

Crime Victim Justice Unit

The Crime Victim Justice Unit (CVJU) is a victim rights compliance office. It seeks to ensure that crime victims in Minnesota are treated appropriately and that their statutory rights are upheld. The CVJU has the authority to investigate complaints from crime victims about decisions and actions of criminal justice professionals.

The goal is to promote the highest attainable standards of competence, efficiency, and justice for crime victims. Victims of crime who feel that their rights have been violated or that they have been mistreated by a member of the criminal justice system may contact the CVJU to request assistance or make a complaint. Individuals interested in filing a complaint are encouraged to contact the CVJU to ensure that the complaint falls within the CVJU's authority. The CVJU has the authority to investigate complaints of victim mistreatment and statutory rights violations by law enforcement officers, prosecutors, probation officers, jail/correctional facilities, and organizations providing services to victims. The CVJU does not have the authority to investigate judges.

The CVJU has its roots in the Office of Crime Victim Ombudsman (OCVO), which was created in 1985 with

the mission to investigate complaints of statutory victim rights violations and victim mistreatment. It was the first such office in the country. In 2003, as part of a statewide reorganization, OCVO's responsibilities were assumed by the CVJU, a unit of the Office of Justice Programs in the Department of Public Safety, Minnesota remains one of a handful of states with a formalized victim rights compliance office.

The CVJU derives its authority specifically from Minnesota Statutes sections 611-A.72-74. The statute gives the CVJU, through the commissioner of Public Safety, broad powers to investigate "elements" of the criminal justice system, including law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, probation departments, court administration, and victim advocacy programs.

You can reach the CVJU by calling 651-201-7310.

