even the best police department cannot stop every single crime from occurring and that is

where this philosophy comes in - how does your agency handle the victims and how can we prevent further victimization from taking place.

We, in law enforcement, must address re-victimization on two levels: 1) Ensure crime victims are not re-victimized during their interaction with the criminal justice process and 2) We additionally must provide an education component to teach crime victims how not to become victimized again.

This change starts within the individual organizations and must be accepted at every level of the agency in order for it to achieve the desired result, which is a new focus on how police provide service. Enhancing law enforcement's response to victims is the right thing to do. We became police officers to protect and serve individuals that can't protect themselves. Victims need our help, care, protection, understanding, and guidance so they are not re-victimized and, just as important; do not feel victimized through their interaction with the police.

Finally, we feel that our efforts at improving the way we interact with victims of crime continues to strengthen our partnership and provide the best quality service to those that are most vulnerable.

Mundelein Victim Service Provider Focus Group Summary

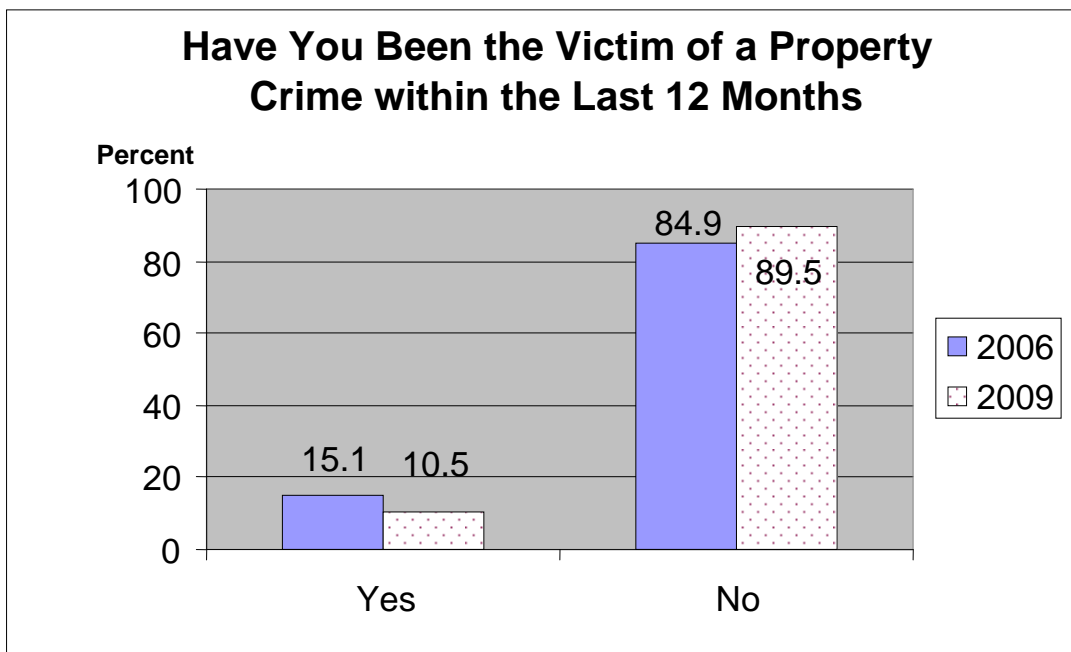
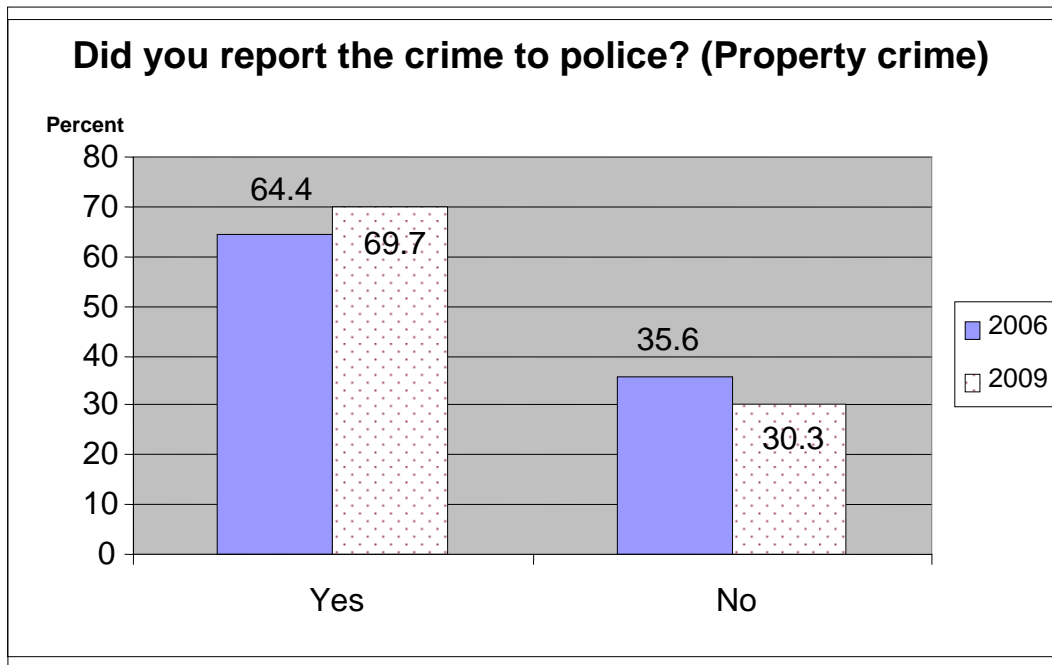
1. With regard to responding to victims of crime, please describe your organization's relationship with the Mundelein PD.
 - La Casa: 23 years in Lake Co.; relationship has evolved; La Casa would trust that MPD would treat victim well; La Casa is invited into for training. Understands that sensitivity to victims helps both the victim and the police.
 - Similar to Safe Place: MPD is seen as a friend; Chief will be a speaker at their conference; check the response to training is generally positive; training 1X/year. Replenish materials available at MPD.
 - Advocacy Center: works with Detective bureau; child victims of sexual abuse; MPD has been excellent in handling information. They will ask for help if they need it.
 - MHS: experience with MPD primarily with School Resource officer but have had contact with other officers: trustworthy, discreet, knowing how to talk with a victim; have the right demeanor; good at follow-through.
 - Omni: cultivated a very positive relationship with MPD. Omni is called in by officers.
 - State's Attorney: example of contact with a detective: officer was going the extra mile: what is the easiest/quickest way to help with the problem.
 - Hospital perspective: their contact is infrequent; officer is respectful in trying to gather information. Hospital may need to work on a better relationship with MPD.
 - Mi Casa: Our agency could work on better relationship w/ MPD.
 - Health Dept: Waukegan, N. Chicago, are not good examples of victim response. Wish that they were more like Mundelein.
2. In what ways do you work well with the Mundelein PD? (*addressed above*)
3. In what ways could you work better together to respond to crime victims? (**3 and 4 asked together, see under 4**)
4. What steps could the Mundelein PD take to collaborate more effectively with your agencies to serve crime victims? What is within their power to improve? What do they need to know about your agencies to make good referrals?

- State's Attorney's office developed protocol with several police departments; Police dept. have put together packets of information to give to victim which includes State's attorney's card. Tri-fold card; some depts. Have put together checklist. State's attorney's card can be given out to any victim. Sometimes officers don't have all the information with them. Two extra forms for domestic violence that officers need to fill out.
 - Understanding the "hand-off" from arrest point—it is only after the arrest that State's Attorney's office.
 - Red Book: has all the information about all the agencies, locations, phone numbers, brief descriptions of services and fees.
 - Pilot project for police officers who had training in handling special cases—like mental health issues. 19th Jurisdiction may have gotten this started. (Gurnee was host dept for that training.) Importance of training/sensitivity for officers: example of someone who is off their medication—some officers may perceive the individual as being high vs. needing help.
 - If Police has good rapport with local agencies—Lake County Health Dept. –it would be better for the officer to call the LCHD and say: could this be your client? Client's have "crisis care 800 number".
 - It helps for officers to be aware of individual's mental health history—policies and procedures on how to handle mental health issues.
 - More training for officers—better understanding of what services may be helpful.
 - Ni Casa—has several sites; phone number on back of form is only for Round Lake.
 - Teri: officers welcome "ride alongs"; provider suggestion that there should be a reverse "ride along."
 - Red Book may be too comprehensive for Police—they need a "cheat sheet".
5. What do police officers need to know about your agencies in order to make the best referral and follow-up decisions? How can they best become and remain knowledgeable about your agencies? What is the kernel of knowledge that officers should know about your agency? What kind of people does your agency serve? (see above)
6. What information would you like to get from police officers responding to crime victims that would make your job easier?

- Agency would like to know what the police calls are so that agencies could follow-up. Form could help with this tracking. Agency would like this information on a daily basis. Oak Park follows-up on the initial call; agency has to be able to follow-up because the individual may not have the resources to make the call—too traumatized etc.
 - Safe Place thinks that any calls should be referred (via fax/phone/email) to them regarding domestic violence. This needs to be a matter of policy.
 - State's attorney's office gets all the information regarding domestic violence; she has a sheet on every call; Police are already doing this level of reporting; is this a way to capture this information.
 - Data base maintenance: kind of scary for battered women, unless names are not attached, or confidentiality can be assured.
 - On the form: put a blank for an alternate number or alternative contact.
7. In working with your clients, what have you learned about what they would have liked to happen in the PD's initial contact with them that did not occur?
- They were not believed; that the perpetrator could have possibly have done that.
 - They need more Spanish speaking officers.
 - PD generally: the investigative process has not been explained; keeping in touch with the family during the interim process. Families may be misled about the outcomes of the case. Officers need to be more knowledgeable; they might not have to talk to the PD again but will need to talk to someone else within the criminal justice system.
 - 10 Victim witnesses assigned to the Lake County state's attorney.
 - Victims are told to call State's Attorney's office to check on the status of the case.
 - Victims may be handed off about 3-4 times.
 - No Victim Witness counselor assigned for property crimes.
 - **Not** specific to MPD: runaway youth feel judged by police, who sometimes assume this is a bad kid vs. recognizing that they may be running away from domestic violence.
 - Is there a number for someone who is the family of a suicide? Should add LOSS (living outreach to suicide survivors) to resource list.

8. What role would you like the PD to play **in following up** with crime victims as their cases are investigated and prosecuted? In your opinion, does this differ depending on the type of crime? Are there "priority" crime areas where resources should be focused?
- More communication during the investigative process.
 - Police should find out who the prosecutor is and maintain some type of relationship with them, sooner in the process—a more systematic bridging to prosecution so that there is a successful prosecution.
 - Very helpful for Safe Place to receive victim's statement to officer at the time of the incident. (does not know whether MPD does this.)
9. Please talk about any additional opportunities for the Mundelein PD to improve its response to crime victims that have not yet been discussed.
- Teri: at some point MPD may want to have additional input re: the form and specific strategies that you would recommend.
 - Recommend: that MPD invite agencies to do presentations on their services. Training and paper "aid" tools.
 - Teri: mentioned that although there are sometimes turf wars among service providers; this does not appear to be a problem with Mundelein area agencies. Need to match up officers interests with agency information.
 - Training around case studies: what agency would you refer this person to; service providers would need to put the case studies together.
 - Language and cultural training to deal with Hispanic victims.

Appendix 2



**Mundelein Police Department
Field Training Task #45
Victim/Witness Assistance**

Preceding Tasks:

Task #8	Community Policing
Task #28	Crimes vs. Persons
Task #32	Domestic Violence Intervention
Task #41	Handling Impaired/EDP/Homeless

I. Statute

- A. Illinois Compiled Statutes
 1. ILCS 725-120/4-a
 2. ILCS 725-120/4-b
 3. Illinois Victim's Bill of Rights 725 ILCS 120/1-120/9
 4. Crime Victim Compensation 740 ILCS 45/5.1b

II. Policy and Procedure

- A. Victim/Witness Policy (General Order 07-04)
- B. Victim Assistance Notification Form
- C. Victim Service Provider File/Social Services

III. Operational Procedures

- A. Delivery of Services for Victims/Witnesses

The role of the Mundelein Police Department is to provide service to individuals, families, victims and witnesses involved in situational incidents which come to the attention of the police department and are identified as requiring professional counseling or referrals which are beyond the scope of what police officers can provide in their individual law enforcement role. Social Service shall be offered for incidents including, but not limited to the following situations:

 - a. Domestic violence cases/marital problem cases
 - b. Mental health cases
 - c. Involuntary commitment cases
 - d. Sexual assault cases
 - e. Suicide attempt cases
 - f. Overdose cases
 - g. Drug abuse cases
 - h. Alcoholism cases
 - i. Consultation Cases
 - j. Homeless or indigent cases
 - k. Individual or community post traumatic stress cases
 - l. Delinquent minors
 - m. Minors requiring authoritative intervention (MRAI)
 - n. Dependent/neglected juveniles
- B. Resources and referrals include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Social Service Agencies
 - b. Support groups
 - c. Confidential counseling
 - d. Emergency financial assistance
 - e. Health screening
 - f. Homebound services
- C. Preliminary Investigative Assistance

During the preliminary investigation, reporting officers will ensure that all crime victims are provided with a Victim Assistance Notification (VAN) form. Based on the circumstances, witnesses may also be provided with a VAN if they are in need of assistance or services.

Additionally, all crime victims and/or witnesses will be provided with the following information at a minimum:

- Advising the victim/witness about what to do should the suspect or the suspect's Companions or family threatens or otherwise intimidates him or her.
- Informing the victim/witness of the subsequent steps in the processing of the case.
- Providing a department telephone number that the victim/witness can call to report additional information about the case or to receive information about the status of the case.
- Responding to the victim's/witness' questions and concerns to the best of the officer's abilities and informing the victim/witness of the additional services that are available to address any special needs the victim/witness may have.

D. Follow-Up Investigative Assistance

Victim/witness assistance services that are provided during the follow-up investigation will, at a minimum, include the following:

1. Re-contacting the victim/witness of any unusually severe or traumatic incident on a periodic basis to determine if the needs of the victim/witness are being met.
2. Explaining to the victim/witness the procedures involved in the prosecution of the case and their role in those procedures provided such disclosure does not jeopardize the successful prosecution of the case.
3. Scheduling line-ups, interviews, and other required appearances at the convenience of the victim/witness whenever possible, to include a provision for transportation if necessary.
4. Returning evidence or the personal property of the victim/witness whenever possible and as permitted by law or the State's Attorney's Office.
5. Assigning, whenever possible, a designated victim advocate to the victim/witness during follow-up investigations.

I certify that I have been trained and have demonstrated proficiency in the above Training / Task topics:

Probationary Officer: _____ Date: _____

Field Training Officer: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor: _____ Date: _____