PROTOCOL FOR THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY VICTIM ADVOCATE

Once the Detective has filed a case with the District Attorney’s office the Program Coordinator or Detective will contact the District Attorney Victim Advocate of the filing and any relevant information needed to contact the victim.

The DA VA will review the case and contact the victim or victim’s family with information regarding the charges, court dates, explanation of court dates, and answer any questions they may have about the Criminal Justice process.

The VA will assure that the victim or victim’s family has the number for the VINE program in the event the defendant is able to post bond.

If the victim or victim’s family is in danger from the defendant or his/her associates, the Witness Protection program will be notified and safety arrangements can be made if necessary.

The DA VA may arrange and attend personal meetings with the victim or victim’s family and the District Attorney assigned to the case.

The DA VA will contact the victim or victim’s family after every court date, in accordance with the Victim’s Constitutional Rights, to explain the outcome and the next step in the process. This contact will be by phone, as well as a letter, unless otherwise requested by the victim or victim’s family.

If the victim or victim’s family chooses to attend court, the VA will accompany them and ensure they are heard by the court when appropriate.

The VA will make referrals to community resources when appropriate, such as the Rape Assistance and Awareness Program or Parents of Murdered Children. If other resources are necessary the VA will work with the Community Based Advocates to assist the victim and families.

The VA will work with the victim and victim’s family to apply for Victim Compensation when appropriate. In most circumstances Victim Compensation must be applied for within one year of the date of crime. The Denver Compensation Board, however, has agreed to consider paying for Mental Health Counseling for Cold Case Victims even if they did not apply at the time of the crime. This relieves a huge burden for the victims whose trauma has returned due to the re-opening of the case.

The DA VA will communicate with the District Attorney any changes in the victim’s address or interest in pursuing the case.

The VA will communicate with the District Attorney any desires the victim may wish to relate to the court including: objecting to a bond reduction; objecting to a continuance; unavailability for a court appearance and request for restitution.

The VA can assist the victim or victim’s family in making travel and lodging arrangements to attend court appearances.
The VA will provide debriefing after a trial, for the victim and victim’s family, regardless of the verdict.

If the case results in a conviction the DA VA will refer the victim and victim’s family to either the Victim Advocate with the Department of Corrections or the Victim Advocate within the Probation Department for future information on the defendant.

If the case results in a finding of Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity the DA VA will refer the victim and families to the Victim Advocate at the Colorado Department of Mental Health for future information on the defendant.