

VICTIM SERVICES COMMISSION MINUTES – PENDING APPROVAL	
Committee	Utah Victim Services Commission
Date	Wednesday, June 24th, 2026
Time	12 PM - 2 PM
Location	Hybrid Zoom Virtual meeting – Seagull Room, East Senate Building
Members Present	<u>Virtual Attendance</u>: Tyler Kotter, Rep. Ken Ivory, Greg Skordas, Liliana Olvera-Arbon, Alissa Black <u>In-Person Attendance</u>: Tom Ross, Chyleen Richey, Doug Fawson, Eddy Thompson, Jennifer Campbell, Amanda Miller, Kaye Lynn Wootton, Chief Sol Oberg, Dominique Kiahtipes,
Staff & Visitors	<u>In-Person Staff</u>: Danica Bodley, Marlesse Jones, Rachelle Hill, Dan Strong, Elizabeth Klc <u>Virtual Staff</u>: Shannon Arrington, Beatriz Herrera Garcia <u>In-Person Visitors</u>: Christian Sarver <u>Virtual Visitors</u>: Jennifer Yim, Gary Scheller, Catherine Ruestchlin
Agenda Item	Welcome & Introductions/Establish Quorum – <i>Liliana Olvera-Arbon, Co-Chair</i>
Notes	**Technical difficulties in the meeting room started late. Liliana Olvera-Arbon was having issues with her mic so she asked Marlesse to lead out until Sol arrived in person. Marlesse welcomes everyone to the June 2026 Victims Services Commission Meeting. Motion: Tom Ross motions for the commission to approve the meeting minutes from May 27, 2026 Kaye Lynn Wootton seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Other Business. On July 1, 2026, the Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ) will officially transition into its new structure. This change is intended to reflect the reality of the agency's growth since the 1980s, moving from a single commission within the Governor's office to a multifaceted state agency. <u>Key Leadership Changes</u> • Dan Strong: Promoted to Executive Director. He will oversee the CCJJ Commission, Victim Services Commission, Sentencing Commission, and other judicial appointments. • Van Nguyen: Promoted to Executive Director. She will oversee Governor's initiatives, research, and legislative tracking. • Elizabeth Klc: Appointed as Deputy Commissioner. Her focus includes the Prosecutor Conduct Commission and data team management. • Tom Ross: Will move out of a voting role on the VSC but intends to remain involved to maintain relationships and provide agency input. Dan Strong will be the voting member for the Victim Services Commission. • Rationale for Restructuring - The restructure aims to place agency functions into "lanes" that allow for more consistent representation. The shift is not intended to change the power structure of the commissions but to match Utah's code with the current experience of employees and agencies.
Agenda Item	VSC Sub-Committee Reports – <i>Sub-Committee Chairs, VSC</i>
Notes	Standing updates were shared by various chairs. • Domestic Violence: Discussed past policy implementation, legislation watching, engaging in a domestic violence data integration subgroup, and conversations around a domestic violence offender registry. • Child Abuse: Discussed legislative proposals, funding focus, and planning for an educational faith leaders conference to integrate faith communities into victim support. • Multicultural: Shared efforts regarding U-visas and partnering on training opportunities.

Agenda Item	Policy – Marlesse Jones, VSC Director & Sub-Committee Chairs, VSC
Notes	A brief note was made regarding a court rule open for public comment that stems from a privacy bill allowing victims to request that their names be represented only by initials on public-facing criminal justice documents. The Commission engaged in a high-level discussion regarding its identity and its role in the upcoming 2027 legislative session. Tom Ross shared a perspective that the VSC should focus on influence rather than power. While power is hard to maintain and subject to political shifts, influence is built through relationships and being a "must-stop" for legislators drafting policy. The VSC is currently seen as building this influence, as more legislators are approaching the body for guidance. Member Jen Campbell requested a desire for a full strategic plan to be completed by September 2026 to provide immediate direction to subcommittees and the legislature. Director Marlesse Jones cautioned that a September deadline may be untenable, but as the VSC we could strive towards utilizing the study to provide direction to the VSC and Subcommittees. Representative Ivory suggested the priority should be the "Executive Summary" of the study—telling the story of the current funding crisis to leadership in August 2026 to secure "gold standard" funding for 2027.
Agenda Item	VSC Study Update Continued – Christian Sarver, Ph.D., Associate Director, Criminal Justice Center, UofU
Notes	Dr. Christian Sarver of the University of Utah’s Criminal Justice Center presented the finalized findings of the VSC Study. The analysis highlights significant friction within the current system and offers models for reform based on other states’ successes. <u>Systemic Tension and Victim Rights</u> The study identified a persistent tension between defendant rights/offender rehabilitation and victim rights. • Juvenile Justice: Restitution often prioritizes minimizing harm to the juvenile offender, frequently leaving victims without a source of recovery. • Inconsistent Rights: In Utah, victim rights are often afforded differentially based on the specific court or case type, particularly in domestic violence (DV) situations. • Restorative Justice: There is a strong desire among victims for processes that provide apologies and meaning-making, rather than just convictions or sentences. <u>Funding Models and Administrative Burden</u> A core finding is that victim services are currently dictated by available federal funding rather than actual community needs. • The Silo Effect: Federal funds are highly restricted (e.g., specific money for specific crime types), which forces smaller providers to turn victims away if they do not fit a specific grant profile. • Minimum Allocation Models: The study highlights California’s model, where the state provides a non-competitive "minimum allocation" (approximately \$350,000) to ensure providers remain stable regardless of federal fluctuations. • Alternative Funding: Other states utilize local fines, fees, and specialized taxes (e.g., Colorado’s \$12 million annual revenue from local fees) to bolster services. <u>Comparative State Frameworks</u> California

	- Regionalized funding with a minimum allocation formula for all providers. Colorado - Localized distribution of crime victim compensation; claims are processed within a month. Georgia - Flexible outcome measures where providers pick state goals to "roll up" into, reducing administrative reporting. Massachusetts - Targeted use of state funds to prioritize underserved or culturally specific communities. Washington - A commission structure focused on problem-based working groups (e.g., protective orders) rather than crime silos.
Agenda Item	Mass Casualty – Chyleen Richey, UOVC Director
Notes	Chyleen Richey made a proposal to create a dedicated Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) position within the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to coordinate mass casualty victim advocate responses. While there is consensus that this is a "policy gap," the Commission decided to table the vote until August 2026 to ensure the task aligns with the broader 2027 legislative funding strategy.
Agenda Item	Annual Meeting Topics / Suggestions – Marlesse Jones, VSC Director
Notes	Rachelle Hill noted that, based on discussions, most of the agenda for the annual meeting will be heavily focused on funding and the strategic aspects of their proposal. Members were directed to a linked document where they could submit additional ideas for guest speakers or topics they wished to address. The leadership team plans to review this list to determine what can be integrated into the schedule. Rachelle confirmed that the July meeting was officially canceled and would be removed from everyone's calendars, making August the next scheduled group meeting.
Agenda Item	Public Comment
Notes	Public comment time was given but no public comment was made.
Agenda Item	Adjourn
Notes	Motion: Doug Fawson motions for the commission to adjourn. Chief Sol Oberg seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The commission adjourns. Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26th, 2026 from 12 PM - 2 PM. Location: <u>Anchor Location</u>: SEAGULL ROOM Zoom link: meet.google.com/oqt-dzck-cvc
DISCLAIMER	Please note that these meeting minutes have been primarily generated or assisted by an artificial intelligence (AI) tool. These notes have been edited by staff to ensure accuracy and completeness.