



# **NUNAVUT VICTIM SERVICES**

**Annual Report 2020-2021**

**Department of Justice**

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## INTRODUCTION

Nunavut Victim Services is part of the Community Justice Division of the Department of Justice. It consists of four main programs:

- 1) Nunavut Victim Assistance Fund, administered by the Victim Services Coordinator;
- 2) Nunavut Victim Travel Support Program, administered by the Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator;
- 3) Nunavut Victims Training Program, administered by the Victim Care Coordinator; and
- 4) Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU), administered by the Information Referral Coordinator

Of the four staff positions in Victim Services, the Victim Services Coordinator position is core funded within the GN structure.

Victim Services continue to receive multi-year funding from Justice Canada to develop and implement training sessions and educational materials for frontline service providers, Victim Services staff, and volunteers to effectively respond to victims holistically. This funding also provides financial support to enable victims of crime and their families to travel for court proceedings. As well, this funding also provides salaries and benefits for Victim Care Coordinator and the Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator positions. Victim Services received \$3,742,836 over a five-year period starting April 2021 and ending March 2026.

In July 2017, the Government of Nunavut secured three-year funding totaling \$790,400 from the federal government to establish a Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU) that would complement the work of the national Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). This funding is used to support the Information Referral Coordinator position and to support MMIWG families.

## SECTION 1: NUNAVUT VICTIMS ASSISTANCE FUND

### NUNAVUT VICTIM ASSISTANCE FUND

The *Victims of Crime Act* establishes the Nunavut Victim Assistance Fund and provides for the creation of a Victim Assistance Committee (VAC) to allocate the fund.

The Victim Assistance Fund (VAF) is a special purpose fund maintained with revenue from victim fine surcharges. It was established to support community-based projects and activities that provide services and assistance to victims of crime. This includes the following:

- **Training** aimed at sensitizing community resource workers to the needs and circumstances of victims of crime;
- **Direct services** that assist victims through crisis response, personal support, follow-up assistance, victim information and systems referral;
- **Public awareness and information** on the rights and responsibilities of victims, available services, the criminal justice system and its procedures, and any issues relating to victims of crime; and
- **Research projects** on the best practice of addressing issues faced by victims of crime across Canada and the development of strategies that will best support Nunavummiut who have been harmed by crime.
- A call for project proposals is announced in all Nunavut communities twice a year (Spring and Fall). Project proposals are reviewed by VAC members and the recommended projects are sent to the Minister of Justice for approval.

## VICTIM ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

The Victim Assistance Committee (VAC) is made up of three members, each representing a region in Nunavut. They are appointed by the Minister of Justice to serve their respective regions for up to three years. VAC members are respected community members with knowledge of and experience in dealing with justice and social issues.

The Committee members for 2020-2021 are:

Kendall Greenley-Aknavigak, of the Kitikmeot Region

Marie Lucie Uviluq, of the Kitikmeot Region and

Charlene Nichol, of the Kivalliq Region

## VICTIM SERVICES COORDINATOR

The Victim Assistance Fund (VAF) is administered by a Victim Service Coordinator. The role of the Victim Services Coordinator is to provide support in the following areas:

**Victim Assistance Committee** - provide training which supports the committee's function to achieve their goals; maintain an open ongoing platform for Committee members to share information on current issues faced by victims of crime in their respective regions and to discuss strategies that address these issues.

**VAF Applicants** - to assist individuals and/or non-governmental organizations to develop effective projects that align with healing and empowering the survivors of crime. Also providing support to applicants with proposal and report writing.

**Public Awareness** - establish initiatives to raise public awareness about impacts of victimization and the supports available in our communities.

## KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

All three members for the Victim Assistance Committee was appointed.

## CHALLENGES

The Victim Assistance Fund is made up of territorial and federal surcharges collected by the Nunavut Court of Justice. Until recently, federal victim surcharges under the Criminal Code were mandatory. However, in December 2018, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that mandatory federal surcharges were unconstitutional. In response, in March 2018, the federal government introduced Bill C-75. This Bill would amend the Criminal Code to give judges the discretion to order the federal surcharge, but the surcharge would no longer be mandatory.

Note that the Supreme Court decision does not likely affect territorial surcharges. This is because, under the

territorial Victims of Crime Act, a judge already has the discretion to waive a surcharge. Moreover, C-75 does not affect territorial surcharges, as that Bill only has to do with surcharges under federal jurisdiction.

Due to ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions, Victim Services Coordinator was unable to train newly appointed Victim Assistance Committee members and facilitate a call for proposal for Victim Assistance Fund.

## **FUTURE DIRECTION**

The Community Justice division is currently working on building capacity on the Victim Assistance Committee and facilitating a call for proposal to distribute Victim Assistance Fund.

## **VICTIM ASSISTANCE FUND - FINANCIAL REPORT**

See Appendix A

## **NUNAVUT VICTIMS TRAINING PROGRAM**

The Nunavut Victims Training Program was formerly known as Nunavut Victim Care Program. The name of the program was changed to reflect the mandate of the program, which is to increase support, training, and services for victims of crime in Nunavut by strategic partnerships with other government and non-government agencies. The purpose of this Program is to increase the quality of culturally relevant and safe support and services for victims of crime in Nunavut and to mitigate the harm caused by crime. The target populations for the Program include, but are not limited to, frontline service providers, victim services team and volunteers.

## **KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Training for Victim Services Staff**

In addition to providing training to front line service providers, the Nunavut Victims Training Fund financed the professional development of Victim Services staff to access nationally recognized and specialized training tailored for Nunavummiut to address grief and loss, abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, addictions, controlling and hurtful behavior.

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, in 2020-2021, the Victim Care Coordinator mostly attended online trainings via Microsoft Teams, Zoom and other video conferencing platforms.

The Victim Care Coordinator attended the following trainings, webinars, and workshops offered by

Boost Child and Youth Advocacy Center:

- The Normalization of Sexual Harm
- Implementing a Remote Testimony Room: Sharing Insights and findings
- Shelter Movers: A survivor-centered Approach to Helping Women Flee Abuse
- Building Trauma-informed Organizations: Challenges & Promising Strategies
- Family Factors Related to Increased Risk of Family Violence during Covid-19 pandemic
- Raising Canada: Advocating for Children's Right to a Life Free of Violence

The Victim Care Coordinator attended a three-day workshop/ panel discussion facilitated for the 20th Annual Diverse Voices: Family Violence Conference for the following topics:

- Resistance, Resilience and Readiness: Exploring What it Takes to Turn the Corner with Those Who Experience Intimate Partner Violence
- Healing from Violence Related to Historic and Intergenerational Trauma
- Understanding Grief Recovery and its Impact on Healing Survivors of Violence
- Keynote sessions: Rediscovering the Beauty Within (after violence), resiliency, working with faith communities, best practices in sexual violence prevention, from trauma to triumph: a survivor's guide to conquering life after domestic violence

The Victim Care Coordinator attended webinars that addressed:

- Intersection between Domestic Violence and Child Sexual Assault and Covid-19
- Multidisciplinary Responses to Complex Homicide Cases
- Traumatic Grief Responses through the Lens of Death Notification
- Spiritual Sensitivity in Homicide Cases

The Victim Care Coordinator attended webinars facilitated by the Child Advocacy Center:

- Minimal Facts Interviewing
- Talking to Kids about Body Safety
- Online Safety
- Child Abuse and Neglect 201
- Stewards of Trauma
- Male victims of Sexual Assault
- Problematic Sexual Behaviors

The Victim Care Coordinator participated in the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime meeting with the federal, provincial, and territorial counterparts to discuss and receive information on:

- The Release of Progress Report on Canadian Victims Bill of Rights
- Moving towards Enforceable Rights for Victims of Crime in Canada

### **Training for community partners and the public**

The Victim Care Coordinator developed a variety of interactive training packages to deliver to targeted audience using different forums, such as:

- Interagency information sessions to promote cultural awareness, cultural safety and trauma-

informed practices when working with victims of crime in their various capacities: Members of interagency group in the communities include RCMP officers, Community Justice Outreach Workers (CJOWs), Mental Health Nurses, Consultants and Counselors, traditional Inuit Counselors, Wellness Centre Counselors Nurses and Health Centre staff, Community Social Services Workers, Community Corrections Officers, Nunavut Arctic College's Student Counselors and local Hamlet staff.

The Victim Care Coordinator visited nine communities; Igloolik, Sanirajak, Rankin Inlet, Arviat, Kugluktuk, Pangnirtug, Kinngait, Resolute Bay, and Iqaluit to facilitate the interagency information sessions. During these community visits, the Victim Care Coordinator provided training around victims needs and trauma informed practices to front line service providers in the local interagency groups. The Victim Care Coordinator also met with Public Prosecution Services Canada (PPSC) in Yellowknife to discuss the ongoing support for clients in the Kitikmeot region.

- Collaboration with various Working Groups (WG), interdepartmental agencies and non-profit organizations: Victim Care Coordinator participated in the following working groups and initiatives to inform participants of Victim Services
  - Respectful Handling of the Deceased Working Group to gather information and identify gaps in services for Nunavut families with deceased family members. Departments of Family Services, Health, Community and Government Services and Justice staff collaborated to assist families in dealing with loss of family members;
  - Crisis Response Team with Innusivut Division, Department of Health to ensure that victim of crime in Nunavut communities have immediate support, if necessary, aftermath of a crime;
  - Umingmak Child Advocacy Centre Case Review Working Group to review and discuss the cases referred to the Umingmak Centre. Various stakeholders such as the RCMP, Family Services and Victim Services are invited to review the referral process and make recommendations to improve the processes at the Umingmak Centre;
- Information sessions with victims of crime and their families on specific issues: Through self-referrals or referrals from other stakeholders (RCMP, Mental Health, PPSC, and community partners) victims of crime and their families receive information sessions on many issues that affect them in the aftermath of crime.
- Department of Justice Career Fair: Victim Care Coordinator and other Community Justice staff set up information booth at the Department of Justice Career Fair. This was an opportunity for information dissemination through pamphlets, fact sheets, booklets, and flash drives with information about Victim Services, *Family Abuse Intervention Act* program and Restorative Justice Diversion Program.

## Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic



The Victim Care Coordinator canceled community visits and face-to face meetings scheduled with stakeholders and clients throughout 2020-2021 fiscal year due to multiple lockdowns and travel restrictions. However, during the lockdown, the Victim Care Coordinator continue to provide services by

- Informing clients of updated court dates and postponements
- Providing referrals and counseling resources over the phone
- Preparing safety plans and mitigating risk factors for victims in anticipation of offenders' early releases and releases through bail into their communities

## **CHALLENGES**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, Victim Training Program did not reach as many targeted communities as planned. Face to face meetings, presentations and information sharing sessions with clients and stakeholders were also canceled.

## **FUTURE DIRECTION**

The Victim Care Coordinator continues to build strong working relationships with various government departments and non-government agencies for the purposes of joint project coordination and a closer collaboration on victim issues. These interagency working groups help identify the priorities and standard of care for victims of crime.

## **NUNAVUT VICTIMS TRAVEL SUPPORT PROGRAM**

The Nunavut Victims Travel Support Program provides financial support for victims and survivors of crime to travel and participate in court proceedings that are held outside their home communities. This includes financial support for air travel, accommodation, and meals for the duration of court proceedings. The Program also allows for the Victim Travel Support Coordinator to travel to various Nunavut communities to provide support for victims and their families before, during and after court proceedings.

## **KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Participation in the Court Proceedings**

During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator traveled to eight communities (Baker Lake, Cambridge Bay, Kingaait, Naujaat, Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet, Sanikiluaq, and Taloyoak) to provide before, during, and after support to victims and their families attending court. The Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator also assisted victims and their families to access traditional, community-based, and clinical counseling services during challenging hearings and aftercare for families.

Clients were supported in a variety of ways:

- 33 victims and support persons from nine Nunavut Communities (Cambridge Bay, Clyde River, Coral Harbour, Iqaluit, Kimmirut, Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet, Qikiqtarjuaq, Rankin Inlet, and Qikiqtarjuaq) were provided with funding to allow them to attend court proceedings in other communities.
- In addition to clients in Nunavut, the program was accessed by clients from four out of territory locations - St Johns, NFL; Ottawa, ON; Inuvik, NWT, and Edmonton, AB.
- The Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator assisted victims attending 11 court proceedings such as preliminary hearings, trials, and sentencing hearings.

The support and services offered include:

- Educating victims of crime on their rights to information, participation, restitution, and protection;
- Advocating for a statement of restitution to be addressed alongside the crime in court proceedings;
- Supporting victims to write and present a Victim Impact Statement and Community Impact statements;
- Advocating for testimonial aids, where applicable;
- Assisting with Peace bond applications and court accompaniment and;
- Victim registrations with Correctional Services of Canada and Parole Board of Canada post-sentencing.

### **Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Some court proceedings were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and various travel restrictions imposed during 2020-2021. Some families were unable to travel due to delay and cancellations in court proceedings. However, during the lockdown, the Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator continued to provide supports and services by

- informing clients of updated court dates and postponements
- making referrals to counseling resources for over the phone supports
- preparing safety plans and mitigating risk factors for victims in anticipation of offenders' early releases and releases through bail into their communities

## **Collaboration with Justice Partners**

The Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator works in collaboration with staff from the Corrections division of the Department of Justice to notify victims of crime when an offender applies for early release or temporary absence for compassionate leave. This is an important service for the victims, as it allows them to mentally prepare themselves for the offenders' return to the community. The Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator informed the victim of the release and assist each victim to access counseling and additional protective referrals such as the Emergency Protection Order or a Peace Bond application.

The Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator and the Public Prosecution Services of Canada (PPSC) continue to work in partnership to share accommodation costs for the testifying witnesses (victims) and their support persons when testifying outside of the victims' home community. This is an important partnership as it allows for victims to have their natural support networks to be alongside them when recalling traumatic events to provide testimonies during court.

Partnerships with other Justice stakeholders such as the Major Crime Unit of Royal Canadian Mounted Police continues to be strengthened and allows for the Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator to disseminate information regarding ongoing police investigations to the victims and their family members.

The Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator also collaborated with staff from the Department of Family Services, Department of Health, Mental Health, non-profit organizations such as the Department of Healthy Living in Cambridge Bay, Ilisaqsivik Society in Clyde River and Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre in Rankin Inlet to provide income support and financial assistance, mental health clinical counselling, and community based, traditional counselling for victims and their families.

## **CHALLENGES**

### **Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, travel for some victims and their families were canceled. Victims and families from Coral Harbour, Iqaluit, Pangnirtung, Rankin Inlet, and Qikiqtarjuaq were not able to travel to other communities since court proceedings were also canceled.

## **FUTURE DIRECTION**

The Department of Justice is committed to the advancement of victim services and will continue to build momentum going forth. The Victim Travel Support Program Coordinator continues to build

stronger relationships with various justice partners to create seamless service and supports for victims of crime.

## FAMILY INFORMATION LIAISON UNIT (FILU)

The Family Information Liaison Unit is a new resource for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) families and is intended to help these families access third party information about their missing or murdered loved ones. Other supports provided by the Information Referral Coordinator are referrals to traditional health supports and facilitating meetings between families and the various record holders.

### KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Family members of women and girls who were deceased and categorized under Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) were able to access funding and resources through Family Information Liaison Unit. Family members and community members from ten communities; Cambridge Bay, Coral Harbour, Igloolik, Iqaluit, Kuujuaq, Naujaat, Pond Inlet and Rankin Inlet and families from two southern locations; Ontario, and Alberta received assistance from the Information Referral Coordinator to access information regarding their deceased loved ones and to plan events/ activities for healing.

The Information Referral Coordinator assisted families who attended the National Inquiry for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls by making sure that families were able to access counseling resources after the Inquiry ended. Some families of MMIWG were not able to attend the Inquiry; however, the Information Referral Coordinator also assisted them with referrals to counseling services.

The Information Referral Coordinator organized and facilitated various gatherings listed below to meet their needs. FILU provided funding for the events and the Elders who assisted as counselors.

- Private Family Healing Sessions: families of MMIWG participated in private counseling/ healing events with family members to commemorate their deceased loved ones. Elders were identified by families to facilitate traditional healing practices and families held events such as burial site visits, release of balloons, blessing and cleansing of the crime scene to process their grief.
- Group Healing Workshop: The Information Referral Coordinator partnered with the Manitoba Inuit Association to host a three-day workshop in Rankin Inlet, the Red Amautiit Project. Participants at this Project were family members of MMIWG, and they came together to sew an amautiit in commemoration of their loved ones. An Elder from Rankin Inlet was present at the workshop to facilitate healing process and to create an emotionally safe environment for participants to share their lived experiences.
- Celebration of Life Ceremonies: some families of MMIWG access funding from FILU for memorial services and community feasts to celebrate the life lost. The Information Referral Coordinator facilitated several planning meetings with families to address their needs and

concerns. Elders were identified for counseling during these events.

### **Collaborations with Justice Partners**

The Information Referral Coordinator worked together with the members of RCMP Major Crime Unit in Nunavut and the RCMP Advisor to FILU, Contract and Aboriginal Policing to assist MMIWG families to receive clarification regarding unanswered questions and updates on respective investigations. Face to face meetings between the families, the Information Referral Coordinator and identified stakeholders took place in Iqaluit, Igloolik, Coral Harbour and Ottawa.

The Information Referral Coordinator also collaborated with FILU and Coroner's office in Ontario, alongside RCMP members and Forensic Pathologist to provide MMIWG family with information requested.

The information Referral Coordinator referred out and received referrals from indigenous partners including Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI) and Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI). FILU's positive collaborations with Inuit organizations played an important role in enhancing support for clients, especially if they are out of the territory. Inuit, outside of Nunavut were able to utilize traditional meeting spaces and culturally relevant services through TI.

Additionally, the Coordinator has maintained good relations with other FILU representatives who sit on the Federal/Provincial and Territories (FPT) working group. This has allowed seamless flow of referrals in and out of Nunavut. The group has been a great resource for best practices and the knowledge exchange has been remarkable.

## **CHALLENGES**

### **Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, some gatherings and face to face meetings with MMIWG families were postponed.

During the lockdown, the Information Referral Coordinator continue to assist clients and families over the phone to provide referral services.

## **FUTURE DIRECTION**

The Government of Nunavut, Department of Justice is committed to advancement of victim services and will continue to build momentum going forward.

## APPENDIX A: VICTIMS ASSISTANCE FUND 2020-2021 FINANCIAL REPORT

### Statement of Revenue & Expenditures, April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

<b>Opening Balance</b>		<b>\$ 157,641.88</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Federal Contributions	\$ 101,491.49	
Interest accumulated (2020-2021)	<u>\$ 3,608.15</u>	
	\$ 105,099.64	
		<b>\$ 262,741.52</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Disbursements - Contribution Agreements	<u>\$ 52,762.50</u>	
	\$ 52,762.50	
<b>Closing Balance</b>		<b>\$209,979.02</b>