



**pennsylvania**

OFFICE OF VICTIM ADVOCATE

*Giving Crime Victims a Voice*

*Courage • Strength • Resilience*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 27, 2020**

## **On City of Philadelphia Victim Services**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Victims/survivors of crime deserve to feel safe and heard, especially in the immediate aftermath of trauma. Across the landmark city of Philadelphia are a plethora of trauma informed organizations that serve victims/survivors of crime. Often, these agencies are comprised of those who know firsthand the devastation that crime can cause.

The city violent crime rate for Philadelphia in 2016 was 149% higher than the national average; the city property crime rate was 28% higher than the national average.\*

Creating an oversight office for a large city, such as Philadelphia, to ensure networking, education, and victims' rights compliance is another step in providing trauma informed services to crime victims/survivors. In the wake of crime, the response provided by local programs doesn't necessarily correspond to any criminal charges or convictions. The humanity that emerges in these moments provides hope and healing for victims/survivors at a time when it's needed most; having an office with the resources to coordinate efforts is a huge step forward.

"Today, the Pennsylvania Office of Victim Advocate joins the Philadelphia City Council in highlighting the need to ensure that all victims and survivors of crime are protected, informed and empowered with the rights and services the law requires. We applaud the efforts of City Councilman Kenyatta Johnson in proposing this resolution and encourage its swift passage to establish an office that will serve citizens by ensuring compliance with victims' rights laws and providing services to all victims and surviving family members," shares Commonwealth Victim Advocate Jennifer Storm.

*The Office of Victim Advocate maintains a [Victim Service Directory](#) for use by advocates in the Philadelphia area. If you know of an organization that should be added, please contact Ashley Walkowiak at [anwalkowiak@pa.gov](mailto:anwalkowiak@pa.gov) or 717-773-2399.*

\*Data sourced from the FBI Report on Offenses Known to Law Enforcement.

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