



The Victim Advocate helps to ensure that all rights of a crime victim are protected. Advocates can assist crime victims with law enforcement, throughout the court system and with service providers. The Anderson Police Department's Victim Advocate assists women and children in domestic violence situations get into Safe Harbor II which is the local domestic violence shelter. The Advocate refers crime victims to service providers in Anderson such as Family Counseling Center, Foothills Alliance, Upstate Homeless Coalition, SunShine House, Anderson Interfaith Ministries, Crisis Ministries, Behavioral Health Services, DSS, Good Neighbor Cupboard, Salvation Army, Haven of Rest and Safe Harbor II.

Barbara Groves assist crime victims in filling out Orders of Protections, Restraining Orders and State Office of Victim Assistance Compensation (SOVA) forms. They also attend Order of Protection hearings in Family Court with the victims and Restraining Order hearings in Summary Court. SOVA is available to assist crime victims with medical bills, counseling, lost wages and funeral bills. SOVA is a last resort payee which means that victims must file with their health insurance company, Medicare or Medicaid first and then SOVA is the last source of payment. SOVA is available to crime victims if they meet their requirement which is as follows:

- Be involved in a crime in the State of South Carolina
- Receive physical injury as a result of the crime
- Cannot be involved in any illegal activity at the time of the crime
- Report the incident to law enforcement within 48 hours
- Fully cooperate with law enforcement
- Fill out and submit SOVA form within 180 days of crime

SOVA will pay directly to the health provider. If you file for SOVA, then the Advocates will assist you in the application process and mail all forms to SOVA. Once the application is filed, the victim should contact SOVA directly providing them with the information that they request of the victim by mail. SOVA will not pre approve a victim for health care services. Information that is needed by the Advocates in requesting funeral bill payment is a copy of the funeral bill, death certificate and the person who is responsible for the bill to sign the SOVA application. If you need assistance with a SOVA application, please contact the Victim Advocates.

The Advocate also assists law enforcement with interviewing victims and providing services at the Emergency Room for sexual assault victims. The Advocates can attend court with the victim and assist the victim at bond hearings in the Anderson Municipal Court.

If the victim is a victim of a crime that is a state case, tried in the Court of General Sessions, the victim and all of their information is referred to the Anderson County Solicitor's Office Victim Advocates. The Solicitor's Officer Advocates will notify the victim of any hearings or plea agreements.

If you are a victim of a crime and wish to speak with the Victim Advocate, please contact Barbara Groves at 864-260-4858, bgroves@cityofandersonsc.com.