



Victim/Witness Programs and Current Status

April 2, 2020

<u>County/City</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Status</u>
Anoka	Metro	Emily Douglas	We have minimum staff in the office, but the government center is closed to the public.
Bloomington	Metro	Wendy Murphy	Bloomington has an opening for a victim/witness coordinator. We have begun the interview and hiring process. Bloomington will not have victim/witness staff available to assist with civil DV/SA issues during this time.
Brown	SW	Bernie Epper	Brown County is officially closed to the public. I am available to assist in bringing any paperwork to the courthouse. Brown County also has a box set up at our law enforcement center for all paperwork that needs to be submitted to the courthouse; this gets checked three times a day and delivered to the proper office.
Carver	Metro	Nancy Yates	Our courthouse is closed. Our V/W staff is able to assist victims. However, it is likely to be via Facetime or by phone. We have encouraged victims to go online to find the court form and then contact court administration to file.
Chippewa	SW	Denise Loy	I am working remotely but am able to assist victims via phone.
Clay	NW	Pam Foss	Right now, we have victim services in our office. However, our community advocate has an office in the courthouse, so they have let her work out her office and not restricted her access to the courthouse.
Cook	NE	Leah Ekstrom	Our staff are working from home. Our courthouse now has restricted public access available. People need to call ahead and make appointments as the building will be locked to the general public coming and going. The courthouse wants to stress that we are not closed, just restricted. We have worked out a system with our local DV/SA partners that I am available to talk and work people through applications and if it can't be accomplished via phone or other method I will meet people to help them get paperwork for civil orders and help with filing.
Coon Rapids	Metro	Megan Thornwall	I am available by phone and email but not physically in the office as the majority of criminal cases have been cancelled until

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			4/22/20. Our local domestic violence agency, Alexandra House, is still assisting victims with protective orders but over the phone and victims are then emailing/faxing or dropping off at a drop box at the courthouse as all face to face services have been suspended at the courthouse as well. Due to my position I am not able to file/fill out the forms with victims, but I certainly give information on how to file/where to file.
Crow Wing	NW	Julie Charpentier	I am available by appointment to assist victims. Working in office (doors are closed to the public) and also working remotely from home.
Dakota	Metro	Kelly Nicholson	None of the victim/witness staff in Dakota County are working in the office.
Faribault	SE	Kathleen Karjala	I currently do not have a victim/witness coordinator. One hopefully will be starting April 6, but unless and until there is a shelter at home order she will be physically in the office. Since we get an OJP grant and best practice is that she not do civil orders for protection, I will have her refer individuals to CADA who remains open and does assist with civil orders for protection. Otherwise she will be assisting victims from the office.
Hennepin	Metro	Sheila Poechmann Therese Lockwood	Most of the advocates are working from home. I am going in a couple days per week (in juvenile) to get letters out and any other office work my coworkers need. I do have a few court hearings I have gone to also. Yesterday we had the victims call in to the courtroom to be “present” for the hearing. However, the community advocate showed up in court too. We ARE working remotely, and the Government Center is pretty much on lock down for general public.
Hubbard	NW	Jill Christenson	I am working at home.
Isanti	Central	Brenda Skogman	I will be here and am always willing to help our community-based program.
Itasca	NE	Dida Foster	I am working from home.
Kanabec	Central	Cheryl Terhaar	I am currently working from home and going into the office at the end of the day to print letters and get them to the post office and to also file any restitution affidavits or deal with mail that has come in. I am available by email and by phone. My work number rolls over to the main switchboard and when someone calls my direct number, the legal assistant emails me with the person’s name/number and I call them. I spoke with Kari from The Refuge yesterday to see what their current working situation is. They are all working from home and are able to help a DV/SA victim over the phone with an HRO/OPF.

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			The Petitioner then brings the OFP/HRO to the courthouse to be filed. Kari said they are doing OFP/HRO hearings over the phone if needed.
Kandiyohi	SW	Bridget Pederson	<p>The Kandiyohi County Office Buildings are closed to the public. At County Attorney's Office, we are only allowed to do meetings by phone and no face-to-face contact with the public is allowed. Currently, one Victim Services Coordinator is working at the office and one is working from home.</p> <p>The Courthouse in Willmar is only allowing parties to an action in the courthouse and the courtrooms plus judges and court staff. Victim Service Coordinators are not allowed in the courthouse/rooms at this time. Victims are not allowed in the courthouse and we are being directed to give them updates by phone or email.</p> <p>Per the Kandiyohi County Attorney, Victim Services Coordinators will not provide assistance to victims of DV and SA with civil documents. We are still able to help in the way we always have, meaning that we can give them copies of documents, send them to links, tell them what the documents are, and refer them to Safe Avenues for further assistance.</p>
Lake	NE	Stephanie Pry	<p>I do know that our community-based victim service agency has an advocate in their main building to assist any walk ins. They're also called by law enforcement if we get a DV/SA case, to connect the victim with their agency right away.</p> <p>I am also available remotely to assist as I have the ability to e-file any order.</p>
Le Sueur	SE	Vicki Walechka	I am physically at the office and more than willing to help with orders and file them as needed.
Meeker	SW	Angie Maus	The courthouse and our office are closed to the public and I am unable to meet with people one on one. I have been helping victims via the telephone to download the OFP petitions and directing them to either fax the paperwork to court administration or myself (in most of our rural communities, the grocery stores send faxes for less than a dollar).
Pennington	NW	Gretchen Weinrich	Pennington County Justice Center is closed to the public, so I am planning to do OFP/HRO petitions over the phone. I am working from home.
Pine	Central	LoAnn Westerman	I am currently working from home, coming into the office minimally to catch up on file work if needed as well as to pick/drop work off, so I am not physically in the office most days. At that time or by that time, we should be notified if the work from home plan is still in place or if we are going to be allowed to return.

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Polk	NW	Dana Johnson	Polk County Victim Services does not have staff in office (working from home) at this time but we are assisting those who need HROs/OFPs with doing this through e-file and answering their questions over the phone. There is limited staff at Community Health Services last I heard that are still working in office.
Ramsey	Metro	Tami McConkey	Our staff is working at home. They are going to court when the victims in their cases want to attend court. In the last two weeks we've only had one. I just spoke w/Nykee Younghans in our Court Domestic Abuse/Harassment Office. They are not allowing anyone in the building unless they have a hearing. When victims come for hearings, they are allowing an advocate (community or systems) in, but they are not able to allow supportive friends, etc. With respect to filing the paperwork for orders, no one can come into the building to do this – it all must be online. They are referring victims to Tubman and St. Paul Intervention for assistance.
Red Lake	NW	Kelly Rogalla	I am working from home. I will be assisting with OFPs and HROs from there when needed. Violence Intervention Project (community-based) and I are working together to see how all this will work. I will continue to have access to the courthouse when needed.
Rochester	SE	Emily Bakken	We are moving forward with very limited staff being physically present in the office. Both of the Victim/Witness Liaisons are working remotely, so we are still available by phone, but we are not physically available.
Roseau	NW	Connie Grindeland	Roseau County has closed the courthouse to members of the public at this time. I am currently based at home and will be assisting DV and SA victims over the phone.
Stevens	Central	Susie Hanson	I am always willing to help. However, where and how I work is changing by the day. Also, victims are not allowed in our courthouse unless a judge decides they need a hearing. The court window is closed to everyone, including me. HRO/OFP applications are being distributed and received through our community-based advocate. People who don't want to work with an advocate can email, mail, or call court to meet at the front door if necessary.
St. Louis	NE	Jerry Koneczny	In the four office locations for the St. Louis County Attorney, the Duluth main office has Victim/Witness staff available on site. The Duluth satellite office at Government Services, as well as the Virginia and Hibbing Courthouse offices have V/W staff working mostly off site but are available to answer questions via email and telephone.

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		Elaine Lee	<p>I'll mention that in Duluth, the judges have been allowing domestic abuse advocates to be present for the limited hearings taking place.</p> <p>I am working at home. There will be no other VW staff in the Hibbing or Virginia offices in St. Louis County.</p>
St. Paul	Metro	Kathleen Salaba	Our victim/witness team from the St. Paul City Attorney's Office is working from home at this time.
Watonwan	SW	Melissa Cornelius	<p>I am the only victim/witness advocate and we have one community-based advocate. Our courthouse is closed to the public indefinitely. Our Court Admin will be working remotely until April 22nd. OFP and HRO packets are available at our Sheriff's Office entrance to the courthouse. The community-based advocate is trying to work with victims by phone as much as possible but is willing to meet with victims if necessary. There will be a drop-box checked daily outside the courthouse or we can email the applications to our Court Admin staff. Both the community-based advocate and I will be available by phone as much as we can. I will be working in the office some time and remotely other times so there will not always be someone physically in our office. While our courthouse is closed both the community-based advocates and victims would not be allowed to enter the courthouse.</p> <p>We do have a few sentencing hearings and the Chief Justice and our county courthouse are allowing direct victims of the crime to attend the sentencing hearing.</p>
Wright	Central	Jenny Paripovich	Our DV agency is able to file OFP/HRO by email and fax. This should not affect them. At this time, Wright County V/W program staff are working from home (for the most part). With that said, we would be able to assist them if this becomes an issue. We have essential staff that are working in the office and court.
Yellow Medicine	SW	Linda Hagen	<p>Staff from our office are to work from home until further notice. I am not to go to any court hearings and that I was to get information from the attorney as to what happened at the hearing so it could be relayed to the victim. We were all asked not to have face-to-face contact with anyone. If it's necessary, we are to keep the social distancing rule and wear masks and gloves and sanitize after the person has left.</p> <p>As far as OFPs and HROs, victims are being referred to complete them online if they can. If they don't have the capability, they are to contact the community-based advocate or me and we are to call them and do it over the phone.</p>