



VICTIM SERVICES DIVISION

Phone (716) 945-1041 • Fax (716) 945-1301 • 24 Hour Hotline: 1-888-945-3970 • www.ccaction.org

Notice to People Seeking the Services

Cattaraugus Community Action's Victim Service Division (VS), is following the guidance of health professionals and Government officials and implementing steps aimed at reducing person to person contact during the health crisis caused by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

As a provider of victim services, we recognize that relationship and sexual abuse do not stop during a crisis such as the one that our Nation and the World is experiencing right now. To all those that are having to deal with the implications of this health crisis but are also scared or feel unsafe due to relationship and/or sexual abuse, please know that VS cares and we are here to help even as we put policies in place that reduce the person to person contact our staff and clients may have.

Status on the Availability of our Services

Walk-In Services at our Offices Suspended: We recommend that anyone seeking our services do so by phone during this time, our staff will be available during regular business hours. Our process for assisting people who come to our office has changed and services cannot be guaranteed to any individual who may have been exposed to positive cases of COVID-19. *****To speak to a Victim Services staff person immediately, please call:**

1-888-945-3970

24/7 Hotline OPEN: As always, Victim Service staff are available for emergencies by phone 24-hours a day, 7 days a week via our hotline (1-888-945-3970). Our hotline is answered by highly trained staff who can provide information about rights and options and help people access any options they choose. If there is no emergency but you need to speak to your advocate, please continue to follow the normal communication process that you have with your advocate or call the number for the specific office location that you meet with your advocate.

Olean Office – 716-372-2097

Wellsville Office- 585-593-4685

Salamanca Office- 716-945-1041

Emergency Domestic Violence Shelter Modified: Our shelter remains in operation and we will continue to assist our current residents as well as accept victims of domestic violence into our shelter when space and services are available.

Transportation Suspended: Victim Service staff will not be able to provide transportation services until further notice. Staff may be able to meet you at specific service locations when deemed safe and in accordance with guidance of health professionals and Government officials and implementing steps aimed at reducing person to person contact during the health crisis caused by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Sexual Assault Forensic Exams (SAFE) OPEN: Victim Service staff will continue to accompany victims of sexual assault through the SAFE process at both Olean General Hospital and Jones Memorial Hospital.

Assistance in Petitioning Family Court for Orders of Protection OPEN: Victim Service advocates will continue to assist victims of domestic violence in petitioning family court for orders of protection. This may be done in person or by phone. Each request will be assessed to determine the modality in which this service will be offered.

Accompaniment to Family Court Proceedings MODIFIED: The need for this will be assessed on a case by case basis and will also be subject to policies that the courts enact.

Accompaniment through the Police Report/Investigation Process OPEN: Victim Service advocates will continue to accompany victims of domestic violence or sexual assault through police reporting and investigation processes. We defer to the police agencies for any policies that they may enact related to COVID-19 and will follow those accordingly.

Victim Services Offered Outside of Business Hours OPEN: Outside of business hours, we will offer all the same services we currently offer with review by a supervisor for modifications when person to person contact is requested (SAFE, police response, shelter response).

Legal Services Modified: Legal services will be limited until further notice. We will assess everyone's legal needs on a case by case basis and create an appropriate linkage to ensure that people continue to have access to legal advice.

Therapy and Counseling services MODIFIED: Issue oriented therapy, counseling and emotional support will continue to be offered by phone either through a scheduled appointment or anytime via our hotline to any new people seeking the services of VS and any existing clients.

Case Management/Advocacy MODIFIED: People's needs will be assessed and information about rights and options will be provided. Any action that needs to be taken to assist the person in accessing any of those options will be determined on a case by case basis and a plan will be identified in a manner that reduces person to person contact as much as possible.

Community Engagement SUSPENDED: All community engagement activities will be suspended until further notice. Staff attendance at in-person, large group gatherings, such as meetings or conferences, will be suspended until further notice.

Donations MODIFIED: VS will continue to accept food, toiletry, cleaning supply, and financial donations (money or gift cards) so that we can help our clients meet their basic needs and support the operation of VS will continue to receive any items on our Amazon Wish List. VS will discontinue receiving any donations such as clothing and cell phones at this time.

*****For any Victim Service Donation Inquiries, please contact 1-888-945-3970*****