



Confidential referrals for crime victims



855-4-VICTIM

The National Center for Victims of Crime Launches National Helpline for Victims of All Crime

The VictimConnect Resource Center provides critical, confidential assistance through phone, text and chat

Join us for the public launch of the **VictimConnect Resource Center**. Joye Frost, Director of the Office for Victims of Crime, Department of Justice and Mai Fernandez, Executive Director of the National Center for Victims of Crime will be presenting the event.

When: Tuesday, April 26, 2016 at 10:30 a.m.

Where: Google, 25 Massachusetts Ave, NW #900, Washington, D.C. 20001

RSVP to Katie Fidrych at kfidrych@ncvc.org.

The event will be live-streamed at <http://victimconnect.org/launch>.

WASHINGTON, DC – The VictimConnect Resource Center (1-855-4VICTIM and www.chat.victimconnect.org), in operation since the summer, is hosting the public launch of a new national resource for victims of all crime to learn about their rights and options – confidentially and compassionately. Created through a partnership with the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice and the National Center for Victims of Crime, the VictimConnect Resource Center connects victims of crime with local, national, and online referrals through trained victim assistance specialists.

VictimConnect has a special focus on populations, crimes, and topics that are generally underrepresented or underserved in victim services including a Senior Services Program, through the Elder Abuse Initiative at the Department of Justice, dedicated to assisting senior victims of abuse and crime. Bilingual Spanish / English victim assistance specialists are available and have the ability to access translation services in more than 200 languages. Additionally, the Resource Center maintains a searchable online directory for victim service providers.

“There are many national hotlines and resources in existence that are dedicated to a specific type of crime,” said Mai Fernandez, Executive Director of the National Center for Victims of Crime. “VictimConnect provides a point of entry for victims of ALL crime from anywhere in the United States. That is what makes this helpline so unique. Our priority is to serve those most in need and to support them as they heal on their own terms.”

The launch event will be held at Google in Washington, D.C. and includes information on how the services operate, the partnership, outreach efforts and the gaps in services with presentations from Joye Frost, Director of Office for Victims of Crime as well as Mai Fernandez and Victoria Hougham, Director of Victim Services at the National Center for Victims of Crime.

VictimConnect has already received over 3,000 calls and nearly 300 chats. Three-quarters of the inquiries to the helpline are directly from the victims who have experienced the crime. The majority of the calls to have included topics such as assault, harassment, homicide, stalking, domestic and intimate partner violence, and financial crimes. Calls have come in from across the country with the highest amount of calls coming from California, Florida, Texas, New York, Ohio and Texas. A victim assistance specialist fields each call individually and seeks to connect the victim with the most appropriate resource, which is most often case management, financial assistance, crime reporting and legal assistance.

The VictimConnect Resource Center telephone service operates Monday through Friday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. EST, with chat available from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST. If you or someone you know is a victim of any crime, contact the VictimConnect Resource Center by phone and text at 1-855-4VICTIM (1-855-484-2846) and through chat at www.chat.victimconnect.org.

About the VictimConnect Resource Center:

The VictimConnect Resource Center is a resource for victims of all crime to learn about their rights and options—confidentially and compassionately. VictimConnect can be accessed anywhere in the United States through a traditional telephone-based helpline and innovative text and online chat services Monday through Friday. Services are available in English and Spanish and interpreters for more than 200 languages can be accessed. Victim assistance specialists help people who reach out find appropriate national, local, or online resources. Additionally, victimconnect.org has information regarding types of crime, crime statistics, and maintains a searchable online directory for crime victim service providers.