



Board of County Commissioners

County of Hunterdon
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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hunterdon Prosecutor's Victims Assistance Unit To Receive Grant

Hunterdon County's Victim Witness unit in the Prosecutor's Office, which provides support services for victims of violent crime, will benefit from a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant approved by the Hunterdon County Board of Commissioners, at the April 6th meeting.

The Board of County Commissioners' Deputy Director, John E. Lanza, stated, "The grant provides funding for an incredibly important program.

The Prosecutor's Office is generally associated with the investigation and prosecution of criminals and crimes, but where there are crimes, there are also victims. And those are people that deserve attention, support, and advocacy, which is provided by the county's victim witness unit, funded by this grant with a county budget match."

Lanza, the Board's liaison to the Prosecutor's Office, said, "The three person unit provides support services for victims of violent crime throughout the victim's involvement with the criminal justice system, including court accompaniment, notice of important court events, referrals for counseling and housing, and assistance with restitution efforts, among other activities.

Through the program emergency shelter can be arranged for domestic violence victims and is particularly important in sexual assault cases. The team goes so far as to provide clothing for victims, if needed, to testify in court."

The grant for \$265,492 is through the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety. The program was created in 1984 by Congress, so that state programs had federal support for victims of crimes. Hunterdon County provides a \$175,445 budget match.



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Acting Prosecutor Michael J. Williams said, “Sadly, all crimes produce victims. Although most people typically equate a prosecutor’s office with the investigating of crimes and the convicting of offenders, those are but two of its many component parts. One extremely important function of the Hunterdon County Prosecutor’s Office is assisting crime victims in navigating the criminal justice system.

Our Victim Witness Unit accompanies our victims from the commission of a crime through prosecution, and beyond. Simply put, we would not be able to do justice for our citizens without the skilled and dedicated members of this Unit, who are the face of the Prosecutor’s Office for those victimized by illegal conduct.”