

# CITY OF SIMI VALLEY

## VICTIM ADVOCATE

*Class specifications are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in the class. Specifications are **not** intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.*

### **SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

Under direction, assists victims of crime by providing a full range of services including assistance with compensation claims, crisis intervention, court support, case status updates, community referrals, and community awareness; and performs related duties as required.

### **REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES**

*The following duties are typical for this classification. Incumbents may not perform all of the listed duties and/or may be required to perform additional or different duties from those set forth below to address business needs and changing business practices.*

1. Initiate contact with victims of violent crimes; advise crime victims of their rights and assist them in navigating through the criminal justice system.
2. Review police department crime reports; contact victims of crime in which a person has been arrested to ascertain what assistance may be provided by the Police Department; provide crisis intervention and emergency assistance; conduct immediate needs assessment and provide information and referrals to other agencies and community services.
3. Assist victims in applying for benefits including reimbursement for lost wages and medical expenses; assist victims with completing and processing forms, including the state Victim Assistance Compensation Fund; determine victim eligibility for benefits.
4. Provide ongoing emotional support, encouragement and information to victims as the case moves through the criminal justice system; provide support during court proceedings, as needed; update victims regarding the ongoing status of criminal proceedings.
5. Confer with law enforcement officials on the status of cases; coordinate interviews between investigating officers and victims; provide support to victims and their families during interviews with law enforcement, attorneys, and other court personnel.
6. Coordinate with the District Attorney's Office to transfer responsibilities from local processing during the preliminary investigative stage to County processing during the post investigative stage.
7. Initiate and maintain case logs, document case activities, and maintain files.
8. Perform routine administrative duties, including preparing mailings and correspondence; file all appropriate forms and reports.
9. Represent the Police Department at public education classes.
10. Perform related duties as required.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

*The following generally describes the knowledge and ability required to enter the job and/or be learned within a short period of time in order to successfully perform the assigned duties.*

### **Knowledge of:**

Criminal and juvenile justice systems.  
Victims' rights within the criminal justice system.  
Needs and challenges experienced by people from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.  
Community resources and community organizations.  
Various benefits available to victims of crime.  
Crisis intervention methods and techniques.  
Interviewing techniques.  
Restraining order process and procedures.  
Safety planning for victims of crime.  
English usage, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.  
Modern office procedures, methods, and computer equipment.  
Principals and procedures of business letter writing and basic report preparation.  
Pertinent federal, state, and local laws.

### **Ability to:**

Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.  
Interpret and explain policies, procedures, and relevant laws.  
Conduct needs assessments and provide appropriate community referrals.  
Communicate effectively with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds.  
Maintain a high degree of sensitivity, tact, and diplomacy during stressful situations.  
Prepare accurate reports and case summaries.  
Maintain records and documents.  
Make public presentations.  
Maintain confidentiality with sensitive information.  
Work emergency call-outs, nights, weekends and holidays.  
Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

**Education and Experience Guidelines** - *Any combination of education and experience that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:*

### **Education/Training:**

Equivalent to completion of the twelfth grade supplemented by college-level coursework in criminal justice, sociology, psychology or a related field. Specialized training in assisting victims of sexual assault is desirable.

### **Experience:**

Two years experience in victim services, outreach services, community programs, criminal justice or related experience.

### **License or Certificate:**

Possession of a valid California Class C driver license.

Possession of, or ability to obtain, an Entry-Level Victim Advocate certificate through the California Victim Services Training Institute (CVSTI) within one year of employment.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

*The conditions herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential job functions.*

**Environment:** Standard office setting and field environment; occasional travel from site to site; exposure to crime scenes and occasional exposure to noise, dust, and fumes; emergency and stressful situations.

**Physical:** Primary functions require sufficient physical ability to work in an office setting and field environment including travel to various locations; sit for prolonged periods of time; operate office equipment including a computer keyboard.

**Vision:** See in the normal visual range with or without correction; vision sufficient to read computer screens and printed documents and to operate equipment.

**Hearing:** Hear in the normal audio range with or without correction.

Established: July 2008