

A. Purpose

1. The purpose of this directive is to provide all members with information and guidelines for the provision of victim and witness assistance.

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B. Policy

1. It is the policy of this Service to ensure that all victims and witnesses of crime are informed of, and given access to, all rights and privileges accorded them by law, and that they are treated with fairness, compassion and dignity. This Service will continue to work in partnership with all interested stakeholders in order to promote the development of an integrated service delivery framework for providing assistance to victims, including safety planning.

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C. Definitions

1. For the purposes of this directive, the following definitions shall apply:
 - (a) "volunteer" - means a volunteer (non-paid) member of Victim Services of Peel;
 - (b) "victim" – includes:
 - (i) a person who, as a result of the commission of a crime by another, suffers emotional or physical harm, loss of or damage to property or economic harm and, if the commission of the crime results in the death of the person, and:
 - includes a child or parent of the person, within the meaning of Section 1 of the Family Law Act; and,
 - includes a dependant, spouse or same-sex partner of the person, all within the meaning of Section 29 of the Family Law Act, but does **not** include a child, parent, dependant, spouse or same-sex partner who is charged with or has been convicted of committing the crime; and,
 - (ii) those designated as such by Officers of this Service; and,
 - (c) "witness" - includes those who, as determined by this Service, have information or evidence relevant to the investigation of a crime, but does **not** include Defence Witnesses or anyone engaged in the commission of the crime.

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D. General

1. Members shall ensure the confidentiality of victims and witnesses and their role in case development to the extent consistent with applicable law.
2. In collaboration with Victim Services and the Victim/Witness Assistance Program, the public shall be informed of the available victim/witness assistance services through proactive outreach, including the use of brochures, posters, personal and video presentations, and