



VICTIM SERVICES BRANCH

SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CRIME & TRAUMA

HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE
VICTIM SERVICES BRANCH
www.hamiltonpolice.on.ca

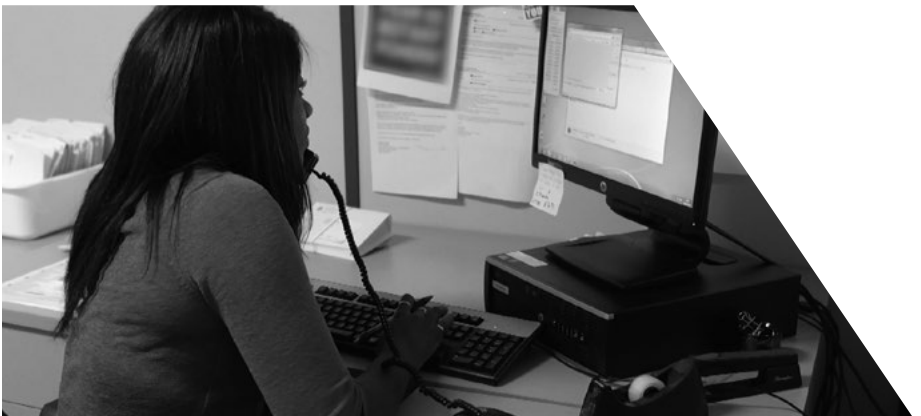
VICTIM SERVICES BRANCH OVERVIEW

Established in 1992, Victim Services is a Branch of the Hamilton Police Service. It is the only 24 hour crisis intervention service for victims of crime and/or tragic circumstance in the City of Hamilton.

We respond to the immediate needs of people who have been victimized by crime and/or experienced a traumatic incident such as homicide, suicide, sudden death, assault, domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, hate crime, traffic, workplace or fire fatalities, robberies, and harassment, among other circumstances. Individuals, families, businesses and organizations receive critical crisis intervention as well as support, information, and referrals to assist them in healing from the trauma of the incident.

Accessing support from the Victim Services Branch does not require police involvement or a formal police report be made. If you choose, we can assist you in navigating the reporting process, as well as provide support throughout the investigation and beyond, as there are no time limits to access support through our branch.

If you or someone you know has been a victim of crime and/or experienced a traumatic incident and need someone to talk to, please call our 24/7 line at 905-546-4904. We are here to support you.





COPING WITH TRAUMA

Events such as a sexual assault, abuse, the death of a loved one, a natural disaster, etc., can be traumatic. These types of situations can result in unpleasant feelings and emotions – both during and after such events.

Responses to a stressful situation vary greatly from person to person and not all people will experience the same reaction at the same level of intensity, nor for the same length of time. However, it is important to recognize that whatever the reaction is, it is often a normal human response to a stressful situation.

What to Expect

Most people who have been impacted by crime or a tragic circumstance experience normal physical and emotional reactions. Some things you may experience include:

Physical

- ▶ Difficulty sleeping
- ▶ Change in appetite
- ▶ Back or stomach aches
- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ Fatigue

Thinking

- ▶ Difficulty concentrating
- ▶ Replaying event over and over in your mind
- ▶ Nightmares
- ▶ Blaming yourself or others who are not responsible

Behavioural

- ▶ Crying
- ▶ Need to be alone or around others
- ▶ Emotional outbursts
- ▶ Pacing

Emotional

- ▶ Anger
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Feeling overwhelmed
- ▶ Guilt
- ▶ Panic
- ▶ Sadness/Withdrawal
- ▶ Fear
- ▶ Irritability



COPING STRATEGIES

It is important to remember that traumatic events fall outside of everyday life. You may need some new strategies to cope with an unexpected event.

Helpful things to try may include:

- ▶ Talk to someone you trust
- ▶ Give yourself permission to reach out for professional help (e.g. family doctor, Employee Assistance Program [EAP], community organizations, etc.)
- ▶ Spend time with supportive family and friends
- ▶ Give yourself permission to have difficult moments
- ▶ Try to avoid self-defeating thoughts (e.g. “I can’t manage...”, “nothing matters...”, etc.) and instead try to focus on one day/moment at a time
- ▶ Try to maintain a regular routine
- ▶ Resist making life changing decisions following a serious incident
- ▶ Give yourself time to mend
- ▶ Be aware that traumatic events can sometimes bring back memories of past traumatic events

- ▶ Write out or journal your experiences, thoughts and feelings – this may be especially useful through sleepless nights
- ▶ Avoid overuse of alcohol, drugs, caffeine, nicotine
- ▶ Try to eat healthy food options and exercise if possible
- ▶ Don't try and fight dreams or flashbacks. They are normal and will become less intense and painful over time. If they do not appear to be decreasing over time, you may need to seek assistance as there are additional strategies that may help manage these
- ▶ Practice deep breathing – inhale slowly to a count of 4, hold your breath to a count of 4, and exhale to a count of 4 and repeat until you are breathing more easily





SUPPORTING CHILDREN

Children who have been involved in a traumatic incident need the attention and close physical contact of their parents or caregivers. Some helpful strategies are listed below:

- ▶ Reassure them of their physical safety
- ▶ Take opportunities to listen and talk to the child
- ▶ Talk about your own reactions with the child, in an age appropriate way
- ▶ Invite conversation so children feel encouraged to share their concerns and reactions too
- ▶ Allow them to set their own pace
- ▶ Try to keep routes as normal as possible
- ▶ Encourage them to play and draw – a good way to cope with stress and anxious feelings
- ▶ Practice relaxation techniques with them
- ▶ Seek professional help if you need assistance or have concerns about your child's reaction and/or response. Often, parents can receive helpful coaching by a professional to effectively support their child



VICTIM SERVICE BRANCH SUPPORT OPTIONS

On-Scene or Phone Support

Support is provided by the Victim Services Branch team on the phone, in office, or other locations as necessary alongside police (e.g. on scene, at private residences, hospitals, organizations, etc.). Emotional support, coping strategies, safety planning, as well as information about community services, resources and referrals are provided. With support from our Volunteer team, we are able to provide this assistance 24/7.

Interview Support

In addition to the support options detailed above, our team is also able to provide support should you need to attend an interview with an investigator. All options are guided by the individual, as we encourage informed choice and promote empowerment.



EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Victim Services Provides internal training to Hamilton Police Service Officers on victims' issues and the support options offered by the Victim Services Branch. Victim Services also provides external community training when requested on victimology related topics and support options available.

Additionally, the Victim Services Branch collaborates with several community organizations to provide training, information and wrap-around services for those in need of support (See page 10 for an example of resource options in the City of Hamilton).



PROGRAMS

Sexual Assault Support Program

The Victim Services Branch offers support to victims/survivors of sexual violence throughout the investigative process in collaboration with the Sex Crimes Unit or Criminal Investigation Division. Support options can include: emotional support, safety planning, practical assistance, and connection to community resources. We also offer the option of having a member from Victim Services support during the police interview if preferred.

Trauma Bear Program

The Victim Services Branch administers the Trauma Bear Program by ensuring all Hamilton Police Service vehicles contain Trauma Bears. Police Officers and Victim Services give Trauma Bears to children at the scene to provide some comfort during the aftermath of a crime and/or traumatic incident.



Comfort Bears

In Specialized
Units & Patrol Cars



**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN, COMMUNITY AND
SOCIAL SERVICES**
- TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCE ASSISTANCE

Tragic Circumstance Assistance offers financial support to assist with clean-up services following a suicide. This program is available to family members, or anyone impacted (e.g. roommate).

To explore eligibility, please contact the Victim Services Branch at 905-546-4904.

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN, COMMUNITY AND
SOCIAL SERVICES**
- VICTIM QUICK RESPONSE PROGRAM+ (VQRP+)

The Victim Quick Response Program+ (VQRP+) offers assistance following a violent crime. The goal of the program is to increase the safety of victims of violent crime to help prevent re-victimization, as well as lessen the impact through immediate support services.

Who may apply?

- ▶ A direct victim or immediate family member
- ▶ A parent or guardian of a victim who is under 16 years of age
- ▶ A person authorized to act on behalf of a victim

Eligible crimes include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▶ Homicide | ▶ Non-Consensual
Distribution of Intimate
Images |
| ▶ Attempt Murder | ▶ Voyeurism |
| ▶ Serious Assault (e.g.
aggravated assault) | ▶ Elder Abuse |
| ▶ Hate Crime | ▶ Intimate Partner Violence |
| ▶ Human Trafficking | ▶ Child Abuse |
| ▶ Sexual Assault | ▶ Criminal Harassment |
| ▶ Historical Child Sexual
Abuse | |

Potential VQRP+ Support Options:

- ▶ Counselling
- ▶ Immediate Safety/Home Safety Items (e.g. locks, door/window repairs, contact alarms)
- ▶ Basic Needs (e.g. clothing, hygiene items)
- ▶ Meals & Groceries
- ▶ Crime Scene Clean-up Services
- ▶ Interpretation Services
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Funeral (Homicide circumstances only)
- ▶ Serious Injury Support
- ▶ Aids for Victims with Disabilities
- ▶ Homicide Survivor Support

** Options listed above are not exhaustive. To explore all VQRP+ support options and to find out if you are eligible, please call the Victim Services Branch at 905-546-4904.*



MINISTÈRE DES SERVICES À L'ENFANCE ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX ET COMMUNAUTAIRES - CIRCONSTANCES TRAGIQUES:

Ce programme offre des services de soutien afin d'aider à payer le coût du nettoyage suivant un suicide. Ce programme est disponible aux membres de familles, ainsi que n'importe qui est affecté (p. ex., colocataire).

MINISTÈRE DES SERVICES À L'ENFANCE ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX ET COMMUNAUTAIRES - LE PROGRAMME D'INTERVENTION RAPIDE+ AUPRÈS DES VICTIMES (PIRV+)

Le Programme d'intervention rapide+ auprès des victimes (PIRV+) fournit du soutien suite à un crime violent. Le programme permet d'atténuer les répercussions de l'acte criminel, de renforcer la sécurité des victimes et de répondre à leurs besoins pratiques immédiats.

Qui peut appliquer au PIRV+ ?

- ▶ Un(e) victime directe ou un membre de sa famille immédiate.
- ▶ un parent ou tuteur d'un(e) victime âgé(e) de moins de 16 ans.
- ▶ une personne autorisée à agir au nom d'un(e) victime.

Crime éligible pour le PIRV+ :

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▶ Homicide | ▶ Distribution non-consensuelle d'images intimes |
| ▶ Tentative de meurtre | |
| ▶ Voie de fait grave | ▶ Voyeurisme |
| ▶ Violence conjugale | ▶ Mauvais traitements envers les aînés |
| ▶ Crimes haineux | ▶ Violence Conjugale / Violence dans les relations intimes |
| ▶ Traite de personnes | ▶ Mauvais traitements d'un enfant |
| ▶ Agression sexuelle | |
| ▶ Agression Sexuelle de l'enfance (historique) | ▶ Harcèlement Criminel |

Aide Financière – Services offerts:

- ▶ Services de counselling
- ▶ Sécurité du domicile (p. ex., remplacement de serrures, réparations de fenêtres/portes brisés, alarme – contact magnétique)
- ▶ Besoins pratiques (p. ex., nécessités de base).
- ▶ Frais pour repas/provisions
- ▶ Nettoyage des lieux du crime
- ▶ Services d'interprétation
- ▶ Frais de transports/déplacement
- ▶ Frais d'obsèques (en cas d'homicide seulement)
- ▶ Frais de soutiens en cas de blessures graves.
- ▶ Remplacement ou réparation d'un appareil pour compenser un handicap
- ▶ Soutien au survivant d'un homicide

** Les soutiens nommés ci-dessus n'incluent pas tous les soutiens offerts par le PIRV+. Avant de pouvoir déposer une demande d'aide, s'il vous plaît contacter le bureau de Victimes Services Branch au 905-546-4904 afin de savoir si vous êtes admissible au programme.*





CONTACT INFORMATION

Uniform patrol officer name:

Contact phone number:

Detective / investigator name:

Contact phone number:

Hamilton Police Service incident number:

Additional Information:

RESOURCES LIST

24/7 Help Lines

COAST (Crisis Outreach and Support Team)	905-972-8338
Barrett Centre for Crisis Support	905-529-7878
Assaulted Women's Helpline	1-866-863-0511
Fem'aide: Francophone Women's Support Line	1-877-336-2433
Kid's Help Phone	1-800-668-6868
Mental Health Helpline	1-866-531-2600
SACHA (Sexual Assault Centre Hamilton and Area)	905-525-4162
Red Cross Society	1-866-579-4357
Victim Services Branch	905-546-4904
Indigenous Victim Services	1-866-445-2204

Women's Shelters and Crisis Lines

Interval House of Hamilton	905-387-8881
Good Shepherd Martha House	905-523-6277
Good Shepherd Mary's Place	905-540-8000
Mission Services Inasmuch House	905-529-8600
Native Women's Centre	1-888-308-6559
YWCA Hamilton	365-384-3406

Men's Shelters

Good Shepherd Centre	905-528-9109
Mission Services	905-528-7635
Salvation Army Booth Centre	905-527-1444

Medical

Emergency	911
Ambulance NON-EMERGENCY	905-574-1414
Hamilton Health Sciences	905-521-2100
Hamilton General Hospital	
Juravinski Hospital	
McMaster Children's Hospital	
St. Joseph's Hospital	905-522-4941
Urgent Care Centres	
Hamilton Health Sciences	905-521-2100
St. Joseph's Ambulatory Care	905-573-7777
Sexual Assault Domestic Violence Care Centre	905-521-2100 ext. 73557
Rainbow Health Ontario	416-324-4100

Police

Emergency	911
NON-EMERGENCY	905-546-4925
Domestic Violence Unit	905-546-3852/3853
Professional Standards Branch (complaints)	905-546-4776/4777
Ontario Provincial Police	1-888-310-1122

TTY (Deaf and Hard of Hearing)

Emergency	911
Police, Fire, Ambulance NON-EMERGENCY	1-800-855-0511
Ontario Provincial Police	1-888-310-1133

Please note - this list does not cover all resources available in Hamilton. The Victim Services Branch is Available 24/7 to assist you with additional options. Police involvement is not required to access support.

Legal Supports

Victim/Witness Assistance Program	905-645-5272
Crown Attorney's Office	905-645-5262
Hamilton Community Legal Clinic	905-527-4572
Legal Aid Ontario	1-800-668-8258
Family Law Information Centre	905-645-5252 ext. 2554
Legal Advocates/Family Court Support	
Jared's Place	905-522-0127
Flamborough Women's Resource Centre	289-895-8580
Good Shepherd Women's Services	905-523-8766
Mission Services Inasmuch House	905-529-8149
Hamilton Detention Centre	905-523-8800
Probation	905-521-7527
Parole Office (Provincial)	905-549-9977
Parole Office (Federal)	905-572-2695

Counselling Services

Sexual Assault Domestic Violence Care Centre	905-521-2100 ext. 73557
De dwa da dehs nyes>s - Aboriginal Health Centre	905-544-4320
Hamilton Regional Indian Centre	905-548-9593
Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara	905-528-0163
SACHA (Sexual Assault Centre Hamilton and Area)	905-525-4162
Compass Community Health	905-523-6611
Positive Health Network	905-528-0854
The Women's Centre of Hamilton	905-522-0127
Flamborough Women's Resource Centre	289-895-8580
Good Shepherd Women's Services	905-523-8766
Native Women's Centre	905-664-1114
YWCA Immigration and Settlement Program - Gender Based Violence Counselling	905-536-1930
Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre	905-522-3233
Elizabeth Fry Society	905-527-3097
John Howard Society	905-522-4446

Child and Youth Supports *in addition to above

Lynwood Charlton Centre	905-389-1361
CONTACT Hamilton	905-570-8888
Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services	905-523-1020
Hamilton Child & Family Supports	905-522-1121
Catholic Children's Aid Society	905-525-2012
Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line	1-800-268-9688
Living Rock	905-528-7625
YMCA Anti-Human Trafficking Initiatives	289-659-6290

Housing Supports

Housing Help Centre	905-526-8100
Access to Housing (Subsidized)	905-546-2424 x.3708
Good Shepherd Reaching Home	289-919-0396
Wesley	905-540-4646



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

**VICTIM SERVICES BRANCH
905.546.4904 (24/7/365)**

Hamilton Police Service
Central Police Station
155 King William Street
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 1A7



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