
THE FOLLOWING IS A BROADCAST EMAIL

Dear Colleague:

On February 2, 2014, MetLife Stadium in New Jersey will host Super Bowl XLVIII. Such a significant event coming to the New York Metro area will provide an opportunity to show the nation all that is good in the region. Unfortunately, it will also bring with it the opportunity for increased crime and violence to those living, working and visiting the area.

For years we have read reports that suggest an increase in crime surrounding major sporting events, especially the Super Bowl. This year, with the game in our own backyard, it is important for us to prepare for the possibility of a significant influx of victims from this one event. Increased victimization may result from any number of crimes, including but not limited to human trafficking, assault, and domestic violence. Local Victim Assistance Programs (VAPs) should take the time to conduct internal assessments of organizational capacity prior to the need for services. Additionally, VAPs should also strengthen connections with other like programs not only in the NY Metro area but also in the lower Hudson Valley, Long Island and New Jersey.

The Super Bowl is an event which is not limited to game day. There are numerous activities in the days and weeks leading up to kick-off. Local VAPs may need to extend hours, provide additional after-hours coverage or enlist a larger corps of volunteers in the days leading up to game. Now is the time to prepare.

The Office of Victim Services (OVS) remains a strong ally in the effort to serve crime victims and will work closely with all the regional service providers across New York State. OVS is available to offer support and services to the advocate community and will remain a resource in efforts to serve victims. OVS suggests that VAPs ask themselves the following questions to assess their preparedness in meeting the potential demand:

- What categories of victimization do you anticipate increasing as a result of this event? Do you anticipate an increase in sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking victims, as well as other victims of crime?
- What victim services are being provided within your community?
- How accessible are these services (e.g., hours, location, language capacity)?
- If victims are from other countries are you aware of resources such as language access programs and consulate services?
- What services may the victims need?
- Are you able to meet these needs?
- How familiar are the key partners and community members with your program and the services available?
- Have other VAPs in the area been advised of the potential increase in crime rates around this event?
- Who in your area is best suited to identify potential victims?
- What outreach efforts are made to educate the public about the issue and the services you provide?
- Since the stadium is located in New Jersey, have you reached out to your counterparts there to discuss the potential problems/solutions?
- What additional support may VAPs need?
- Are you able to pool your resources with other VAPs to serve victims?
- Are there any potential obstacles you know of that would prevent you from accomplishing your mission?
- What are the obstacles and how can they be resolved?

OVS is interested in learning about your plans to prepare for this event, particularly your responses to the questions noted above. Please provide us with a brief summary of what your organization is doing to position itself to serve any victims that are impacted by this event. Please submit this information to your program monitor by January 15, 2014. This information will be very valuable to us as we too plan for this event.

On behalf of the New York State Office of Victim Services, thank you for your commitment to providing the highest quality services to innocent victims of crime in New York State.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Cronin, Esq.
Director