



# Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

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VACANT  
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VACANT  
Sheriff

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## **NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK**

*“Seek Justice, Ensure Victims’ Rights, Inspire Hope”*

### ***Arizona Criminal Justice Commission Provides Resources for Victims’ of Crime***

**Phoenix, AZ, Tuesday, April 21, 2020** – Today, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) commemorates National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, April 19–25, 2020 and this year’s theme of “Seek Justice, Ensure Victims’ Rights, and Inspire Hope.” This year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will be honoring our victims virtually and doing what we can to raise them up.

As one of Arizona’s largest funders of victims’ services each year, ACJC places great focus on seeking legislative changes that advocate for victims’ rights, provide additional resources, and improve accessibility to victims’ services and programs.

This year, in partnership with the Administrative Office of the Courts and Department of Public Safety, ACJC rolled out the new Arizona Protective Order Initiation and Notification Tool (“AZPOINT”). This online portal provides individuals seeking protection through the courts a more streamlined process to file and track the progress of their petitions in real time. If the court grants an Order of Protection, it is electronically sent to the serving agency for service. The serving agency is responsible for printing and serving the order. After the defendant has been served, the serving agency has 72 hours to file the affidavit, declaration, acceptance, or return of service to the court. A notification system lets the plaintiff know the status of service of the Order of Protection.

“Every year and throughout the year, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission continues to fight to raise awareness for the rights of victims in every corner of the state. This year was no exception. Our team worked diligently with the Arizona Office of the Courts to launch AZPOINT to provide even greater protections for victims of domestic violence and abuse,” stated Sheila Polk, Yavapai County Attorney and Commission Chairwoman.

The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission oversees and administers two key programs to assist victims: Arizona’s Crime Victim Compensation and State Crime Victim Assistance programs. The Crime Victim Assistance program provides grants

to private non-profit or government agencies that deliver direct services to crime victims. The Crime Victim Compensation program provides financial assistance to victims who may have experienced a financial loss as a direct result of a crime. In FY2019, the Victim Compensation Program provided program assistance to 1,767 victims and 1303 individuals (relatives and/or associated individuals) with a total of \$3,486,177.00 in assistance paid. For FY2020, the program has been allocated approximately \$4.5M from both state and federal funds to assist victims statewide.

Over the past six years, ACJC has spearheaded the following legislative and programmatic changes that benefit victims of crime in Arizona:

- 2015- Passed Senate Bill 1295, which closed a gap in missing fingerprints by those who committed a crime to ensure that an accurate criminal history is created in the state system (increased protections for sensitive populations in Arizona that require a criminal history background check for workers)
- 2017 – Passed House Bill 2375, which created a stay of debt collection process for individuals participating in the victim compensation program and required health care providers who accepted payment as payment in full for their services (added significant financial protections for crime victims).
- 2018 – Passed House Bill 2249, which oversaw the first comprehensive re-write of Arizona’s orders of protection/injunction against harassment process in over 25 years (modernizes and provides easier access to individuals seeking protection from the courts and increases the likelihood that orders and injunctions will be served and enforceable).
- 2019 – Working with State Senators Victoria Steele (D) and Eddie Farnsworth (R) to pass Senate Bill 1250 that will close a significant gap in the injunctions against harassment process for victims of sexual assault who, under the current statute, must be victimized more than once before being able to seek relief from the court.
- 2020- ACJC in partnership with the Administrative Office of the Courts and Department of Public Safety launched the new AZPOINT Orders of Protection system.

“These are just a few efforts ACJC has undertaking on behalf of crime victims, but we know can do better!” said Andrew T. LeFevre, Executive Director of ACJC. “As we honor victims and their rights this week, let us remember these victims year round and continue to fight the good fight everyday.”

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*Created in 1982, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) is a statutorily authorized entity mandated to carry out various coordinating, monitoring and reporting functions regarding the administration and management of criminal justice programs in Arizona. The ACJC serves as a resource and service organization for Arizona’s criminal justice community on a myriad of issues ranging from drugs, gangs and victim assistance to criminal history and crime laboratory enhancements.*