

Domestic Violence Audit for 2012

For Storey County

Prepared by:

Storey County Sheriff's Office

Storey County District Attorney

Storey County Justice Justice of the Peace

Community Chest, Inc.

Completed: September 18, 2013

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The Storey County District Attorney, The Storey County Justice of the Peace**

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The Storey County Sheriff's Office, Community Chest, Inc., the Storey County District Attorney, the and the Storey County Justice of the Peace have completed our annual domestic violence audit for Storey County's legal and social advocacy community for public review. Using numbers from 2012, representatives from these four agencies held substantive discussions, analyzed statistics for each of the four agencies, and engaged in self-evaluation.

As in previous editions, contained in this report is an analysis of the legal and social advocacy system's response with special attention paid to ways in which each of the various parts of the legal and social advocacy system can improve their responsiveness to addressing domestic violence. The District Attorney, Community Chest, Justice of the Peace and the Sheriff's Office are singularly and jointly committed to improving their abilities and capabilities such that perpetrator accountability and victim safety are optimized.

First, let's provide some context. Domestic violence is a cancer shared by many, if not all, communities throughout the country. It is a crime between intimates -- husband to wife, father to son, mother to daughter -- that violates the most sacred of spoken and unspoken promises. It is a crime that saps the soul of a community and inhibits economic growth and development.

The cost of domestic violence can be seen in the following ways: healthcare services consumed (emergency room visits, mental health care, and hospital stays), criminal justice and social service costs, decreased productivity and reduced earnings due to injury or fear from a perpetrator, and behavioral issues in secondary victims of domestic violence are just a few of the ways that society is negatively impacted by this "personal issue."

In the end, probably the most devastating effect that domestic violence has on a community is the damaged capacity for it to realize its full potential.

One of the more effective tools for addressing the issue of domestic violence within a community is to develop what is known as a "coordinated community response." This simply means that the various parts of the legal community -- in Storey County's case, the Sheriff's Office, the District Attorney, the Justice of the Peace and Community Chest (as a provider of services to victims of domestic violence) -- do their respective parts to address the issue of domestic violence *while maintaining relationships with the other partners*. The discussion points listed on the following pages have been pulled from each agency's self-evaluation.

Storey County Sheriff – (statistics and narrative provided by Sherriff Gerald Antinoro)

	Total Storey County Domestic Calls	Average Calls per month	Total Cases	% of Calls that become cases	Average cases per month	Total arrests	% of cases resulting in arrest	Average arrests per month
2012	87	7.25	32	37	2.67	20	63	1.7
2009	57	4.75	20	35.1	1.67	13	65	1.1
2008	64	5.3	39	60.9	3.25	11	28	<1
2007	86	7.2	43	50.0	3.5	28	65	2.3
2006	86	7.2	38	44.2	3.1	26	68	2.1
2005	84	7.0	49	58.1	4.0	14	28	1.1

There were 87 incidents where domestic violence was reported to have occurred or been occurring.

- These resulted in 32 cases being drawn.
- Of these 32 cases, 20 of them were cleared by making an at-scene arrest of the perpetrator.
- 10 of the cases were referred to the District Attorney or to another agency.
- 2 of the cases were cleared as unfounded.
- The remaining 55 incidents were either unfounded from the beginning or consisted of merely a verbal dispute.

Of the total incidents reported-

- 9 Occurred in the VC Highlands
- 10 occurred in the Mark Twain Estates
- 27 occurred in the River District (Rainbow Bend and Lockwood)
- The remaining 41 occurred in the VC/Gold Hill area

Storey County District Attorney, Victim Services Unit (VSU)

In 2012 the Victim Services Unit has expanded in many areas in the community. We have partnered with Community Chest, Inc. in an effort to reach out and assist clients affected by domestic violence as well as various other areas of need. We have a part time employee in the office 12 hours a week paid by STOP grant money as well as a volunteer and one additional male volunteer currently undergoing orientation with our Human Resource office. Our advocates are available as needed after hours for response to on-scene situations as well as via phone for crisis intervention.

Our partnership with Community Chest, Inc. has provided the space to offer a neutral visitation place for confrontational parents who share custody of minor children. In an effort to avoid conflict when exchanging children our advocate has met at the Community Chest allowing one parent to 'drop off' the children without having to interact with the opposing parent.

Domestic violence continues to increase nationwide with Nevada ranking No.1 in the nation of women killed by men they know intimately. Nevada has held the top position for five of the past six years, three consecutive years being No.1. Although the national ratings are severe, Storey County's occurrences are dwindling and we believe it is due partly to the job of educating the Storey County residents and our non-judgmental response to clients.

VSU works closely with the sheriff's office and justice court maintaining 'no contact' instructions should offenders bail out of jail before the victim is able to secure a protection order. Deputies offer VSU information to victims when responding to calls and follow up with advocates should a victim decline to have an advocate respond on-scene.

Our unit has two trained and certified sexual assault responders available 24/7 that work with Advocates to End Domestic Violence (AEDV) in Carson City. In addition to responding to on-scene calls our advocates accompany victims to hospital exams, court accompaniments, referring them to proper services such as counseling and assisting with Victim of Crime applications.

Victim Services and Community Chest offer a weekly support group 'Women's Parlor', facilitated by counselors and assisted by our volunteer advocate. This service is open to all women in the community offering a safe, confidential and supportive environment to share their time, concerns and encouragement.

VSU has expanded outreach to the high school both in educating students on the effects of domestic violence in the home as well as dating violence and sexual predators via the internet and texting. Volunteers from Victim Services Unit and Community Chest maintain an informational bulletin board at the high school maintaining our presence and services.

Due to a change in staff the quarterly Domestic Violence Task Force meeting has fallen by the wayside in 2012 not having met for the entire year. This is currently in the process of being

reinstated and this important unit will include various offices in the community including the Sheriff's Office, Fire and Medical Responders, Justice Court, Community Chest and of course the District Attorney Office. The Storey County Victim Services Unit is recognized by the Board of Commissioners and we take seriously the job of educating the community while supporting victims. Educating all responders, including dispatch personnel, law enforcement officers and medical responders is a priority, and is imperative in properly identifying, apprehending and prosecuting offenders and this can only be done through collective efforts.

The most important goal of our victim services is providing assistance and guidance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in a non-judgmental, supportive and ethical manner. As former victims themselves, our advocates realize the fear, shame and paralyzing confusion victimization breeds. It is our intent to provide professional, confidential and knowledgeable assistance in a positive manner without demeaning or revictimizing the individual brave enough to make the first step in changing his or her life.

In 2012:

Sheriff's Office Reports for Review	36
District Attorney Files Created	14
Clients Provided Services	8
Clients Provided Emergency Shelter	2
Crisis Intervention Phone Calls	14
Protection Order Assistance	7

Information compiled and reported by
 Sue Jones, System Advocate
 Storey County Victim Services

Justice Court of Virginia Township- (as prepared by Eileen Herrington, Justice of the Peace)

The Justice Court of Virginia Township is happy to be included in the community’s annual domestic violence audit report.

The state legislature sets mandatory minimums and maximums for sentencing in domestic battery cases.

- A conviction on a first offense carries a minimum of 2 days, but not more than 6 months in jail; a minimum of 48 hours, but not more than 120 hours of community service; a fine of not less than \$200, but not more than \$1,000 and successful completion of counseling with weekly sessions of not less than 1 ½ hours per week for at least 6 months in a State-certified program for the treatment of persons who commit domestic violence.
- Conviction of a second offense in 7 years carries a minimum of 10 days, but not more than 6 months in jail; a minimum of 100 hours, not more than 200 hours of community service; a fine of not less than \$500, but not more than \$1,000; and successful completion of counseling with weekly sessions of not less than 1 ½ hours per week for at least 12 months in a State-certified program for the treatment of persons who commit domestic violence.
- A third offense in 7 years is a felony and carries a penalty of at least 1 year, but not more than 5 years in the Nevada State Prison and a fine of not more than \$10,000.

Our court also sets up a review schedule where we can closely monitor the defendant’s progress and compliance with sentencing.

Our court also handles applications for protective orders against domestic violence. Forms and information are available on line at www.storeycounty.org.

A review of our statistics reflects:

New cases filed	2012	2013 (to date)
Domestic Battery	16	6
Protective Order Violations	0	0
Dispositions		
Guilty plea before trial	8	2
Dismissed before trial	3	3
Guilty at trial	0	1

The Justice Court staff and the Sheriff’s Office want to do everything we can to promote safety in our courtroom. During the recent legislative session, improved courtroom security throughout

the State was a much-discussed topic and a recent bill has allowed more funding to our courts for that purpose.

Community Chest, Inc. – (as written by Erik Schoen and Adrienne Sutherland, Community Chest)

Community Chest, Inc. (CCI) is an organization concerned with many aspects of social justice and a local provider of many social services, including those for victims of domestic violence. In 2012, CCI provided services to an average of 14 primary victims of crime quarterly, for a total of 37 victims of crime being served for 2012. CCI served on average 8.25 victims of domestic violence quarterly with an average of 3 secondary victims of domestic violence.

While there was an average of 14 primary victims of crime served quarterly, there was a dramatic increase in the latter part of the year, almost doubling the number of victims served. The reason for this occurrence is unknown; however, one plausible explanation is that with the increased amount of collaboration between community entities, there have been more referrals made to CCI for counseling services. The types of abuses reported continue to be varied and include physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and financial abuse.

In addition to counseling, victims continue to be provided with referrals and provided food/clothing/rent/utilities assistance as needed. CCI advocates and counselors have endeavored to expand community partnerships and have been working more closely with allies from a variety of organizations, both government and non profits, such as Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence.

We look forward to expanding these collaborative approaches as we continue to address domestic violence communitywide.

We share the opinions of the Sheriff, District Attorney, and Justice Court offices regarding how important a role the community-at-large plays in helping to send the message that domestic violence is not tolerated in Storey County and has, perhaps, the largest deterrent effect compared to other possible strategies. It is, therefore, important for all Storey County citizens and organizations to take a strong stand against domestic violence.

The bottom line is that we want to have community supports in place for *anyone* who is a victim of domestic violence to feel comfortable placing a call to 911, talking with officers, working with prosecutors, and obtaining the assistance they need in order to lead lives of dignity.

In Conclusion

Well coordinated community responses to domestic violence result from each of the various components being fully trained on the issues of domestic violence and the various dynamics of domestic violence. Further, communities successful in developing and institutionalizing such coordination frequently have regular meeting times where all of the various components come together to hold each other accountable and work together. Indeed, only by doing so, can a community hold its perpetrators of domestic violence accountable.

By incorporating the best practices mentioned above, Storey County's legal and social advocacy community will be utilizing nationally-recognized best practices and be doing what it can to ensure that fewer families and their neighbors experience the damaging effects of domestic violence.

The participating agencies in this report respectfully present this report for public review as a sign of their commitment to do all within their power to limit the deleterious effects of domestic violence.

Shaun Griffin, Executive Director, Community Chest, Inc.

Bill Maddox, Storey County District Attorney

Gerald Antinoro, Storey County Sheriff

Eileen Herrington, Storey County Justice of the Peace