



# Office of Victim Services

The following is a **Broadcast Email** to all OVS Funded Victim Assistance Programs:

## NY Crime Victims Legal Help Expansion

### NY Crime Victims LEGAL HELP

Connecting Crime Victims with Civil Legal Assistance

Dear Colleague:

This past October, the NYS Office of Victim Services along with Empire Justice Center, Pro Bono Net, and the Center of Human Service Research at the University at Albany launched [NY Crime Victims Legal Help](#), the Crime Victims Legal Network's online resource designed to make it easier for victims of crime to get civil legal information



and services they need. It has been field tested with focus groups and is being piloted in Erie, Genesee, and Niagara counties. An Advisory Committee, which includes representation from The Legal Project, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, and Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, has been helping to oversee the project.

In May, [NY Crime Victims Legal Help](#) will be expanded to include legal resources in 23 counties in the Albany and Hudson Valley regions. This means the website's Legal Help Directory, which pulls information from the LawHelpNY directory, will include legal resources from the 23 counties in the new region. This will allow crime victims in those counties to connect with legal services in their communities.

As a recipient of a June 2018 OVS Attorney Services contract, you have agreed to be a Referral Partner for the Crime Victims Legal Network. The attorney(s) funded under this grant (whether staff attorney(s) or via a contract) are required to be their organization's point of contact, and to communicate, coordinate and collaborate with the CVLN to ensure that victims are receiving the most comprehensive response. The long-term success of the CVLN is an important OVS priority. The CVLN is intended to be an on-line resource for victims that has many resources and self-help tools that a victim can navigate and use independently. However, recognizing that victims may only be able to progress so far in addressing their civil legal needs on their own, the CVLN will rely on partners to take client referrals. Partnerships with the CVLN by providers is key to providing the full scope of legal services to crime victims.

Your obligations as a referral partner are outlined in the June 2018 Request for Applications for Attorney Services, which is a component of your contract with OVS. To help you understand your obligations as a Referral Partner, and to ensure that the legal services you are offering through the June 2018 OVS Attorney Services contracts are accurately reflected in the Network's Legal Help Directory, we ask that you read the ["Frequently Asked Questions"](#) section on the website (this can be accessed only through this link), and complete the [CVLN Referral Partner Form](#). It is important to note that an explicit obligation of your contract is to maintain your organization's contact information that is on the CVLN website. Completing this form is essential to meeting that obligation.

We suggest that Victim Assistance Programs who have subcontracted with legal service organizations to perform this work consult with their subcontractor to complete this

form; the answers on this form will help determine what information will appear in the Network's Legal Help Directory and when an organization appears as a Referral Partner in the search results.

Because *NY Crime Victims Legal Help's* Legal Help Directory pulls information from the LawHelpNY directory, if an organization's profile has not been updated on LawHelpNY (for example, when the legal services provided have changed based on funding) this will affect the search results on the Network's website and may prevent a user from obtaining accurate information about the legal assistance available to them. **We encourage civil legal organizations to verify that their profiles on LawHelpNY are accurate in addition to completing the new CVLN form.** Taylor will be able to assist you with this as well.

If you have any questions about the form, please contact Taylor Goetzing at [TGoetzing@nylawhelp.org](mailto:TGoetzing@nylawhelp.org). If you have any questions about becoming a Referral Partner, please contact Crime Victims Legal Network Project Leader, Remla Parthasarathy at [rparthasarathy@empirejustice.org](mailto:rparthasarathy@empirejustice.org).

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