
Victim Legal Assistance Network

— A Georgia CJCC Vision 21 Project —

What is the Victim Legal Assistance Network? (VLAN)

VLAN is a network of victim service providers

- Core Partners provide comprehensive, *pro bono* "**no-cost**" legal assistance and referrals to other legal partners
- Core Partner Navigators connect victims to support services for non-legal needs
- All VLAN partners participate in "warm hand-off" referrals

The Need

Violent crime prevalence

According to the most recent Georgia Uniform Crime Reporting Program report:

 365,949
number of crimes reported in Georgia in 2014

of those

 65,529
number of family violence incidents

 36,873
number of violent crimes reported

 2,091
number of reported rape incidents

 579
number of reported murders

If we add to these statistics the untold number of victims who are unable to report or fail to report their victimization to law enforcement or obtain civil legal assistance, the potential number of victims is staggering.

SCOPE OF THE NEED



The Need

Domestic Violence prevalence

Calls for Help

- 68,313 Law Enforcement Family Violence Reports in 2013(*GBI*)
- 58,995 DV Hotline Calls in 2013

Domestic Violence Deaths

- 117 Persons Killed as a result of DV in 2014
- 1436 Deaths in Georgia as a result of DV since 2003

Source: 2012, 2013, 2014 Fatality Reviews

The Need

Property and other crimes

2015 in Georgia

Identity theft

15,230 - 7th in the nation

Fraud and other FTC complaints

123, 429 - 2nd in the nation

71%

of victim service providers report that victims of abuse have
unmet civil legal needs.

Civil Legal Services - Saving Lives

- 50% of the time, Protective Orders end violence completely
- In 25% additional cases, Protective Orders substantially reduce violence
- For every \$1 invested in Civil Protective Orders, communities save \$30.75 in other costs – law enforcement, ER visits, Courts, CPS, DV agency services

Logan,T.K., The Kentucky Protective Order Study,
<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/228350.pdf>

How can VLAN help your clients?

Meeting the Need

- Civil legal services keep victims safe and communities safer

Type of Crime	Services Available
Family violence	Legal help with ex parte and 12 month temporary protective orders, and family law, immigration, public housing, public benefits, consumer & other cases
Sexual assault	Legal help with ex parte and 12 month temporary protective orders, stalking protective orders, and family law, immigration, public housing, public benefits, consumer & other cases
Elder abuse	Legal help with ex parte and 12 month temporary protective orders, guardianship and family law, consumer, public benefits, public benefits cases, adult protective services referrals
Identity theft and property crimes	Legal help with family violence protective orders, stalking protective orders, and family law cases, if applicable, credit report disputes, garnishment defense, credit counseling referrals

Victims of Crime | Immigration laws

- U-Visas - victims of state crimes
- T-Visas - victims of human trafficking
- VAWA Self-Petition - abused spouses, parents, or children of U.S. Citizens or Lawful Permanent Residents

Related Note: Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals have the right to an interpreter in all court processes

Victims of Crime | Immigration Benefits

- Work authorization
- Lawful status to remain in the United States
- Ability to apply for qualifying family members
- Limited access to public benefits (for trafficking survivors)
- Ability to apply for lawful permanent residence in the future

Victims of Crime | 12 Month Protective Orders

- Civil order under the Family Violence Act BUT violation of order can lead to the criminal charge of aggravated stalking
- Mutual Orders
 - Prohibited except in limited situations
- Recent violence is not a statutory requirement
- To get a 12 Month Protective Order must prove:
 - Relationship with Respondent that meets statute
 - Violence or other crime, as outlined in the statute occurred

Remedies Available in 12 Month Protective Order

- Stay Away and No Contact
- Custody of children
- Visitation
- Support and temporary property division
- Child Support
- Possession of home
- Family Violence Intervention Program
- Removal of firearms
- Attorney's fees

Extension of Protection & Stalking Orders

Survivors with 12 Month Protective or Stalking Orders can file to extend their orders.

- Must file to extend before protection expires
- Judge can order three more years of protection or permanent protection
- Orders can include all remedies of the 12 Month Order

Victims of Crime | Child Custody and Visitation

- Judge must consider the safety of the child and the domestic violence survivor parent
- Supervised exchanges or supervised visitation options
 - Sliding scale resources are available in some areas
- Protective orders can be part of custody, visitation or divorce orders (though not all offices have funding for divorce actions currently)

Victims of Crime | Housing

- Public housing protections
 - Take abuser off of lease
 - Change rental unit
 - Prevent eviction or loss of subsidy due to domestic violence
- Private housing formal eviction process must be followed
 - Landlords have security obligations
- Temporary housing resources are available in some areas

Victims of Crime | Consumer

- Temporary Protective Orders can address debt payments
- Social Security identity protections for domestic violence survivors
- Credit Report disputes
- Other legal options for resolving retaliatory actions

Victims of Crime | Benefits

- Food Stamps and WIC
- Medicaid
- Child Support Services
 - Domestic violence survivors can be excused from cooperating in the child support collection process if it would put them in danger
- Citizen children are eligible for benefits even if parents are not eligible due to immigration status.

Meeting Non Legal Needs

- increasing collaboration between victim service providers & legal service providers to provide comprehensive care

Need	Service Options
Understanding the justice system	Referrals to online resources, Family Law Information Centers, local shelters & safety planning
Help attending hearings	Transportation assistance and referrals for transportation assistance where available
Treatment referrals, counseling	Referrals to support groups, mental health and other counseling, abuse and addiction treatment
Victim impact statement assistance; financial support	Assistance with victim compensation and public benefit applications, information about eligibility criteria and appeals if denied
Housing counseling/relocation	Local shelters & community action agency referrals

Training for Legal and Non-Legal VLAN Partners

- Access to training, including national trainings through NCVLI
 - Domestic Violence
 - Sexual Assault
 - Teen Dating Violence
 - Immigration Resources
 - Identity Theft/Fraud
 - Elder Abuse
 - Language Access Rights of LEP Georgians
 - Education Rights (of child crime victims and children affected by victimization)
 - Cultural Competency -representing special populations of crime victims

Community Education & Domestic Violence Prevention

- Teen Dating Violence Workshops
- Participation on Domestic Violence Task Forces and Fatality Review Teams
- Education of law enforcement, local attorneys, and community leaders on domestic violence and other crime victim issues

How can your organization join the Network-VLAN?

Complete this simple survey for each of your offices:

- <http://tinyurl.com/GAVLAN>

Join Georgia Legal Advocates “Victim Help” section:

- <http://www.georgiaadvocates.org/>

Contact us with questions:

- Tiffany.williams@cjcc.ga.gov
- 404.657.2081 (Toll Free: 877.231.6590)

The Network

Needs you!

Please join to help us
improve services
for crime victims.



“Without equal access to the law the system not only robs the poor of their only protection, but it places in the hands of their oppressors the most powerful and ruthless weapon ever invented.”

- Reginald Heber Smith, Justice and the Poor, 1919

**“Working together, our vision is that
someday every victim will have access to a
knowledgeable lawyer to protect his or her
rights!”**

- National Crime Victim Law Institute

Vision 21 & VLAN:

Transforming victim services in the 21st century

Thanks!

Core Partner Providers

Atlanta Legal Aid Society

Navigator, Monica Morris
404-614-3941

Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers

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