
MONTANA VICTIM LEGAL ASSISTANCE NETWORK: NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Office for Victims of Crime in the U.S. Department of Justice awarded the “Vision 21–Victim Legal Assistance Network (VLAN)” grant to the Montana Board of Crime Control. This report is the result of a contract between the Montana Board of Crime Control, the Montana Legal Services Association, and the University of Montana Criminology Research Group.

The goal of the Montana Victim Legal Assistance Network project is to improve crime victims’ access to comprehensive, coordinated, and holistic legal services. This research represents the initial step towards that goal. This study is a state-wide Needs Assessment of the civil legal services for victims of crime in Montana. The purpose of this research is to identify the strengths, weaknesses, gaps in services, and barriers to civil legal services in the state. This report will be used to develop an Implementation Plan to better meet the legal needs of crime victims in Montana.

This study seeks to answer two central research questions:

- ❖ What are the civil legal needs of crime victims in Montana, and to what extent are these needs currently being met?
- ❖ What are the major barriers preventing victims from receiving civil legal services, and how can these barriers be overcome?

In this summary, we discuss the methodology used in this research, the results of the research, and the recommendations drawn from these findings.

METHODOLOGY

In order to answer the research questions, we engaged in a mixed-methods approach consisting of two phases of research: a qualitative phase followed by a quantitative phase. The findings from the exploratory qualitative research shaped the surveys in the quantitative phase.

- ❖ Qualitative Phase
 - Focus Groups with Service Providers
 - We conducted focus groups with 67 service providers in 7 communities across Montana, including two tribal communities.
 - In these focus groups, we discussed the resources available to crime victims in the community, the legal needs of these victims, and the barriers that victims face when addressing their civil legal issues.
 - Interview with Victims
 - We conducted phone interviews with 24 crime victims.

- We asked victims about their experiences following their victimization, including the problems that they faced, the services that they received, and the services that they needed but were unable to access.

❖ Quantitative Phase

- Service Provider Survey
 - We conducted an online survey of 189 service providers.
 - This survey focused on the needs of crime victims, barriers to services, interorganizational collaboration, and civil legal services.
- Victim Survey
 - We conducted an online survey with 36 crime victims.
 - The survey examined the legal problems these individuals faced following their victimization and their experiences with civil legal services.

RESULTS

The findings of the focus groups, interviews, and surveys revealed several important patterns involving the need for victim services and the barriers to civil legal services.

NEED FOR SERVICES

❖ Need for Legal Services

- The greatest civil legal needs of victims in Montana are in the areas of:
 - Family law (such as parenting plans, divorce or separation, and orders of protection)
 - Housing law (mainly landlord/tenant legal issues)
- However, victims reported that their legal needs are not being met across all areas of civil legal issues.
- The need for legal assistance exceeds the available resources.
 - Victims often cannot retain an attorney.
 - Victims lack access to adequate self-help resources.
- Advocates are needed to help guide victims through complex legal processes.
- Many service providers need more education or resources related to tribal law.
 - Serving clients in tribal courts is a common form of jurisdictional issue in Montana.
 - Service providers and victims face challenges when dealing with the tribal court system.

❖ Need for Non-Legal Services

- The need for services related to mental and behavioral health was emphasized throughout this study. Service providers discussed the need for more mental health services (e.g., counseling, substance abuse treatment, crisis intervention, etc.), while victims discussed the deleterious effects that victimization had on their mental health.
- Some services facilitate access to other services. Two such services—transportation and child care—were discussed as unmet needs for victims of crime.
- In addition to the housing law needs mentioned above, housing and shelter were discussed by both service providers and victims as a need for some victims of crime.

BARRIERS TO LEGAL SERVICES

❖ Organizations and Victims Face Financial Barriers

- Victims often cannot afford legal representation and they may not qualify for free legal services based on restrictive eligibility requirements.
- Budgetary limitations can force organization to turn away victims seeking legal aid or put these individuals on long waitlists, and overburdened staff cannot adequately serve victims.

❖ Lack of Knowledge is a Barrier for Victims

- Victims are often unaware of the legal services available, uncertain how to obtain these services, or unaware that they are eligible for these services.
- Without assistance, victims of crime encounter significant difficulty navigating the court system. Currently available self-help resources are not an adequate solution for this lack of legal knowledge.
- Victims want to know more about their rights as victims of crime.

❖ Victims Face Emotional Barriers

- Lack of trust in the system, shame and embarrassment, and fear of retaliation by the offender are all critical barriers that may prevent a victim from reporting a crime or accessing services.

❖ Non-legal Needs of Victim are Not Being Met

- Crime victims need mental and behavioral health services, transportation, child care, and housing. If these needs are not met, then they form significant barriers to addressing civil legal needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon these findings, we have several recommendations for improving the delivery of civil legal services to crime victims in Montana.

COLLABORATION

- ❖ Organizations must collaborate and interface with one another in order to meet all of the needs of their victim clients.
 - Legal aid organizations need to be able to connect victims to providers who can give the non-legal services that they require.
 - Non-legal service providers need to be able to effectively refer their clients to civil legal aid providers.
- ❖ By collaborating with other service providers, civil legal organizations will be able to ensure that victims' non-legal needs are treated so that unmet needs do not form barriers to legal services.
 - Organizations providing civil legal services to victims must help their clients access mental health services, housing, transportation, and child care.

INCREASE AWARENESS

- ❖ Civil legal aid organizations need to increase public awareness of their services.
 - Community outreach and advertising are needed to educate victims about the services that are available, who is eligible for these services, and how to access the services.

INCREASE CAPACITY

- ❖ An increased number of attorneys are needed to address victims' largely unmet civil legal needs.
 - Most victims are not getting the legal assistance they require because they cannot afford an attorney or are unable to find an appropriate attorney and they are turned away from legal aid organizations.
 - Victims need legal assistance to navigate the civil legal system.
 - Without an attorney, victims face great difficulty addressing their civil legal issues.
 - Alternatives to legal representation—such as current self-help resources—are not sufficient replacements for a lawyer.

- ❖ It is also important to increase victims' access to advocates. Legal aid organizations should provide clients with advocates in order to most effectively meet the needs of crime victims.
 - Advocates can help victims effectively navigate aspects of the legal system and the sometimes complex processes of accessing other services.
 - Victims have very positive experiences with advocates, and there is a strong desire for advocates among victims who lack these services.
 - Victims will experience the best outcomes when they are being served by an attorney and advocate working together.

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of a crime, victims face a variety of needs and challenges. Due to the complexity of the judicial system, legal issues can be especially daunting. While there are many dedicated organizations, agencies and individuals working to alleviate these problems, Montana faces gaps and barriers to meeting all of these needs.

The Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) is one of 10 sites across the country participating in a national Victim Legal Assistance Networks (VLAN) demonstration project funded through the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), Office for Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. In 2014, the Montana Board of Crime Control (MBCC) was awarded Vision 21–Victim Legal Assistance Network (VLAN) grant funding from the OVC, and contracted with Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) and the University of Montana Criminology Research Group (CRG) to coordinate the Montana VLAN Project.

In 2015, CRG set out to conduct a state-wide Needs Assessment, to collect and analyze data identifying current strengths, challenges, gaps and barriers in services. This information will be used by MLSA to develop an Implementation Plan to better meet the legal needs of crime victims based on the assessment results.

Joan is 75. A widow in rural Montana, she relies on her caregiver to help ensure her basic needs are met—from food to medical care to ensuring financial obligations are addressed. Unfortunately, her caregiver does anything but. They’ve exploited Joan’s finances and neglected her health, leaving Joan facing foreclosure and bankruptcy. Without legal and supportive services, Joan could wind up homeless, penniless, and alone.

The VLAN Project seeks to improve access to comprehensive, coordinated and holistic legal services to crime victims in Montana, to help make sure that clients like Joan do not go without help. Comprehensive specialized services will be offered to all crime victims, including victims of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, and underserved victim populations such as American Indians, and Montana’s rural/remote/frontier populations.

The information gathered by the CRG from crime victims, service providers, and other stakeholders from throughout the state has identified the gaps and barriers, and provides several recommendations to address the identified needs. This endeavor is helping Montanans achieve fairness for all in the justice system, and helps Montanans protect their livelihoods, their health, and their families.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The dissemination of legal and social service information is a pivotal component of victim assistance. The current literature focuses on improving the existing strategies towards informing victims of their rights and available support. Victims would benefit from service providers and legal authorities adopting a more proactive approach to their dissemination of information (Kelly 1984;

Maguire 1991; Newmark 2004; Shapland 1984). Victims of crime often report low levels of satisfaction with legal authorities (Kelly 1984; Shapland 1984), and others are unaware of the available help and support concerning their trauma and victimization (Kelly 1984; Newmark 2004; Shapland 1984). An active, or proactive, approach to dissemination of information should include elements of individualized victim attention (Kelly 1984; Maguire 1991; Newmark 2004; Shapland 1984), direct communication (Maguire 1991; Newmark 2004; Shapland 1984), and frequent check-ins and follow-ups (Kelly 1984; Shapland 1984). Crime victims would also benefit from increased attention to their emotional needs from first responders (Kelly 1984; Maguire 1991; Newmark 2004; Shapland 1984), especially within the first two days of victimization (Maguire 1991; Shapland 1984). Immediate and continued personalized attention towards victim needs can increase the victim's use of other available support services, and leave people feeling taken care of and heard by legal authorities and service providers (Kelly 1984; Maguire 1991; Newmark 2004; Shapland 1984).

SPECIAL POPULATIONS AND TOPICS

Victims belonging to special populations have common needs through unique circumstances. Limited access to legal knowledge and support services is a main concern for members of various special populations (Anon. 2007b; Dutton, Ammar, Orloff, and Terrell 2007; Robin and Runge 2010; Schmitz 2004; Sings and Barkey 2010; Uekert, Peters, Abraham, and Keilitz 2006). Difficulties obtaining legal and support services can vary depending on the special population itself. Victims who have a limited use of the native language or who are immigrants can suffer due to language and culture barriers (Dutton et al. 2007; Schmitz 2004; Uekert et al. 2006). Other groups may suffer from lack of advocate or guardian training, such as victims of domestic violence (Anon. 2007b; Dutton et al. 2007; Robin and Runge 2010; Schmitz 2004) and elderly victims (Legal Issues Related to Elder Abuse: A Pocket Guide for Law Enforcement). Victims of domestic violence and elderly abuse are commonly victimized by family members or guardians, adding another barrier to these special populations being able to receive legal and support services (Dutton et al. 2007; Robin and Runge 2010; Legal Issues Related to Elder Abuse: A Pocket Guide for Law Enforcement).

The solutions for obtaining legal and support services parallel the unique circumstances of each special population; however, there is a general need to increase the training and education of legal and support service providers (Anon. 2007b; Dutton et al. 2007; Robin and Runge 2010; Schmitz 2004; Uekert et al. 2006). Immigrants and "limited English proficient persons" (Uekert et al. 2006) would benefit from legal authority commitment to efficient interpretation methods and cultural understanding (Dutton et al. 2007; Schmitz 2004; Uekert et al. 2006). Victims of domestic violence would greatly benefit from legal authorities, service providers, and workplace associates who receive intensive training that focuses on understanding and addressing domestic violence trauma (Anon. 2007b; Dutton et al. 2007; Robin and Runge 2010; Schmitz 2004; Uekert et al. 2006). This is especially true for victims of domestic violence who are seeking a protective order (Anon. 2007b).

DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS AND EVALUATIONS

Evaluations of victim assistance projects reveal a general need for increased training and education for legal authorities and service providers to better aid victims' needs (Boccellari, Lokin, Shumway, Green, & Penko, 2007; Oregon Crime Victims Needs Assessment 2002; Rosay 2009; Sexual Assault Needs Assessment in Texas; Stone 2000; Winkel, 1991), as well as a pronounced need for additional

services and dissemination of services to victims (Boccellari et al., 2007; Davis, Anderson, & Howley, 2009; Monroe et al., 2005; Oregon Crime Victims Needs Assessment 2002; Pruitt and Showman 2014; Rosay, 2009; Sexual Assault Needs Assessment in Texas; Stone 2000). Aside from improving training efforts and increasing available services, evaluations tend to recommend step-by-step policies and services to aid victims throughout their case (Boccellari et al., 2007; Sexual Assault Needs Assessment in Texas; Stone 2000) and collaboration efforts between legal authorities and service providers within the community (Boccellari et al., 2007; Davis et al., 2009; Pruitt & Showman, 2014; Sexual Assault Needs Assessment in Texas).

CURRENT STUDY

EXPAND

This study focuses on two central research questions:

- ❖ What are the civil legal needs of crime victims in Montana, and to what extent are these needs currently being met?
- ❖ What are the major barriers preventing victims from receiving civil legal services, and how can these barriers be overcome?

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODS

The research for the Montana Victim Legal Assistance Network Needs Assessment consisted of two major phases: a qualitative phase followed by a quantitative phase. The findings from the exploratory qualitative research informed the subsequent quantitative phase. In the first phase, the research conducted (1) **focus groups** with service providers and (2) **interviews** with victims. The focus groups took place in communities across the state of Montana; the participants in these focus groups were service providers who worked with victims of crime in the community. These focus groups provided information on the resources available to victims within each community, the legal needs of these victims, and the barriers victims face when trying to resolve their civil legal issues. The researchers also interviewed victims of crime from across Montana. These interviews provided victims' perspectives on the civil legal challenges they faced following their experience with crime. These focus groups and interviews were transcribed and analyzed by the research team. These findings were used to shape the instruments used in the second phase of the research.

In the second phase, we distributed two surveys statewide: (1) a **service provider survey** for workers who interact with victims of crime and (2) a **victim survey**. The service provider survey gathered information on the service provider's organization and clients, including the needs of these clients, the barriers faced by organizations providing services to victims of crime, and the barriers these victims face in seeking services. This survey also gathered information on cross-organizational collaborative efforts and civil legal assistance for victims of crime. The victim survey focused on the legal problems that individuals faced following their victimization and their subsequent experiences with civil legal services.

In the following chapters, we will discuss the methodological approach of each of these four elements of the research. We will also examine the results from each piece of this project. First we will examine the focus groups with service providers. Next we will discuss the interviews with victims. Finally, we will move to the surveys, first examining the service provider survey and then discussing the victim survey.

FOCUS GROUPS WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS

In this chapter, we will discuss the focus groups conducted in both tribal and non-tribal communities in Montana. First, we will detail the methodology for these focus groups. Next, we will examine the state-wide findings. Finally, we will examine community specific findings before concluding the chapter.

RESEARCH METHODS

Seven communities across the state of Montana were selected to be part of the focus group data collection. In each community, four to fifteen participants attended the focus group, representing a variety of victim service providers (for example, participants ranged from law enforcement and crime victim advocates to civil legal aid attorneys and domestic violence shelter workers). The focus group discussions examined the resources available to victims within the community, the legal needs of victims in the community, and the barriers these victims face when trying to resolve their civil legal issues.

The five non-tribal communities sampled were Billings, Great Falls, Lewistown, Missoula, and Sidney. Part of the sampling strategy used for selection focused on gaining information from communities which were geographically dispersed and represented both densely and sparsely populated areas in Montana. These included the three largest cities in the state—Billings, Missoula, and Great Falls—along with less-populated communities from the central and eastern parts of Montana—Lewistown and Sidney.

We also conducted focus groups in two tribal communities: Poplar and Ronan. Poplar is located within the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. The community serves as the seat of the Tribal Government. The Fort Peck Indian Reservation, located in the northeast corner of Montana, is home to the Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes and has a population of 10,261 (approximately 69% of whom are American Indian).¹ Ronan is located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in western Montana. The Flathead Indian Reservation is home to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CKST) of the Flathead Nation, including the Bitterroot Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d’Oriettes Tribes. The Flathead Indian Reservation has a population of 28,324 (about 32% of whom are American Indian).² Since Montana is home to seven Indian reservations, it was important for us to examine the potentially unique needs and challenges facing these communities.

The following table lists the focus group communities, the dates of the focus groups, the populations of the communities, and the number of participants in each focus group. For additional reference, we have a map of the state of Montana marking each community, along with the borders of the two Indian reservations we visited.

¹ Population statistics are based on the 2014 Census Bureau population estimates.

² Population statistics are based on the 2010 Census.

Location	Date	Population*	Participants
Missoula	June 10, 2015	71,002	15
Great Falls	June 16, 2015	59,638	10
Lewistown	June 17, 2015	5,874	4
Billings	June 29, 2015	110,263	12
Sidney	June 30, 2015	6,828	8
Poplar	December 12, 2015	871	10
Ronan	April 27, 2016	1,981	8

*Population statistics are the 2015 estimates of the United States Census Bureau



In order to recruit participants for the focus groups, the Montana Legal Services Association distributed public notices and invitations to community service providers. Focus group participants ranged from individuals who provide direct civil legal assistance to crime victims to people who are part of the larger referral and service network. Each focus group was led by either Dr. Jackson Bunch or Dr. Dusten Hollist, with the assistance of Project Coordinator Melissa Fisher of the Montana Legal Services Association.

The researchers led the focus groups using a pre-constructed instrument to guide conversation, but the design allowed for unique subjects to arise from participant exchanges and room to probe topics of interest (see Appendix for the focus group questions). Each focus group lasted between one and two hours.

After transcription of the focus groups was completed, two research assistants coded the data using qualitative data analysis software.³ The data were coded such that each topic relevant to the research subject was created as a “theme” and each passage was coded to one or multiple themes depending on its content. A general guideline was used to structure the coding, though unique information arising out of each community demanded a form of open-coding in which the research assistant would create and code themes as they emerged (in addition to those identified in the original guide). Each focus group was coded individually and then merged. Themes were matched across projects and combined where appropriate, and additional coding was performed post-merge.

FINDINGS: STATEWIDE

In this section, we will examine the statewide findings from the focus group data. The statewide findings represent those themes that emerged either most frequently from the communities (both tribal and non-tribal) or as having particular significance in relation to the literature. Here are some of the most important statewide findings:

- *Family law* and *landlord/tenant issues* were the two most frequently discussed types of civil legal issues presented to service providers.
- Two key difficulties mentioned for victims were whether or not they are able to *retain representation* in court or acquire the necessary *self-help* or *pro se legal assistance* for their case.
- *Lack of financial resources*—both in terms of *organizational funding* and the *personal finances of victims*—presented the largest barriers for service providers and the victims they served in resolving civil legal issues. In part, this was due to the costs associated with the legal process, but it also involved the costs involved in resolving non-legal issues which confronted the victim.
- Two crimes were associated with the bulk of civil legal needs - *domestic violence* and *sexual assault*. In particular, their relationship to *family law*, *victim representation*, and non-legal needs such as *shelter* and *financial resources* available to the victim.
- *Collaboration between victim service providers* and the larger referral network was a key component for each community, though the degree in which effective collaboration was present and the organizations which collaborated varied.

In the following sections, phrases and terminology will be defined and we will examine the statewide findings in closer detail, starting with a discussion of the services available to victims. Each focus group began with an attempt to gather information on services already available within a community and who participated in serving the civil legal needs of victims.

³ The coding and analyses were completed using QSR International's NVivo 11 qualitative data analysis Software

EXISTING SERVICES

In the five non-tribal communities, participants were most likely to mention pro bono programs (through which attorneys provide free legal services to low income clients), self-help law centers, and referral resources as existing services within their community. A wide range of organizations participated in meeting the civil legal needs of victims, of which public organizations had the strongest presence. Child Protective Services at the state-level, attorney offices at the county-level, and police departments at the city-level were the most commonly referenced organizations by participants. Among nonprofits, the Montana Legal Services Association and YWCA were mentioned in multiple communities. When presented with a scenario in which someone had just become a victim of crime, hospitals and local nonprofits were at the forefront of the discussion as the first points of contact, or the first referring agency. Local law enforcement, family members and Child Protective Services were also significant sources of referral.

Participants in the two tribal communities discussed a somewhat different list of known available resources than those participants outside of tribal communities. Among others, shelter, transportation, and nonprofit victim advocacy agencies were markedly discussed. Emergency shelter services and the Tribal Housing Authority were mentioned as necessary shelter resources. Transportation to and from those shelters as well as transportation home following a crime was discussed in the focus groups. Participants also commented that public transportation was a valuable service, but when the busses were not running, sometimes law enforcement would be able to provide transportation for victims. A local nonprofit victim advocacy agency was mentioned often and regarded highly by participants in Pablo. Focus group members stated that this resource helps to provide both shelter and transportation in addition to providing advocates, referrals, and offering “general helpfulness.” Some available services mentioned that are specific to these locations were Indian Health Services and the FBI. Additionally, participants discussed the details of whether services were available to only tribal members or to non-tribal members.

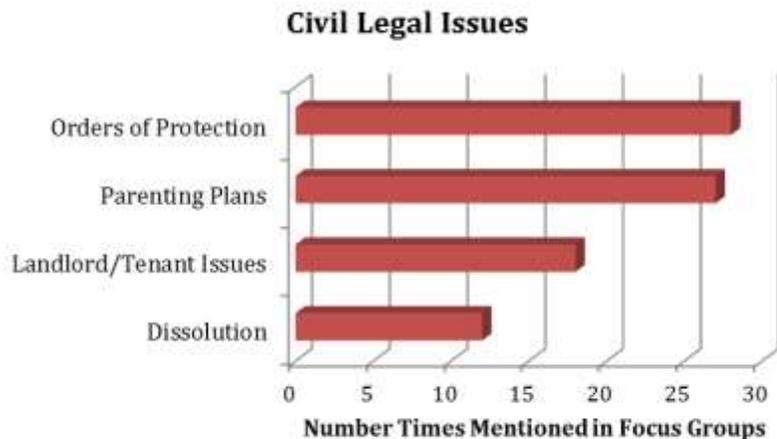
“Well as far as our stats are concerned, a majority of the actions that we see of course are family law, divorces, parenting plans... anything that deals with family law is our number one situation.”

- Participant (non-tribal community)

The next portion of the focus group discussions attempted to capture the specific civil legal issues victims presented to service providers, as well as the barriers service providers faced in assisting victims with these issues.

CIVIL LEGAL ISSUES

Though a variety of civil legal issues were addressed, participants from both the tribal and non-tribal communities primarily mentioned orders of protection, divorces, parenting plans and landlord/tenant issues. The chart to the right displays the most frequently discussed civil legal issues facing victims of crime.



Orders of protection were possibly the most common civil legal need among victims. However, this may not have always been the case, as one non-tribal participant describes, “Prior to, well, 2010, we averaged between 20 and 30 orders of protection a year and since then we’ve had between 50 and 65...” Orders of protection, divorces, and parenting plans were often discussed together, and perhaps better understood from a larger family law framework. One provider described the relationship as:

[Our workload] is probably 90%, whether it’s doing the order of protection process or parenting plan, the divorce [...] This woman today said the attorney she’s contacted wants a \$10,000 retainer because she has a difficult case. What divorce is not difficult?

Though the particularly high cost of a divorce was specific to this particular community—which can have very high attorney fees—the general emphasis on family law was a common theme across communities. Focus group participants in the two tribal communities thoroughly discussed parenting plans as a civil legal need. Complications due to *pro se*-filed parenting plans were brought up by one participant (rather than being represented by an attorney, *pro se* litigants advocate on their own behalf):

Oftentimes you see a client who has filed a *pro se* parenting plan already, prior to seeking legal assistance [...] and that’s legal work because oftentimes that parenting plan isn’t really what the client wants but they felt like they needed to get something filed. Then it just adds to the amount of work that is needed on the case.

This highlights the barrier of clients forced to be *pro se*, as well as the need for civil legal assistance with parenting plans.

Another member of the tribal focus groups discussed the role of criminal charges in filing parenting plans. This participant was concerned about the accountability of criminal charges and what effect a lack of a conviction has on parenting plans, as well as what message is sent:

Criminal accountability send[s] a message to their kids, to their community, to the people around them that it’s not okay to abuse someone. Because the minute those charges are dropped, that sends a message to everyone that it’s not something that

we take seriously, but then it [also] has a huge impact on the civil case. [...] It's coming up in my role so much, [...] and the lack of accountability just undermines the victim being able to prove that something happened. That's not okay for the children, that's not okay for her, that is relevant to our parenting plan and having a criminal conviction where there is accountability, which we don't always have the opportunity for if the victim didn't want to report. In those cases where the victim did report, there's nothing so dis-empowering as having had no accountability and then having that have an adverse effect on a parenting plan or something.

Focus group participants in the tribal communities also reported landlord/tenant issues as a civil legal need they often encountered. One participant commented that this type of need "would be at the top of my list for the number of calls that I've got." This common civil legal need is connected to many others:

Many times we've had a client that was in a domestic violence [situation] and a police report can generate an eviction [...] Let's say [...] there was drugs there, [...] the entire family will be evicted [...] The drugs were there, so you have seven days to get out. That's it. Zero tolerance, even if that was not belonging to the victim.

This participant went on to discuss that this scenario could then result in Child Protective Services being brought in and clients not being able to remove important items from their home before the eviction deadline, possibly resulting in a small claim. This is a multifaceted issue, sometimes related to intimate partner violence and other needs:

Some of it is the lease is in both of our names, that stuff, but a lot of times I'm dealing with illegal evictions where the landlord just comes in and just throws their stuff on the lawn without a court order and they don't know the law. I actually talk to a lot of landlords who are trying to evict their clients to try to counsel them to do it legally because we have so many illegal evictions that come through. We have a lot of clients that just don't know the process.

An additional aspect of this need that was brought up in the tribal focus groups was that "One of our hardest agencies to deal with these are our own tribal housing. [...] It's becoming so problematic that I'm helping defend more people, more tribal members from our tribal housing agency than any other landlord." Additionally, one focus group member suggested that landlord/tenant issues were often connected to chemical dependency and mental illness on the reservations.

Orders of protection were also discussed as a civil legal need in the tribal focus groups. One member stated:

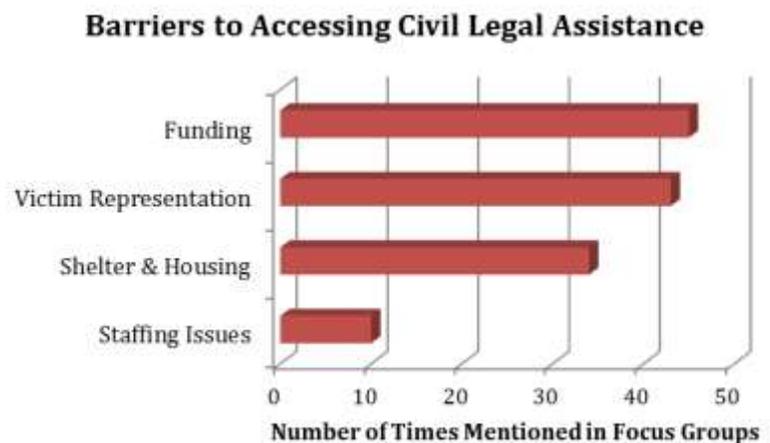
After we can issue the protection order, then we start examining other issues when there's children involved, divorce, parents are married or just living together. The initial focus is the protection order, but then that evolves, depending on the case, legal separation or divorce; or even custody or issues with non-married spouse.

This is a frequent and complicated civil legal need.

BARRIERS

Both service providers and victims face a number of barriers that can prevent a civil legal need from being addressed and/or resolved. Lack of financial resources was the number one issue mentioned as a barrier for both organizations and for clients, but multiple communities also discussed the barriers they and their clients faced with the court system—in particular the lack of and difficulty in obtaining victim representation.

The most frequently discussed barriers to accessing civil legal assistance are listed in the chart to the right. Many of these issues were discussed in tandem with one another, and service providers mentioned other barriers in providing victims with civil legal assistance as well. “Funding” includes references to both a lack of organizational funding and a lack of financial resources available to victims of crime. “Victim representation” refers to the lack of legal representation for victims, the



difficulty victims have in retaining representation, and the problems victims face when they lack representation. “Shelter and housing” refers to limited space in shelters or problems locating safe housing. Service providers discussed housing as one of the one of the core non-legal barriers for victims in accessing civil legal assistance. Finally, “staffing issues” includes references for staff burnout, high caseloads, and high rates of turnover. These issues were not disparate: many of the discussions reflected how these barriers would overlap and interact with one another. For instance, a victim without financial support may need to locate a shelter, and the shelter, perhaps underfunded, does not have enough space nor staff resources to expand the facility.

In the course of discussing victim representation, one participant in a non-tribal community summarized, “To put it in a word or phrase, these laws are not self-executing. They take legal representation to articulate, to get there before a judge who can then grant the relief that person is looking for.” Victims of domestic violence in particular were said to often find themselves without the resources to secure representation and, in lieu of securing representation, appear as a *pro se* litigant. One such example discussed in a focus group was, “Because the abusive person somehow has means [...] here they are with an attorney and the victim survivor is just, you know, kind of left hanging out there in the court room on her own.”

Complications associated with victims being *pro se* were also discussed within the tribal focus groups. Victims who have to represent themselves in court and are not prepared to do so present a barrier. Focus group participants reported that this was commonplace:

A lot of our cases in civil court and family court are *pro se* litigants. We have the packet for them. We can give them legal advice. We do have an in-house attorney

[...] but they're not there to actually represent them in court. [...] They're left on their own.

This barrier manifests as a larger problem because in having victims self-represent:

They may not be informed as to what paperwork needs to be submitted, what they should have said or mentioned in court, what they should've written down in the petition, or even as simply as answering the brief. They just don't know.

"We can't help if we don't know."

– Participant (tribal community)

Focus group members expressed that attempting to fully prepare victims to be *pro se* was as much or more work than it would take if an attorney was able to advise, provide brief services to, or represent the victim:

I'm working on a [...] case but we can't represent, so I'm trying to help someone represent themselves to try to get a case dismissed [...] and it's awful. I can't represent them and I'm trying to teach them how to represent themselves.

A related barrier was not being able to provide legal advice at all to victims. One tribal focus group member stated that:

I think [legal advice] is one of the hugest barriers that we have right now is because we [only] have a supervising attorney and [...] one staff attorney, I'm not an attorney, I'm not able to [...] provide legal advice. All I can do is present resources and victim rights and try to help guide them through the criminal justice system but I can't actually provide any type of answers on parenting plans or even down to jurisdictional issues a lot of the times. [...] It can be really challenging when there's very limited resources available to be able to present as an option for these clients who are in crisis, who need this immediate assistance to get them the help that they need when they need it.

Regarding staffing issues, one tribal participant stated that "having one person getting burnt out on so many cases" was a major barrier. They went on to say that it was a concern that:

Going through employees, social workers, over and over again. You could be in the middle of a big case, that person will just be like, "I can't do this anymore," then you'll get somebody new. You've got to update them, too, on what's going on.

The above quote demonstrates that the result of burnout is a lack of continuity for the client and the organization, forcing both to do more work. One focus group member commented that this was true especially for mental health workers: "We can't retain anybody. We even burn out our school counselors because we have so few mental health people here. We burn out, unfortunately, a lot of people." This quote illustrates that a lack of staff in specified areas can be a barrier, as well. This can include

Q: What resources do you need more of or do you need to more effectively serve victims?

"Educated attorneys and financial assistance and shelter: the three things that victims don't have when they're attempting to get out of these relationships."

– Participant (tribal community)

staff that can provide legal advice for clients.

In addition to the issues highlighted above, service providers mentioned several barriers to legal services of particular importance in rural communities, including transportation difficulties (e.g., clients lacking the ability to travel long distances in order to access services or to attend court proceedings), conflicts of interest (arising when a law firm or legal services organization is already representing the other party in the civil legal dispute, which can happen often in small communities with few legal resources), a lack of civil legal attorneys, and issues related to jurisdiction.

Jurisdictional issues were a barrier that was reported in both tribal and non-tribal focus groups. However, this barrier manifests differently in these two focus groups due to the additional factor of tribal land being a sovereign nation. Focus group members discussed how jurisdictional issues look different with tribal interactions, giving an example to illustrate how the process may play out:

Say there's a sexual assault and the victim called the police and said "I've been sexually assaulted." What will happen then is law enforcement will respond. And it could be federal, it could be tribal, county, or city because we have something called cross-deputization agreement, where all law enforcement can respond and then they figure out the jurisdictions later.

Jurisdiction issues also arise when either the victim or the offender is a tribal member. Some focus group members believed getting to tribal court before a non-tribal party made it to a non-tribal court was of vital importance to the client, while other participants felt that it did not matter as much. One participant commented that it was advantageous, particularly related to the rights of the victim:

[Service providers] need to go through tribal court immediately, let them assume jurisdiction. The race is on regarding who's going to get to court first, right? I think people don't understand that and they don't know. I think non-native people in [this town], the ones that we've worked with, they'll come into my office and tell me off for helping her. They're always thinking it's an ICWA [Indian Child Welfare Act] issue in part, not really, but yet her rights are going to be violated big time.

Another focus group member stated:

I think that's a huge implication of what happens when people don't know how to file in court; I think it's huge. [...] Maybe she's a native woman living in [a nearby town]. She'll come to our office, she's enrolled here and her partner's from another tribe, same issue, they're trying to file there. It's in her best interest to try to get as much services here as she can.

This participant also called attention to the fact that additional, specific knowledge is important in working on cases filed in tribal court. Focus group members reported that because of these additional elements to consider, communication among organizations and providers was especially important. "That whole referral process needs to be put in

"I think it does help, us being involved. I think it is also indicative of our community changing, because I think our community, especially our nonprofit community and advocacy community, is growing stronger and more connected. I think that really is making a difference."

- Participant (non-tribal community)

place. We don't do that. I do it because I know people here and I worked with them [at an advocacy organization] for a long time.” Another participant stated:

Because sometimes people feel comfortable with certain advocates and sometimes they don't. Because we live on the reservation and we're all kind of related and sometimes you get into that, well you could be related to a subject and your victim's not going to want to work with you because you're related to that subject. You kind of all work together. Victim advocacy, the victim groups, we kind of work together. We kind of have that strong communication going because we don't talk, we don't go into specifics about cases, we just say, “Hey, I think this is going to go federal or hey, this is going to stay tribal, are you still working with them? What do you need to help?” A lot of times, the, certain programs have different leeway or different monies or different compliances or issues where they can provide services that say the federal government can't right away, that say they can provide right away.

Dealing with jurisdictional complications on top of handling basic requirements for cases increases the workload for the staff working on those cases. This additional work could contribute to the burnout experienced by providers and organizations that are experiencing difficulties related to the lack of staff. One focus group member suggested this connection, stating:

I'm trying to keep it in tribal court here and deal with the case that they filed in another court and for several weeks [just that one case] will be what I'm spending a ton of time on because I'm doing jurisdictional battles as well as just dealing with their safety issues. Those are just examples of some of the reasons that cases need so much direct representation and how one case can require so much time and resources.

Service providers were also asked what the most valuable resources in their community were—those resources that they saw as being essential to meeting the civil legal needs of victims. Again, funding was mentioned as one of the primary resources service providers identified, but collaboration between service providers and specific tools used in the referral process also emerged as themes. Two tools mentioned which were of particular note were the informal referral networks which service providers formed amongst one another and the domestic violence/partner or family member assault packets issued by police officers. After describing the valued resources that their communities already had, service providers were asked to describe those resources which they don't have and would value if they were available. Funding emerged as the number one theme mentioned across communities. The primary purpose of funding in this instance, however, was for additional staff.

“I think that the number one thing that victims in this area need is attorneys.”

“Educated attorneys.”

– Participants (tribal community)

FINDINGS: COMMUNITY-SPECIFIC

We have detailed some of the common themes between all of the communities; however, the focus group data also reflect that each community presents a unique environment with its own barriers. This community context can relate to the civil legal issues encountered by local service providers along with the makeup of the service provider networks in the community. The graphic on the following page summarizes some of the unique characteristics of each of the communities mentioned by their service providers, with particular emphasis on those not already covered in the statewide findings.

Many unique circumstances arose in close examination of each community, including but not limited to those mentioned above. A quick glance also reveals some similarities between communities which did not arise in the statewide examination.

In Sidney, participants mentioned having to send both the victim and offender in a domestic violence case to the same Alcoholics Anonymous group due to the lack of service providers, and described the difficulties either party may face in finding work after-the-fact due to the lack of anonymity in smaller communities. Elder abuse and exploitation cases were mentioned as a factor in the increase of landlord/tenant issues the community was experiencing, ultimately related to the large population increase the region had experienced driven by the boom in oil and gas production. One participant spoke of “people just moving in with [elderly residents] to rent and then refusing to leave.” Another service provider added:

Well, that’s the other thing, a lot of elderly, single women have taken in single guys who come to the community to work [...] They get their trust, so, there is a lot of that, an increase in [elder exploitation] [...] It’s really difficult, a lot more landlord/tenant issues.

Elder exploitation was also mentioned in relation to contested mineral rights, “The other one I was going to mention is, we’ve had a huge increase, just lately, of elder exploitation cases. People are always trying to get other people’s mineral rights away. It’s kind of crazy.”

Participants in Billings also discussed elder abuse as an issue, in part due to issues with recognition of the crime, “But they say elder abuse is where domestic violence was in the ‘70s; I mean people just don’t think elder abuse exists and that’s the one we’re starting to see more and more of.” The increasing recognition of these issues has also spurred educational programs held at the public library in Billings, “I think the other thing people are looking for is education [...] we did a couple programs that were sponsored by the AARP where we talked about financial fraud...” Participants in Great Falls discussed another type of program sponsored by the Billings public library. One stated:

So did you know that some libraries across the state have done things where they have had service fairs at the library on a specific issue? Billings did a homeless service fair day down in their meeting room [...] It was an opportunity to both bring in persons who needed those services but having everybody in the room also served as a really good catalyst.

Community-Specific Highlights

Missoula

- More diverse entry for victims in to legal assistance programs
- Additional staff for service organizations a larger priority
- Complexities with international student victims

Great Falls

- Unique interaction with local military and Special Victims Counsel
- Desire for service fairs
- Difficulty with court system in terms of non-standardized legal forms

Lewistown

- Participation of local religious organizations and local non-profit programs
- More discussion around victims' non-legal needs
- Lack of diverse job opportunities and job training for victims

Billings

- Wide-range of services available, but relative lack of awareness of those services
- Difficulty in acquiring mental health services for victims
- Difficulty with court system in terms of non-standardized legal forms

Sidney

- Increase in elder abuse and exploitation
- Relative lack of service providers
- More multijurisdictional issues (state and tribal)

Poplar

- Victims end up being pro se without sufficient assistance to represent themselves
- Jurisdictional issues are particularly complex, especially when considering tribal jurisdiction
- Lack of communication and connectivity between and among organizations

Ronan

- Lack of attorneys with necessary education and skills for the victims in that area
- Attorney, client, and organizational misconceptions about domestic violence
- Need for more chemical dependency treatment

Service providers in Billings and Great Falls were also more likely to mention issues regarding court forms, which were tied to their desire for self-help legal assistance required to educate victims on the filing of these forms, but also to concepts such as trauma-informed care and problems raised by differing forms across jurisdictional boundaries. One participant stated, “Let’s be honest, I think that if you were looking for recommendations, we need to provide forms that the average person is able to utilize just by themselves.” Another service provider expressed the following opinion:

I think one of the civil legal needs in our community is making the forms less punitive. The courts website is fantastic in terms of the range of things that it has and the forms are very self-explanatory, but the majority of the clients who come in, who are crime victims, they typically have a lower literacy rate. They are typically in poverty, so the forms can be really confusing and even though there are very clear directions about how many copies to make or what forms to turn in, we frequently have to sit with them and go over repeatedly the directions about the process. I think if there was some way to outline the forms to make it simpler or to address that in some way—that would be fantastic.

Another participant said:

One of the major gaps we have in our community, I do not know if you will see this in the other places you are visiting, but we have three different courts and all three courts require different work or potential paperwork.

Multijurisdictional issues were also raised in the Sidney focus group, but they were focused around the legal complexities raised and also around the ability of law enforcement to respond. One participant said, “We have a lot of interstate issues. It affects all of us; we’re dealing with the consequences constantly.” Multijurisdictional issues were also expressed in relation to cases with victims from other countries, including international student victims in Missoula. Another quote from a Great Falls representative addressed an additional tie between tribal jurisdiction and legal forms:

One issue that we do see in terms of family planning is the relationships with the tribes. It is a very big open gray area if someone comes in and they are a member of the tribe or their partner is, or one of their children. It gets very complicated very easily. Developing forms that would work with tribes across the state of Montana—that are even specific between judicial report and the different tribes—would fulfill a huge need and a huge service. As of right now, there is not clarity on what someone is supposed to do if they are getting divorced or if they are filing a parenting plan and someone is enrolled as a member of a tribe in the state.

Some connections can also be drawn from community specific issues to issues expressed at the statewide level, such as the lack of job opportunities and training available to victims of crime in Lewistown, which is linked to larger issues such as the financial independence of victims.

The two tribal communities also had unique issues. Service providers in the Poplar focus group on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation reported that victims often end up being *pro se* without ample resources to help them represent themselves. One participant stated:

A lot of our cases in civil court and family court are *pro se* litigants. We have the packet for them. We can give them legal advice. We do have an in-house attorney that we can say, “You know what? You can go ask your legal questions to them,” but they’re not there to actually represent them in court. We do have a public defender. [...] They’re left on their own.

Service providers in Poplar also reported that tribal jurisdictional problems were an important issue for discussion. Complications with jurisdiction were reported as being especially complex to navigate for this location. This focus group discussed the need for more communication and connectivity among organizations to better serve victims. One participant commented that providers “don’t know what happened to [the victim] because [organizations] don’t call you back. If you want to answers, you’ve got to literally drive out there.”

In Ronan, service providers reported several issues that appear to stand out for this community. The first of these community-specific issues was attorney education. Participants in Ronan emphasized not only a need for attorneys, but attorneys who are educated and skilled. When asked what their community needed, one participant responded, “I think that the number one thing that victims in this area need is attorneys,” to which another participant added “educated attorneys.” This topic came up at several points throughout this focus group, including one time that a participant commented that attorneys with knowledge on domestic violence were especially needed. Additionally, general misconceptions and stigma surrounding domestic violence was a problem that was discussed several times throughout this focus group. This included alienating the victim through victim blaming and limiting the scope of domestic violence to include only physical assault. Service providers also commented that there is a need for chemical dependency treatment in this location; some reported that this was an even greater barrier than mental healthcare. One participant commented that chemical dependency treatment “seems to have all these roadblocks or these hoops that [victims] have to jump through,” which they stated were more extensive than those for mental healthcare.

CONCLUSION

As the focus group data presented a wide array of community characteristics, needs, and barriers as expressed by their service providers, the best available conclusions are those which allow the issues to be connected and addressed as a whole. Though the composition of participants and their positions in the victim service provider network played an important role in the issues which arose, several conclusions can be drawn about the participating communities. Valuable information was obtained on a number of topics, including those outside or on the periphery of civil legal assistance for victims of crime. Here, we frame the information in terms of the project’s goal.

One of the basic concepts communicated by participants from both the tribal and non-tribal communities concerning civil legal assistance is that legal matters require legal education. This education may come in many forms—a self-help law clinic, a pro bono attorney (i.e., an attorney providing free legal services to a low income client), guided online forms, or a private practice—but it is without a doubt a necessity to resolving a victim’s civil legal needs. Among those barriers which may prevent a victim from accessing civil legal resources, two larger categories arise: organizational barriers and non-legal needs. Organizational barriers can take many forms, whether it is a lack of resources, staff burnout, or lack of knowledge on a specific issue. A single organization is also unlikely to be able to resolve a victim’s every need. The victim may face non-legal issues—

such as lack of transportation, lack of housing, or substance abuse problems—that prevent them from accessing civil legal assistance without the aid of an array of other service providers; therefore, the victim’s resolution may be tied to an organization’s ability to collaborate with resources in their network. Communities require a diverse network of service providers to respond to the variety of civil legal and basic needs presented by victims. Ultimately, as the number of service providers increases, so does the need for tools to facilitate collaboration between them. The ability of community networks to holistically assist a victim is improved when organizations collaborate with one another. Finally, victims of domestic or intimate partner violence were among the most encountered groups for these service providers, and these individuals present a wide range of legal and non-legal needs.

“The process empowers them. The process definitely empowers them to be able to have confidence in their capabilities of having this court order, gives them this leg to stand on that they didn’t have before. It’s only through the civil legal services that they can get that.”

– Participant (tribal community)

In the next chapter, we will discuss the interview with victims of crime.

INTERVIEWS WITH VICTIMS

In this chapter, we will examine the interviews conducted with victims of crime from across Montana. First, we will discuss the methodology for these in-depth interviews. Then, we will delve into the results of these interviews before concluding the chapter.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research team conducted 24 interviews with victims of crime in the state of Montana. To protect the privacy of participants, no information was collected on the location of these respondents. To minimize the discomfort of participants, no details were collected about the crime committed against them. The phone interviews were transcribed and coded into themes using qualitative data analysis software.⁴ Interviewees answered a brief series of questions about the services they received or were unable to receive following the crime. Most interviews lasted around 30 minutes, though some were far shorter and a few were over an hour long. Participants were offered a \$25 gift card for their time. The interview questions and verbal informed consent form are available in the Appendix.

FINDINGS

In this section, we will discuss the results from the analysis of the interviews with victims. First, we will discuss positive and then negative experiences of the interviewees that are specific to civil legal issues. Next, we will delve deeper into victims' problems with understanding court procedure and processes. Then, we will discuss victims' reports of services that they received and services they were unable to receive. Next, we will address the negative and then positive non-civil legal experiences discussed by victims in the interviews. Lastly, we will conclude the chapter.

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES WITH CIVIL LEGAL ISSUES

We would like to highlight several commonly discussed topics under the theme of “things that worked well or went well with civil legal assistance.” The most discussed positive about civil legal assistance in these interviews were the crime victim advocates (CVAs). Interviewees mentioned CVAs more than any other positive civil legal assistance theme. One interviewee highlighted the helpfulness of CVAs by stating “I would have never made it through the first month after [the crime] without the crime advocate people.” CVAs filled a variety of roles for victims depending on their needs. One interviewee described that role as “help[ing] me fill out paperwork to obtain other documents that I needed from the courts” and another interviewee found it helpful that “they went to court with me on my order of protection.” Participants spoke positively about crime victim advocates:

“[The crime victim advocate was] very kind, informative, compassionate.”

They explained literally everything to me, plus more. They actually told me about things that the police officer before had never even told me. [...] They made sure

⁴ The coding and analysis of the interview data was completed using QSR International's NVivo 11 qualitative data analysis Software.

that I was comfortable, that I knew everything. It was honestly the most pleasant experience I've ever had when it comes to [...] the legal part of things.

Another service provided by CVAs that an interviewee mentioned was “the CVA awarded me counseling benefits,” and they described this as “a huge blessing.” The interactions with CVAs were described by one interviewee as “very kind, informative, compassionate.” This highlighted some of the impact CVAs have on victims.

The CVAs and other advocacy organizations provided assistance with filing an order of protection for several interviewees. Help with orders of protection was a commonly discussed theme in these interviews. One interviewee “got a hold of them [CVA] immediately after [the crime] because they helped me fill out my order of protection. They helped me file it.” Some interviewees had help filing orders from their attorney. “Mostly [my attorney] is dealing with the parenting plan and the protective order.” This interviewee had an attorney assist with both the protective order and a parenting plan.

“I have dyslexia, I have [a medical condition] in my hands and they've helped me fill out any paperwork.”

Having an attorney or CVA to help file the appropriate paperwork and to know what paperwork to file was reported as a positive experience. One interviewee said that their CVA “offered a lot of help with paperwork, [they offered] to help me fill it out” and that “they've helped me with all the paperwork that

I've needed to fill out. I have dyslexia, I have [a medical condition] in my hands and they've helped me fill out any paperwork.” The interviewee reported that “the courts want [every] ‘I’ dotted and every ‘T’ crossed. They made sure that all of that was done for me.” This interviewee and others discussed that they appreciated the assistance with properly filling out and filing detailed paperwork.

Another commonly discussed topic was being connected to resources. Interviewees interacted with many different organizations and they reported that it was helpful when organizations were aware of other services and resources. One interviewee described this guidance: “If it hadn't been for [my CVA] telling me, ‘You can go to this place or that place’, I wouldn't have known.” This interviewee highlighted that knowledge of and referrals to other organizations are an important need because if this victim did not get that knowledge from their CVA, they would not have known where to go for resources that they needed following the crime that was committed against them. Some interviewees reported that law enforcement connected them to advocates or other resources that were helpful.

NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES WITH CIVIL LEGAL ISSUES

Interviewees also discussed difficulties that they faced with civil legal assistance following the crime. Several interviewees reported that they needed help finding attorneys that were appropriate for their case as well as affordable for them. One interviewee said “a regular attorney told me I couldn't afford to hire him as it would cost me several thousand more than what I could collect.” This suggests that the attorney in question would cost more than any potential payout and that the interviewee could not afford the difference. Another interviewee described their situation, in which money was not the barrier in finding a lawyer. The interviewee said they “needed an attorney to stand up to the attorney that his parents hired, and there was nobody willing to go up

against him.” In this instance, it was difficult for the interviewee to find a lawyer that would represent them against the opposition’s lawyer. Another interviewee discussed their difficulty with finding an attorney to represent them. They said that “even after I offered to pay for a lawyer, lawyers just didn't want to take [my case].” These quotes demonstrate that while money was a barrier to finding an attorney, it was not the only reason that these interviewees did not have someone to represent them on their case.

“[I spent] over \$500 to \$600 on just making copies of text messages, and court papers, and then charge it, for fees with getting information from one part of the court, and then running over to the other side of the court.”

Attorney costs were not the only reason finances were a barrier. Several interviewees reported that they had other expenses that made the process difficult for low income victims. Time and money were hurdles for one interviewee who reported that they were “able to eventually get all this information, and go through all these processes, but with great difficulty. With a lot of my personal finances spent.” This interviewee indicated that the process itself costs money, which can be a burden to clients. One victim reported some figures that they spent on making copies and paying for expenses along the way:

[I spent] over \$500 to \$600 on just making copies of text messages, and court papers, and then charge it, for fees with getting information from one part of the court, and then running over to the other side of the court. Then giving them more money to give them back the same papers to file those papers with the judge, so the judge can see them.

They went on to express the results of this financial burden, “We are actually currently a month and a half behind rent and we're being evicted,” demonstrating that fees and the copies they needed for their case led to a financial burden and the interviewee and their family losing their housing.

Another victim expressed frustration with the barriers they faced when trying to access legal services:

It's really complicated to get services. You've got to go through all the financial hurdles and filling out all the forms and remembering all the dates and times and exactly what happened and who was involved. You know, that's tough for a person to organize that.

This victim highlights the experiences that were reported by many interviewees. They suggested a solution to at least some of those complications. “It'd be really nice if there was some place that you could go to basically hook you up with the pro bono and the *pro se*, a direct route, an easy guidance system to redirect you.”

“It's really complicated to get services [...] You know, that's tough for a person to organize that.”

PROBLEMS UNDERSTANDING LEGAL AND COURT PROCESSES

A major theme that interviewees highlighted was that victims do not understand the legal process and court procedures. In this section, we examine this issue to understand what this entailed for the interviewees. Victims detailed their troubles with navigating the court process, the shortcomings of the available resources, and the lack of available information on victims’ rights.

Various interviewees reported situations that were difficult because of their lack of knowledge of court procedures and practices. Those without previous knowledge of law are left to figure out a difficult system with little guidance. Interviewees highlighted that it is unclear for victims how to navigate the system. One interviewee found that “you're pretty much on your own. If you don't fill something out right or do something quite right, your effort and money has been wasted,” highlighting the devastating effect of an error on an already demanding and expensive process. Interviewees described various scenarios where they felt at a disadvantage because of the lack of assistance to understand the processes following the crime committed against them. One interviewee detailed their experience:

The adversaries that you're going against are usually well-armed and have corporations and know all the loopholes and tricks. It would be nice to be able to figure out some kind of a way to streamline the process. [...] It's hard for an individual to schedule their legal time frame because they're basically trying to do it off of the knowledge that they have or can acquire and what their availabilities and resources [are]. If they don't have good financial resources, they're already starting out with a disadvantage.

This victim described the difficulties that they faced as someone with no legal knowledge attempting to navigate a complicated and intricate system. They also highlighted, in relation to a previous theme that was commonly discussed, that income is another factor in the ability to best utilize the available resources. Interviewees discussed that the system is not accessible to people with no prior knowledge of law—everything from understanding legal language to understanding the court process becomes an incredible hurdle without any legal background.

Additionally, victims that represented themselves *pro se* reported situations that they were unsure how to navigate the court system due to their lack of legal knowledge. One interviewee described two such situations, one in which they felt bullied by the other attorney about dropping a motion that they did not know enough about to follow through and another where they did not know what to say during court, including when to object and how to argue for those objections. They said:

I'm representing myself. I don't know what I'm doing. I don't know my rights. I don't know what I can and cannot do. All I knew is I did not have any evidence to give the judge to support my concern, or my request. I had, at that point, absolutely no confidence that I could defend my motion.

Because of their lack of knowledge of law, they were left unable to provide a key piece of evidence to the court. One interviewee highlighted this need, saying “there needs to be a lot more explanation of what this is, what it means, what procedure is.” This quote demonstrates that victims are aware that they need to know much more to be successful in court.

One interviewee described the difficulty with navigating the nuances of services and of the legal process:

Basically when I get there, I don't know where to go, what to do. [If it was] some type of criminal thing where I would appear and need public representation, it would be different, you know? But since it was a civil thing where even though there have been crimes, there's been negligence and there's criminal and physical criminal things going on there, too, in addition to that. It's just a legal battle with

multiple layers in it, you know. It's some of one thing and some of another, and since it doesn't rest considerably in one niche or another, it basically points a finger at somebody else and send you to somebody else to go to.

Even with their understanding of their case, the victim had difficulty finding answers or knowing where to go for help. One victim commented that they were representing themselves and “because I do not have that education and I do not have that license and degree” that “chances are, I am not going to win.”

When asked by the interviewer what assistance would have been the most helpful that the victim did not receive, one participant responded, “Someone that can answer your legal questions. That can tell you what's going about with the court, or the case. Like an all-in-one answering system.” This victim wanted one go-to “answering system” that they and other victims could utilize for answers to legal questions, that could help with understanding court, and that would know what was going on with their criminal and civil cases. This particular victim had a lawyer for their cases but they found that that wasn't enough:

“There needs to be a lot more explanation of what this is, what it means, what procedure is.”

I do have my attorney, but she's super busy and stuff. Every once in a while I have to make sure that I have a whole list of questions. For the few minutes that I get her on the phone, she's able to answer them. In both [criminal and civil] cases, you know, I get a lot of questions unanswered. I end up spending a lot of times getting those questions answered. I get yelled at a lot, because I was referred to the wrong department, or the wrong person, and I ask them the wrong question. Just obtaining information in both cases is tough.

This victim's quote demonstrated that in some cases, having an attorney is not sufficient to have all of their civil legal needs met.

Another interviewee commented that the content of the resources that were available was not helpful and that, “It would be helpful if they could put together something that's actually useful to people who don't know anything. [...] I'm looking at that [the packet] and I'm like, “This tells you basically nothing.” This interviewee reported that not only did it take quite some time to be directed to this legal packet, but once they obtained it, they did not find it helpful at all.

Victims often found that the resources that are available to them to help understand the legal process fell short. Victims reported that the available resources that they did find were either not informative or difficult to comprehend. One individual commented on the resources for victims who represent themselves:

[The resources are] written by people who know what they're talking about. They're assuming, “We made this simple enough anybody will know.” I'm not a stupid person and I can read and I'm looking at this and I don't know it. So many of the people I know have difficulty reading and writing. [...] There needs to be a lot more explanation of what this is, what it means, what procedure is.

This victim highlighted that the resources that they utilized were not accessible for people with varying levels of literacy.

Interviewees further emphasized the importance of legal help and resources having language that victims could understand. One interviewee said:

I don't have a clue what you're talking about. I can read this. I know the words but I do not understand the meaning of what you're saying this law means. Some are very simple. Some are not. If it was all that simple attorneys wouldn't be arguing with each other what they meant. Something needs to be put together that explains to people how to proceed in your case more than what they have.

Another interviewee stated that they were not able to get their needs met because, "I didn't know the legal terminology, and couldn't get these things read and address the concern."

Additionally, several interviewees specifically mentioned lack of knowledge about victims' rights being an issue. One individual said that victims "have no idea what our rights are, because we don't know they exist, they don't tell us." Another victim stated, "I would like to discuss with somebody in law who knows about law, and what rights do I have here?"

"I know the words but I do not understand the meaning of what you're saying this law means."

Another participant mentioned victims' rights in addition to wanting help in some other areas. They said they were representing themselves and that, "I don't know what I'm doing. I don't know my rights. I don't know what I can and cannot do." This interviewee wanted the following:

A person who [has] some legal background, people that a person like me could go to and say [...] what can I do? Because [...] if we don't have the money we can't fight it. If somebody is a judge rules against us on erroneous information, we're stuck.

When the interviewer asked another participant what would have helped them in their situation, they said:

A checklist for people that are affected by legal circumstances, so that they can get a better understanding of where to go [...] some type of a guidebook or something like that [and] a sequencing system to go along with it. I think a chart to let them know to take a certain type of category because there's different types of categories that are out there. An informational brochure that's connected in some way to a directory.

In these interviews, victims illustrated their desire to better understand court and legal processes by utilizing materials that are both easy to access and easy to understand. Victims highlighted that these materials should detail the civil legal process for victims who have representation as well as victims who are representing themselves. Participants also wanted more information on their rights as victims of crime.

SERVICES RECEIVED AND GAPS IN SERVICES

Participants were asked by the interviewers to discuss the services that they received following the crime. Several participants reported that they received assistance from services with orders of protection. Others indicated that they received counseling or therapy. Several participants said that they received assistance with parenting plans. Some individuals reported that they utilized legal self-help centers, while others said that they received legal advice. A number of interviewees said that they received help in communicating with law enforcement or with the court. Less commonly mentioned services received were child support assistance, assistance connecting to other services that they needed, and having someone attend court with them.

Interviewees were also asked to describe services that they were unable to receive following the crime. Victims' most commonly reported gap in services was legal representation. General legal assistance, explanations for legal situations, and some list or source where they could go to know what services are available to them were also mentioned. Some less commonly mentioned gaps in services were an easy to read card distributed with an order of protection, services that understand working with people with disabilities, groups for abusers, notifications regarding updates on their case, police accepting evidence and responding to the crime in a timely manner, assistance with filing a protective order, and support for child victims that are not in foster care.

Several interviewees mentioned legal representation as a form of assistance that they needed but were unable to receive. Interviewees said that they needed attorneys to represent them. Some participants reported that they did not have legal representation because they could not afford an attorney, while others reported that they did not have legal representation because they could not find an attorney appropriate for their situation. One participant stated:

I did seek out some support through the YWCA and spoke with the director there. She contacted a local attorney and that attorney was willing to work with me under, I can't recall the terminology, but basically it would be half the rate [Modest Means Program], which was just completely out of my reach. There was no way I could do that.

Even at this reduced rate, an attorney was still financially unattainable for this victim. Another victim said that they were unable to retain an attorney to fit a specific requirement due to the limited options in the community. While some victims had certain requirements that they needed for a lawyer, others needed a lawyer with no restrictions. When asked what they would like to get services for, the interviewee responded, "It'd be nice to be able to get lawyers that would actually do the job, or just to get one." Another interviewee commented:

"It'd be nice to be able to get lawyers that would actually do the job, or just to get one."

I really do believe that we need to look at our justice system for people that are victims of these horrible, horrible crimes, and not able to get representation to be able to go into a court of law without representing ourselves.

General legal assistance—not necessarily in the form of an attorney—was a topic that came up when discussing gaps in services. Participants brought up several scenarios in which perhaps they did not require legal representation, but they would have liked to receive some general legal

assistance or some explanation regarding their legal situations. One participant commented, “I’d like to find out whether or not I have any legal grounds to protect myself, for one thing.” Another interviewee mentioned:

That was something that definitely wasn't explained to me: that even exploring that other case and instance while [...] waiting for this ongoing trial on a separate [issue] [...] would negatively impact me, having that other case investigated. That was not communicated to me. I wish that that would have been.

This victim required more legal understanding of the situations surrounding their case.

NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES FOLLOWING VICTIMIZATION

In this section, we will address general negative experiences commonly reported by victims—that is, experiences that were not specific to civil legal assistance or civil legal issues. Some of these experiences included interactions with law enforcement. Other involved the negative impact that their victimization experience had on many aspects of their lives, including their housing situations, their mental health, and their employment. Other less common negative experiences included experiences with support groups, the cost of mental health services, the financial impact of the victimization, the victimization’s deleterious effects on their academic performance, and the small-town atmosphere in which everyone knows each other.

Several victims described various negative interactions with law enforcement. Two interviewees mentioned that they felt that the police did not take them and their situation seriously. Other victims reported communication problems with law enforcement. One victim reported that the police ignored their wishes to press charges. Another highlighted the lack of responsiveness of local law enforcement, “We waited a full week with no call and no response from the sheriff’s department, so we went in on our own to the sheriff’s department.” Another participant reported that they experienced “law enforcement being very involved the first week, week and half, and then you can't get a hold of them. They don't return messages.” These cases illustrate the difficulty that victims faced when attempting to communicate with law enforcement.

Victims also reported that they experienced negative effects on their housing following the crime committed against them. One participant discussed the fact that the court fees and the cost of their attorney affected their ability to pay rent, leading to them being evicted. Two other interviewees reported that their housing situations became difficult due to the offender. One stated:

My [apartment] manager's working with me, thank god. [...] They're actually going to relocate me. They're going to allow me to [move] as soon as another one bedroom apartment comes up on the other side of the complex they're going to relocate me.

This victim lived in the same housing complex as the offender and—as a recipient of a Section 8 housing voucher—possessed limited options in relocating. Another victim faced complications with housing because the offender was listed as the head of household on a housing application. This individual stated, “[the property management] asked me if maybe I could get him to sign it, to take himself off, but he wasn’t going to do that for me.” This led to complications with this interviewee’s housing.

A couple of individuals reported that their mental health was negatively impacted by the crime. One victim said that they had panic attacks following the crime, and they did not make the connection from the crime to the panic attacks until sometime later. Another victim described their situation saying:

Trying to explain that to a doctor what's going on with medical and legal and everything going on in your life, it just makes it so complicated that none of the doctors really want to deal with you. Of course, that causes other effects, like mental illness and depression. It just puts a person into a downward spiral in their life.

This individual found that the difficulty trying to explain their injuries and their situation to doctors and others led to even more problems, specifically with mental health.

Two victims also described negative effects on their employment following the crime. Both interviewees said that they were forced to leave their jobs. One victim said:

I was forced to leave my job [...] my employer kept threatening me. [...] He called me into [the] office and threatened to fire me, asked me why I wouldn't just quit, and stuff like that. It just got nastier and nastier as time went by. [...] Both my hands went bad a couple years ago [due to the crime] and I couldn't meet deadlines.

This victim's injuries affected their ability to work and they "felt like they [the doctors and their employer] all ganged up on me," ultimately leading this individual to quit their job. Another participant also reported that they were forced to leave their job following the crime. This participant said, "They always want to set up all these court dates and stuff like that. Having that and on top of that feeling like I had to watch myself all the time, I ended up actually just leaving my job." This participant said that leaving their job was "the only negative effect" that they experienced following the crime.

"Trying to explain that to a doctor what's going on with medical and legal and everything going on in your life, it just makes it so complicated that none of the doctors really want to deal with you. Of course, that causes other effects, like mental illness and depression. It just puts a person into a downward spiral in their life."

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOLLOWING VICTIMIZATION

Victims also discussed general experiences (unrelated to civil legal assistance) that were positive. Participants commonly reported positive experiences with mental health support and receiving assistance in finding housing. Less common positive experiences discussed in the interviews were the ability to successfully hire a lawyer, that the book *The Rape Survival Handbook* was a good resource, positive experiences with law enforcement, and that the victim's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) caseworker was helpful in connecting them to resources.

Participants spoke positively about mental health support in their interviews. Victims listed several organizations by name that they described as being supportive in regards to their mental health. These included the University of Montana's Student Advocacy Resource Center (a center that provides advocacy, counseling, and support for students who have experienced victimization), First Step (a resource center in Missoula's St. Patrick Hospital that provides services to victims of

child abuse and sexual assault), and the Friendship Center (a shelter in Helena that provides services to victims of intimate partner violence and sexual assault). Additionally, a couple of participants mentioned that CVAs assisted them with counseling benefits.

Another participant reported that a CVA was able to connect them to the YWCA to find emergency housing. Another interviewee who was staying in a shelter said that the advocates helped them with housing, as well. They said that “being able to be in a safe place” with the help of the YWCA was especially helpful.

CONCLUSION

Victims discussed their individual experiences in these brief interviews. While their voices were varied, many reported at least minor difficulties in their lives following the crimes committed against them.

Interviewees discussed a variety of positive experiences with civil legal topics following the crime committed against them. Victims reported positive civil legal experiences with crime victim advocates, with assistance on filing orders of protection, assistance with filing other appropriate paperwork correctly, as well as having assistance with connecting to other resources that they needed. These experiences highlight the vital role that advocates can play in assisting victims of crime. Victims also discussed several negative experiences with civil legal issues: that they didn’t receive enough help finding appropriate and affordable attorneys, that there were many financial barriers for victims of crime, and that the lack of knowledge of court procedures and practices was difficult to overcome. This emphasizes the gaps in legal assistance for crime victims—often the result of financial barriers—and how this gap in legal aid negatively impacts victims.

Victims discussed the problems they had with understanding court and legal procedures. Interviewees reported that the resources and literature currently available to them to help them navigate this process fell short. Interviewees were also interested in knowing more about victims’ rights. These issues were often the result of the gaps in legal aid discussed above. Victims were often unable to acquire an attorney, and the resources that substituted for legal advice—such as self-help materials—were often too complex to prove helpful.

In the interviews, victims discussed what services they accessed and what services they wanted but did not receive. Victims in this sample had help with orders of protection, parenting plans, communicating with law enforcement or the court. They also reported receiving help through counseling or therapy, legal self-help centers, and legal advice. Victims reported that they needed help in the form of legal representation, general legal assistance, explanations for legal situations, and some central list or location with details on where to go to receive what services and they did not receive these services. Overall, this suggests that, while many victims did receive some form of legal assistance, many did not get the level of legal aid that they required.

Finally, victims reported on general, non-civil legal topics, as well. Many victims detailed negative experiences, including interactions with law enforcement, effects on their housing, effects on their mental health, and effects on their employment. Interviewees reported that mental health support and being able to receive help with housing were positive experiences following the crime committed against them.

In the next chapter, we will discuss the Service Provider Survey.

SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY

In this chapter, we will discuss the Service Provider Survey, an online survey which was completed by victim service providers across the state of Montana. First, we will detail the methodology for this survey. Then, we will examine the survey results. Finally, we will conclude the chapter.

RESEARCH METHODS

The Service Provider Survey was an online survey created and distributed using the research software Qualtrics. The survey consisted of 53 questions divided into five major sections (see Appendix for the complete Service Provider Survey). The first section gathered information on the respondent and their organization. The second section of the survey focused on the characteristics of the organizations' clients. The third section examined the needs of these clients and the barriers to services—including barriers faced by organizations providing services to victims of crime and the barriers these victims face in seeking services. The fourth section of the survey asked about cross-organizational collaborative efforts. The final section examined civil legal assistance for victims of crime.

In order to recruit our sample, we compiled a list of victim service providers across the state (e.g., law enforcement, prosecutors, crime victim advocates, social workers, domestic violence shelter workers, private attorneys, court appointed special advocates, legal aid attorneys, etc.). Also included in this list were individuals who are not always thought of as victim service providers—and may not see themselves as such—but who do interact with victims in the course of their work, such as librarians or homeless shelter workers.⁵ We sent out an initial invitation to complete the survey with a follow-up email one week later; over the next two weeks, we distributed two additional reminder messages to the list of service providers.

Additionally, we employed snowball sampling in order to reach more participants. In our invitation email (and the subsequent follow-up emails), we requested that participants forward the email and survey link to colleagues who provide services to victims of crime in Montana. Our sampling strategy yielded 189 participants who completed the survey. However, the practical sample size is smaller for some items. Participants could skip any question they did not want to answer, and a portion of the sample opted to do so with some of the questions. Therefore, the number of valid responses varied depending on the question, with some items having as few as half of the respondents providing responses.⁶

FINDINGS

In this section, we will examine the results from the Service Provider Survey.⁷ First, we will examine the participants' characteristics. Next, we will discuss the unmet needs of crime victims and the barriers to meeting those needs. Then, we will address collaboration between

⁵ We used this expansive definition of "victim service provider" in order to get information about the experiences of victims who may not seek services from the traditional providers.

⁶ For each chart and table in the Findings section, we indicate the number of respondents who answered the item(s) involved.

⁷ The analyses of the survey data were completed using the statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics 22.

organizations that work with victims. Finally, we will examine civil legal services before concluding this chapter.

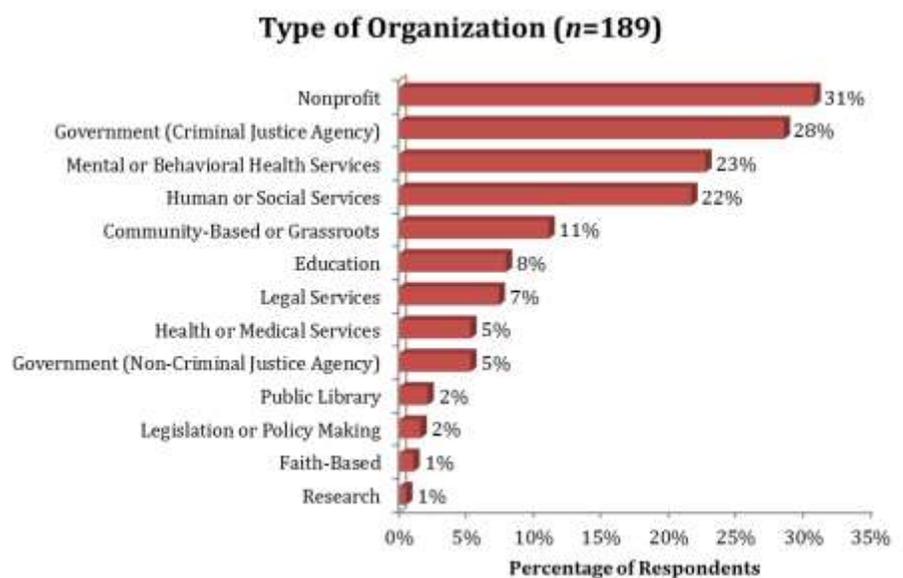
PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

In this section, we will examine the participants' characteristics, including the characteristics of the service providers, their organizations, the clientele they serve, and the services they provide.

ORGANIZATION CHARACTERISTICS

Here, we will discuss the characteristics of the organizations where the service providers worked. First, we will address location. The map on the following page shows the location of the organization of each respondent ($n=183$). These locations are accurate to the county level, with each dot representing one respondent. We had respondents from 38 out of the 56 counties in Montana. Western Montana was represented more heavily than the central and eastern regions of the state, generally reflecting the geographic distribution of the state's population. The two counties with the largest numbers of respondents were Lewis and Clark County (in which Helena, the capital of Montana, is located) and Missoula County (home to Missoula, the second largest city in the state and home to one of the two major universities in the state). Lewis and Clark County and Missoula County had 35 and 20 respondents, respectively. Yellowstone and Gallatin Counties had the next highest number of respondents, with 13 and 12 respondents, respectively. Billings, Montana's largest city, is in Yellowstone County, while Gallatin County is home to Bozeman, the fourth largest city in the state and location of the other major university in Montana.

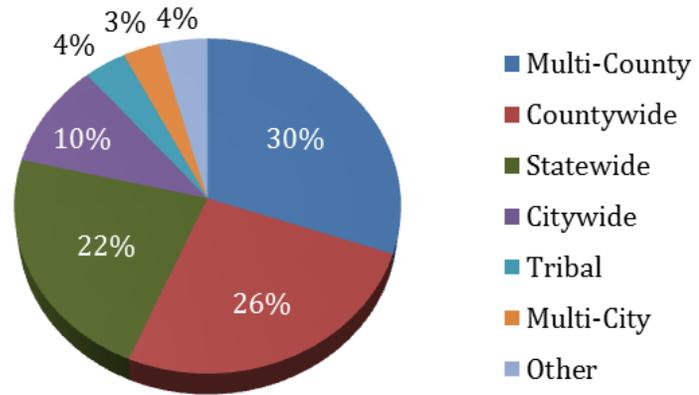
The participants represented a wide variety of organizations. The chart below displays the types of organizations with which the survey respondents were affiliated. Respondents selected each category that applied to their organization (many chose more than one category, so the percentages in the chart exceed 100%). Nonprofit groups were the most common type of organization (31%). Large numbers of participants also worked in criminal justice-related government agencies (28%), mental and behavioral health service organizations (23%), and human or social service organizations (22%). Eleven percent of respondents worked with community-based or grassroots groups, while eight percent worked in the field of education and seven percent worked in legal services. Five percent of participants worked in health or medical service organizations; similarly, five percent of respondents were part of non-criminal justice-related government agencies. Public libraries and legislation or policy making organizations each represented 2% of respondents. A few participants belonged to faith-based groups (1%) and research organizations (1%).



Note: Respondents could select more than one type of organization if applicable, so the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

The organizations represented by the respondents in the survey varied in terms of their catchment area (i.e., the area served by the organization and from which it draws its clients). As displayed in the chart, most organizations had either multi-county (30%) or countywide (26%) catchment areas. Statewide service areas were the next most common at 22%. Ten percent of organizations provided their services at the citywide level. Some organizations had a tribal catchment area (4%), providing services to clients within an Indian reservation. Finally, 3% of organizations had multi-city catchment areas (4% of respondents selected “Other” as the catchment area of their organizations).

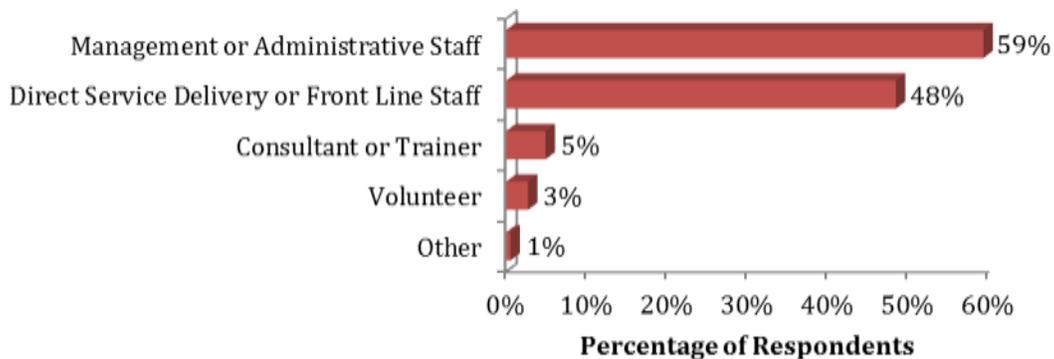
Catchment Area Served by the Organization (n=188)



SERVICE PROVIDER CHARACTERISTICS

Turning to the survey respondents, these individuals occupied a number of different types of positions within their organizations. The chart below shows the primary roles or roles of the participants (some participants served in more than one of these positions). Most participants served as management or administrative staff (59%). Almost half of the respondents worked in the area of direct service delivery or frontline staff (48%). A small number of the individuals served their organizations in the roles of consultant or trainer (5%), volunteer (3%), or some other type of role (1%).

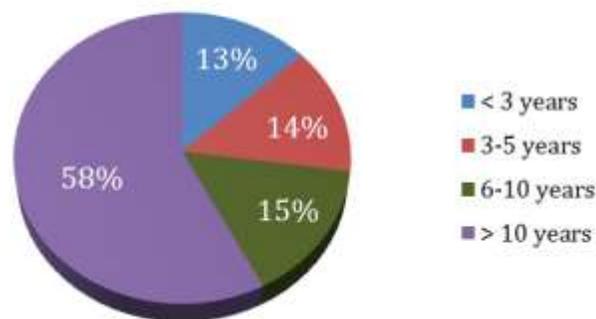
Primary Role(s) of Participants (n=184)



Note: Respondents could select more than one role within their organization, so the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

Now, we will examine the amount of experience that survey participants had in the field of victim services. The chart shows that most (59%) of the participants possessed considerable experience, having worked for more than 10 years as a service provider for victims of crime. Roughly equal numbers of participants had fewer than three years of experience (13%), three to five years of experience (14%), and six to ten years (15%).

Respondent Experience Working as Service Provider for Victims (n=184)



CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS

Next, we will discuss some of the demographic characteristics of these organizations' clients. The table on the following page examines the gender, race, age, and other characteristics of the clientele. Individuals indicated the approximate percentage of their organizations' victim clients that fell within each category.⁸ In the table, we present the average of these percentages supplied by the participants for each category.⁹ For reference, we also include the range of percentages within each category, along with the number of participants that provided responses for each category. As shown in the table, on average, 25% of the clients across organizations were male and 50% of clients were female, though some organizations worked strictly with male clients while others had exclusively female clients. On average, 1% of clients were transgender; some organizations had no transgender clients, and some had as many as 20% transgender clients. Regarding race, on average, most clients were white (52%, ranging from 0% to 100%). Native Americans were the other major racial group represented among the clients (an average of 14%), though some organization had no American Indian clients and others worked solely with Native Americans. Other races—including African Americans, Hispanics, Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders, and multiracial individuals—represented a very minor proportion of clients being served by the organization, with averages of 2% or less. Turning to the age of the clients, on average, 24% of clients were under 18 years old (some organization worked only with minors, while others served only adults). Young adults aged 17 to 21 were an average of 7% of clients, 11% were 22 to 29 years old, 9% were in their 30s, 8% were in their 40s, 5% were in their 50s, and an average of 8% were 60 years old or older (though some organizations worked exclusively with elderly clients). Regarding income, most of the clients were poor. An average of 72% of clients fell at or below the poverty line (though some organizations only served impoverished individuals) and 28% of clients were above the poverty line. Sexual minorities (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or intersex individuals) were an average of 9% of clients. Individuals with disabilities represented an average of 29% of clients (though responses ranged from 0% to 100% among organizations). Victims with limited English proficiency were a small proportion of clients (an average of 8% across respondents). Finally,

⁸ Respondents were instructed to enter "Unknown" if they could not provide a rough estimate for the category. These responses are not included in the analyses presented here.

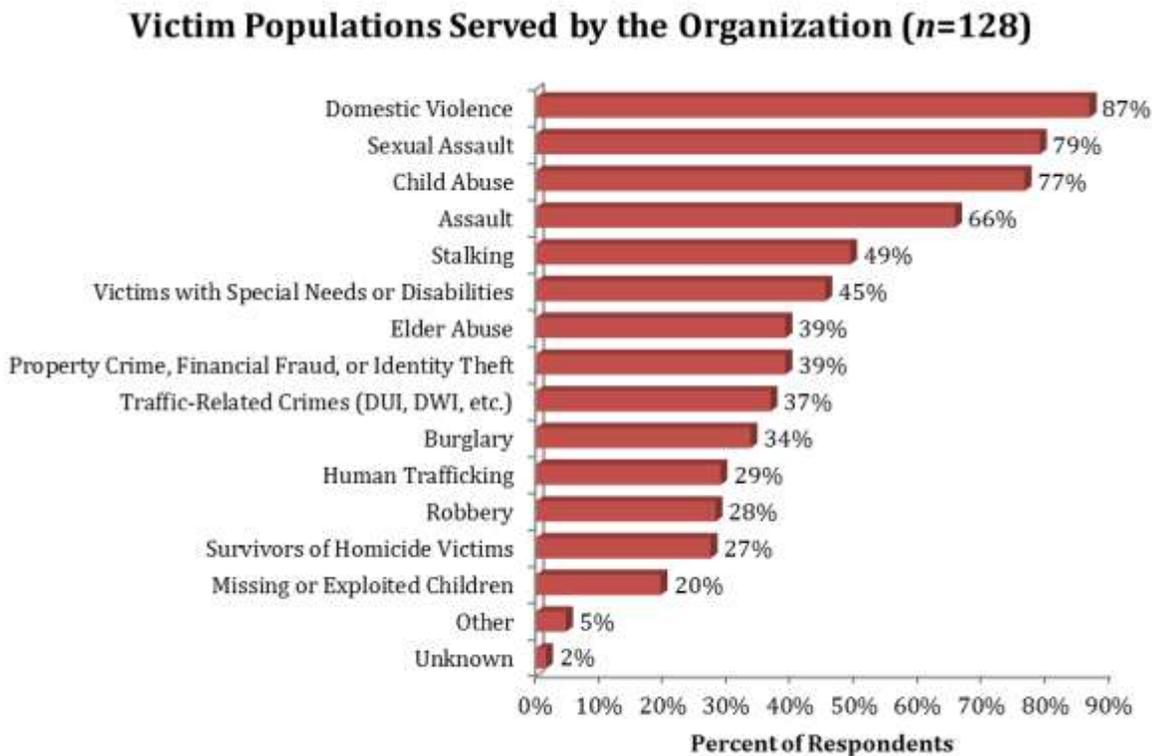
⁹ Because the number of clients served by the different organizations varied—and because some organizations are represented by more than one respondent in the data—the percentages presented here are not to be interpreted as the true demographics of the total victim population served by the organizations in this study. Rather, this analysis merely provides a general approximation of the variety of victims being served by these organizations across the state.

relatively few of the clients served by the organization in this study were veterans (an average of 10%).

Characteristics of Victim Clients Served by the Organization

Demographics	Mean	Range	n
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	25 %	0 % to 100 %	148
Female	50 %	0 % to 100 %	148
Transgender	1 %	0 % to 20 %	148
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>			
White (Non-Hispanic)	52 %	0 % to 100 %	149
American Indian or Alaskan Native	14 %	0 % to 100 %	149
Black or African American	1 %	0 % to 10 %	148
Hispanic or Latino	2 %	0 % to 15 %	149
Asian	0 %	0 % to 5 %	148
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0 %	0 % to 2 %	149
Other	1 %	0 % to 98 %	149
Two or More Races	2 %	0 % to 50 %	149
<i>Age</i>			
Under 18	24 %	0 % to 100 %	149
18 to 21	7 %	0 % to 45 %	149
22 to 29	11 %	0 % to 95 %	149
30 to 39	9 %	0 % to 50 %	149
40 to 49	8 %	0 % to 90 %	148
50 to 59	5 %	0 % to 50 %	148
60 and Older	8 %	0 % to 100 %	149
<i>Other Characteristics</i>			
At or Below the Poverty Line	72 %	2 % to 100 %	85
Above the Poverty Line	28 %	1 % to 80 %	65
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, or Intersex	9 %	0 % to 50 %	52
Disabled	29 %	0 % to 100 %	75
Limited English Proficiency	8 %	0 % to 100 %	85
Veteran	10 %	0 % to 65 %	75

Moving beyond the personal characteristics of their clients, these organizations worked with a range of victim populations, with some organizations serving a particular type of victim and others providing services to victims of any crime. The chart below shows that the most common victim population was victims of domestic violence, with 87% of organizations providing services to these victims. Similarly, a majority of the organizations worked with victims who had suffered sexual assault (79%), child abuse (77%), or assault (66%). Almost half (49%) of organizations served victims of stalking. Victims with special needs or disabilities were served by 45% of the organizations represented in the survey. Thirty-nine percent of organizations provided services for victims of elder abuse, and the same number of groups worked with victims of traffic-related crimes (e.g., driving under the influence, driving while intoxicated, etc.). Victims of burglary were served by 34% of the organizations, and 29% of organizations worked with victims of human trafficking. Twenty-eight percent of groups worked with clients who were victims of robbery. Survivors of homicide victims were provided services by 27% of the groups in the survey. Twenty percent of the organizations worked with missing or exploited children. Finally, 5% of participants stated that their organizations served victims of crime beyond the categories discussed above, and 2% of participants did not know specifically what types of victims their organization served.

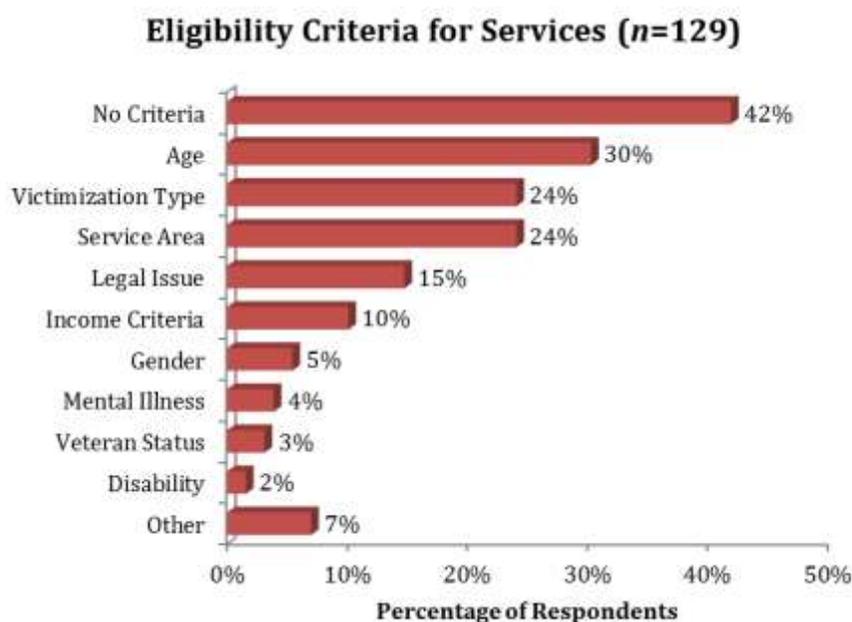


Note: Respondents could select more than one victim population, so the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

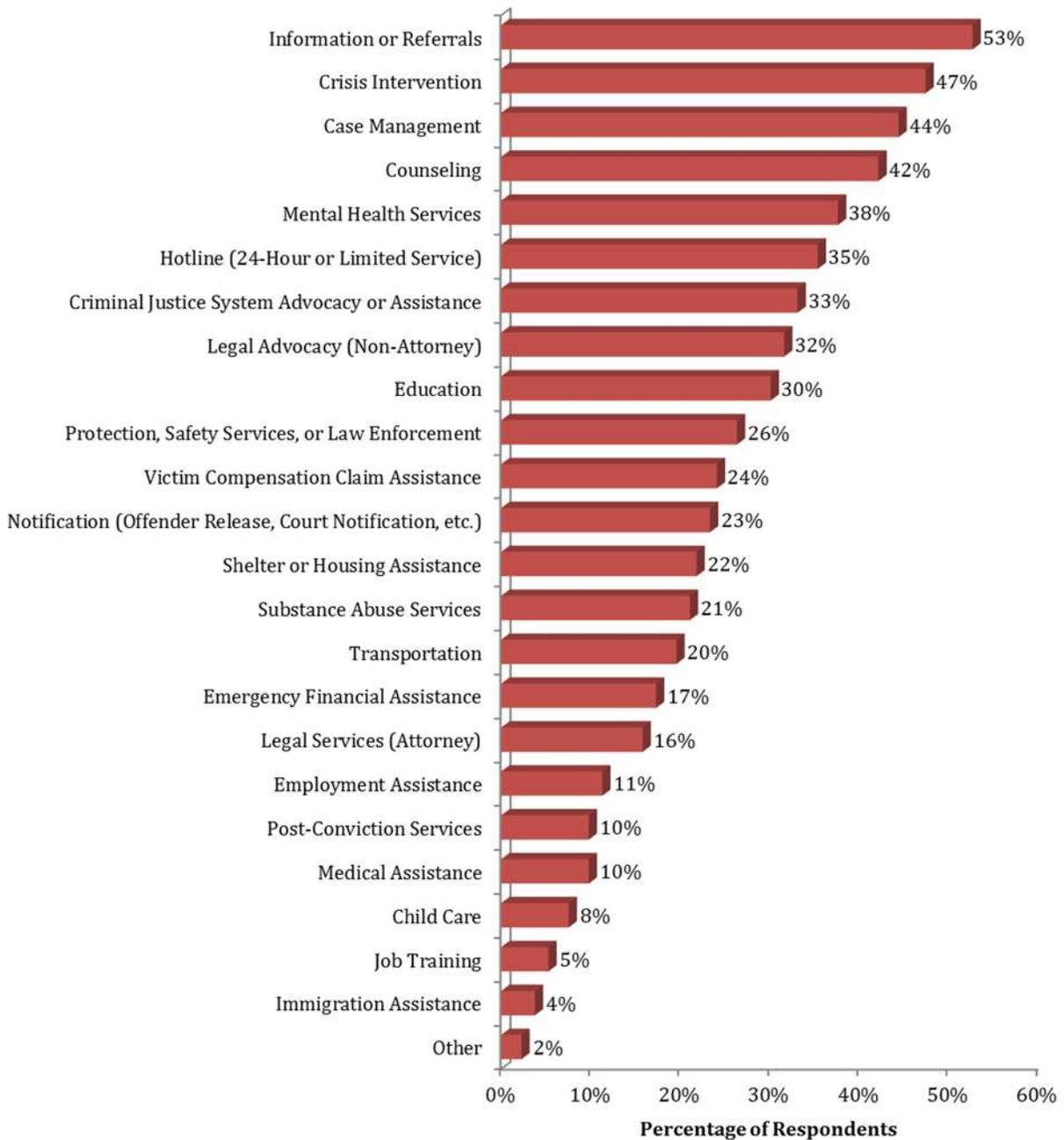
The chart on the following page shows the types of services that the organizations provided to these victims of crime. Most participants (53%) worked for organizations that gave information or referrals to victims. Many organizations also provided clients with crisis intervention (47%), case management (44%), counseling (42%), or mental health services (38%). About one third of organizations had a hotline for victims of crime (35%), provided their clients advocacy or assistance in the criminal justice system (33%), or provided victims legal advocacy by individuals who are not attorneys (32%). Thirty percent of groups provided clients with educational services, and twenty-six percent served victims in the areas of protection, safety services, or law enforcement. Similarly, about one-quarter of respondents worked at organizations that assisted with victim compensation claims (24%) or provided notification service to clients (23%), including notification of offender release or court notifications. Twenty-two percent of groups gave victims shelter or housing assistance, and twenty-one percent provided substance abuse services to their clients. Transportation services (20%), emergency financial assistance (17%), legal services provided through an attorney (16%), and employment assistance (11%) were all less common services provided by the organizations. Only a handful of groups provided post-conviction services (10%), medical assistance (10%), child care (8%), job training (5%), and immigration assistance (4%). Two percent of organizations provided services other than those discussed above.

When providing these services to clients, these organizations had a range of eligibility criteria. Many groups did not use any eligibility criteria, with 42% delivering services to anyone. However, other groups did use at least some form of eligibility criteria. The most common form was age-based criteria, which was utilized by 30% of the organizations. About one-quarter of respondents worked for organizations that only served victims of certain crimes (24%) or victims in particular service areas (24%). Fifteen percent of groups focused exclusively on particular legal issues, such as orders of protection, immigration, or landlord/tenant law. Income-based criteria were used by 10% of organizations when delivering services. A few organizations utilized gender (5%), mental illness (4%), veteran status (3%), or disability (2%) as eligibility criteria for their clients. Finally, 7% of organizations used some other eligibility criteria than those listed.



Note: Because some organizations used multiple criteria, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

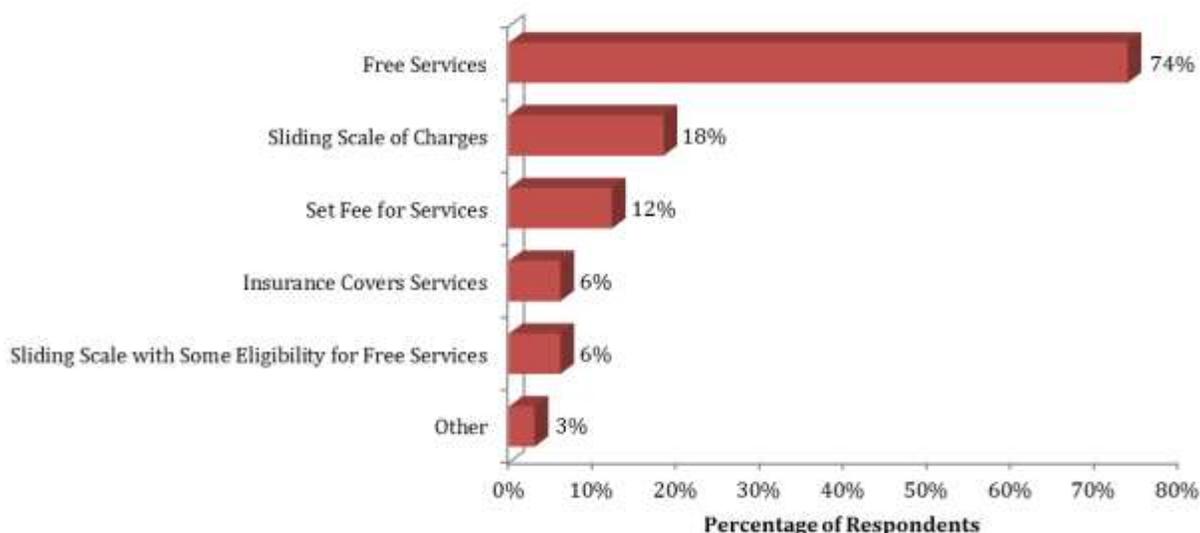
Services Provided by the Organization (n=133)



Note: Because most organizations provided multiple services to victims of crime, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

Finally, these organizations used different methods to charge for the services that they provided to victims of crime, as displayed in the chart below. The large majority of groups (74%) provided their services for free. The remaining organizations charged for their services in different ways, with many organizations taking multiple approaches. Eighteen percent of groups used a sliding scale of charges based on a client’s ability to pay. Set fees for services were used by 12% of organizations. A small number of organizations had the cost of services paid through insurance (6%) or used a sliding scale to determine the cost to a client, with some eligibility for free services (6%). Three percent of organizations used some method of charging for services other than what has been discussed.

How Does the Organization Charge for Services (n=130)



Note: Because some organizations took multiple approaches to charging for services, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

Now that we have discussed the characteristics of the participants, their organizations, their clients, and their services, we will move to examine the views of the participants regarding the unmet needs of victims and the barriers that prevent victims from receiving the services that they require.

NEEDS AND BARRIERS

In this section, we will discuss the unmet needs of victims and the barriers that prevent these needs from being met. Respondents were asked a series of questions related to the needs of clients and the barriers faced by organizations and victim clients.

NEED FOR SERVICES

First, we will examine the extent to which respondents felt that victims’ need for services exceed the current capacity to deliver these services. For each of 22 different victim services—ranging from civil legal assistance to counseling to employment assistance—participants were asked to

what extent they agreed that their catchment area had sufficient capacity to meet victims' needs for that particular service.¹⁰ We present these findings in the chart on the following page. The services are listed on the left side of the chart, with the bars representing the percentages of respondents who disagreed, were neutral, or agreed that there was sufficient capacity to meet the need for the service in the catchment area. The services are presented in descending order of need exceeding capacity. For most services, participants disagreed that the capacity in the catchment area meets the need for the service, but we list the most extreme cases first. On the far right of the chart, we list the number of individuals who answered each question (the valid responses ranged from 113 to 121 participants). For 16 of the 22 services listed, most participants disagreed that the capacity in their area met the need for the service. Overall, there was no service where the majority of respondents thought that the capacity met the need in their catchment area. For no service did more people agree that the capacity met the need than disagreed with the statement.

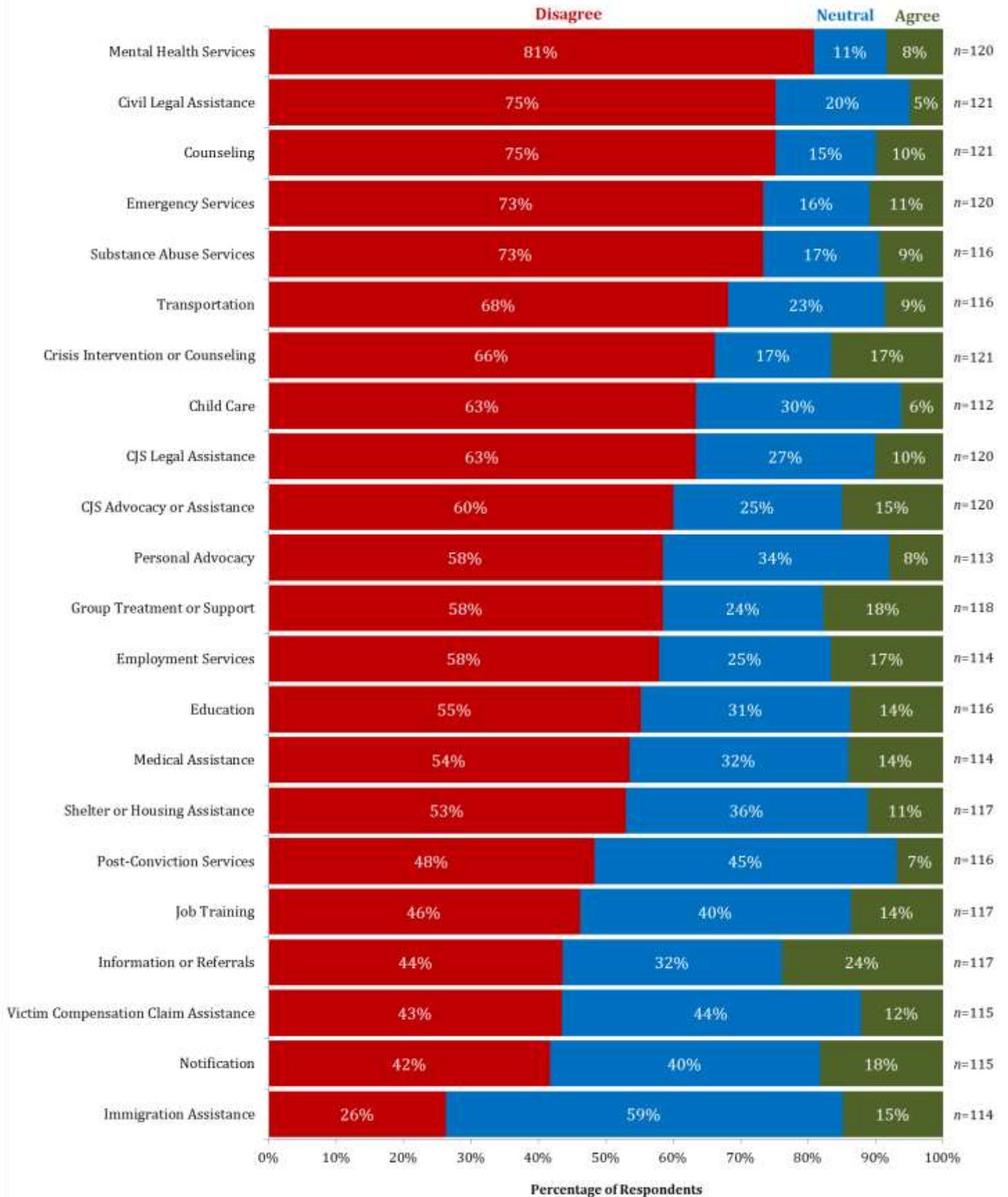
Of central importance to this study, there was a common perception among the respondents that civil legal needs—such as civil litigation related to a criminal case, child custody, divorce, immigration, or landlord/tenant issues—were not being met. Seventy-five percent of participants disagreed that the capacity for delivering civil legal assistance was sufficient to meet the need for these services among victims in their catchment area. Only 5% of respondents thought that the need for civil legal services was being met in their area. This was the lowest level of agreement expressed for any service, further suggesting that there is a particularly pronounced need to increase the capacity for delivering civil legal services to victims of crime in Montana.

Similarly, respondents indicated that there were major unmet needs in the areas of: mental health services (81% disagreed that capacity met need); counseling (75% disagreed); emergency services, such as financial assistance, housing, and medical care (73% disagreed); substance abuse services (73% disagreed); transportation for victims (68% disagreed); and crisis intervention and counseling (68% disagreed). Most participants also felt that the need exceeded capacity for child care (63% disagreed that the capacity meets the need); legal assistance or rights enforcement within the criminal justice system, such as property return, intimidation protection, or compensation assistance (63% disagreed); criminal justice system advocacy or assistance, such as filing a victim impact statement, court orientation, or restitution assistance (60% disagreed); personal advocacy, such as assistance with public benefits or intervention with landlords or employers (58% disagreed); group treatment or support, such as self-help, peer, and social support (58% disagreed); employment services or assistance (58% disagreed); education (55% disagreed); medical assistance (54% disagreed); and shelter or housing assistance, such as rental assistance (53% disagreed).

Just under half of the participants disagreed that the capacity meets the need for post-conviction services, such as corrections orientation, offender apology, and victim-offender mediation (48% disagreed). Fewer participants thought that the need for victim compensation claim assistance exceeded the capacity (43% disagreed). Only 42% of individuals disagreed that the capacity meets the need for notification services, such as offender release from custody or court notifications. Finally, 26% of respondents thought that immigration assistance needs were being met (e.g., Violence Against Women Act petitions, T-visas, and U-visas).

¹⁰ Respondents were given the options *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*. For the analyses presented here, we collapsed *strongly disagree* with *disagree* and *strongly agree* with *agree*. This provides for easier interpretation and does not change the overall patterns presented in the data.

Capacity Meets the Need for Crime Victim Services in the Catchment Area



Respondents were also given the opportunity to discuss other services that victims express a need for but that are currently lacking or unavailable in their catchment area. Twenty-five participants provided additional responses. These responses generally reflected the patterns discussed above. For instance, many of the participants mentioned a greater need for mental health services, counseling, and substance treatment. Some of these participants reiterated the great need for these services, while others wanted increased coverage to help victims pay for these treatments (from sources such as insurance, Medicaid, and Veterans Affairs). Another major theme in these responses related to a desire for more legal services and advocacy, again reflecting the responses in the chart.

Overall, several patterns emerge from these findings. Looking at the top half of the most unmet needs, virtually all of them fall into three major categories: (1) legal and advocacy services for victims, (2) mental health and counseling services, and (3) “facilitating” services (e.g., services that enable an individual to access other services). A lack of sufficient legal and advocacy services is particularly pertinent to this research. The unmet needs in the areas of mental health/counseling services and facilitating services compound this problem, since these unmet needs themselves can serve as barriers to accessing legal and advocacy services.

As discussed earlier, one of the most severely underserved needs is the need for civil legal service. In addition to this, most participants thought that there were major unmet needs in the areas of legal assistance in the criminal justice system, criminal justice system advocacy or assistance, and personal advocacy. This suggests a significant lack of legal and advocacy services for victims of crime in Montana.

Adding to this problematic lack of legal and advocacy services are the other two patterns mentioned above: lack of mental health support and counseling services and lack of facilitating services and support. The most frequently mentioned category of underserved needs reflected in the responses was in the area of mental and behavioral health. A majority of participants indicated that their service areas lacked the capacity to deal with several mental and behavioral health needs of crime victims, including mental health services, counseling, substance abuse services, crisis intervention and counseling, and group treatment or support. When these mental and behavioral issues are not being treated, then victims of crime are less likely to successfully deal with their civil legal issues. This reflects concerns discussed in the focus groups, in which participants mentioned the lack of treatment for mental health issues and substance abuse issues as presenting a barrier to other services. In addition to mental and behavioral health services, participants indicated that there was a lack of certain services—transportation and child care—that facilitate a victim’s ability to access legal services. As discussed in the focus groups, clients in rural areas may lack the ability to travel long distances in order to access services or to attend court proceedings, creating a barrier to justice. Similarly, a lack of child care may prevent victims from meeting with attorneys or advocates. Ultimately, it is important to both expand access to legal services for victims of crime and to ensure that these other barriers do not prevent these individuals from actually utilizing these services.

BARRIERS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

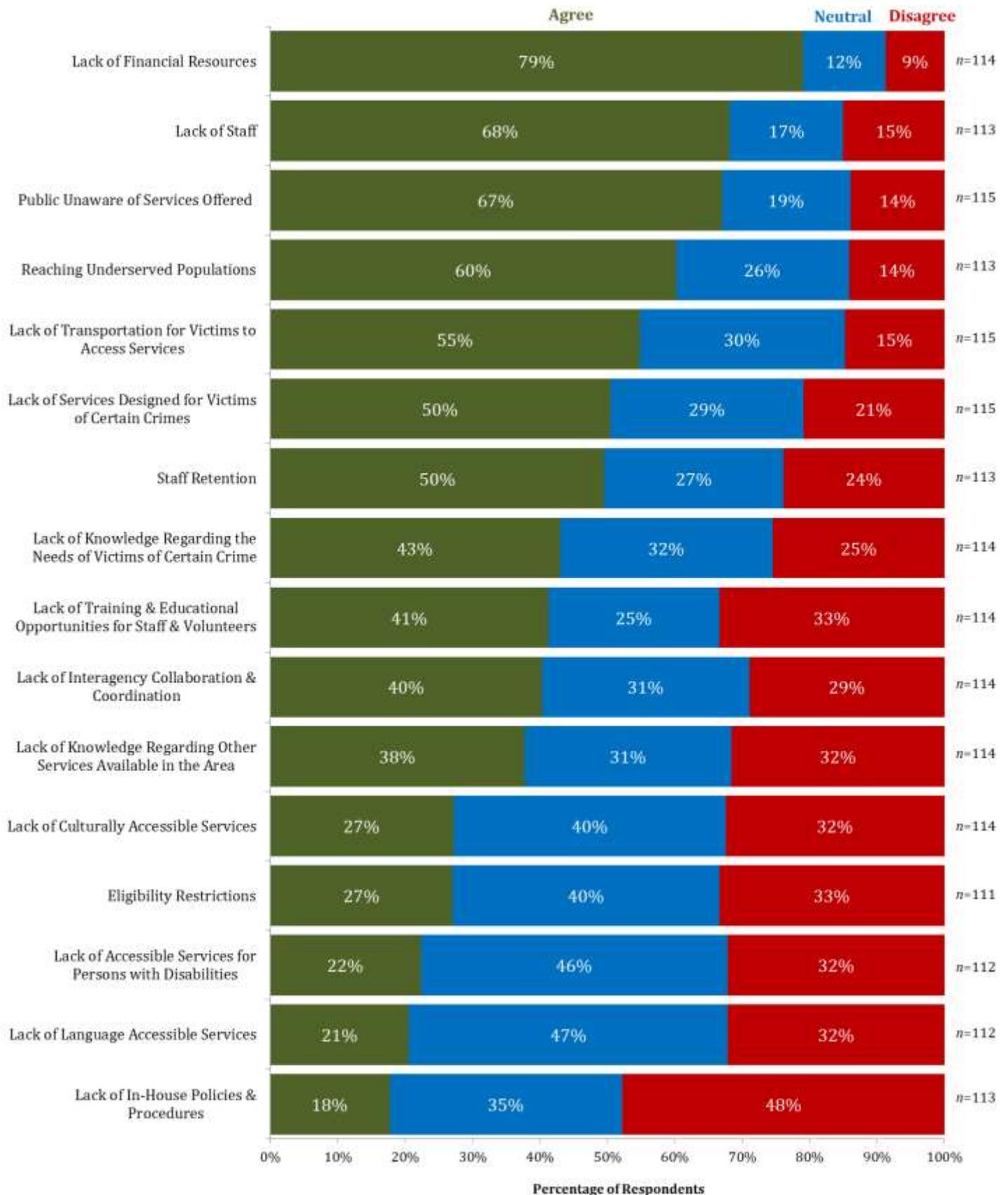
Next, we will examine what issues represent barriers for organizations when providing services to victims of crime. Respondents rated 16 different issues, indicating the extent to which they agreed that these issues posed critical barriers to their organizations serving victims.¹¹ We present these results in the chart on the following page. The potential barriers are listed on the left side of the chart. The bars represent the percentages of respondents who disagreed, were neutral, or agreed that a particular issue stood as a critical barrier for their organization. We present the most critical barriers first. On the right side of the chart, we list the number of individuals who answered each question (the valid responses ranged from 111 to 115 participants). Of the sixteen issues listed, a majority of participants perceived five of them as critical barriers. For none of the issues did a majority of respondents disagree that it constituted a critical barrier; however, for the last five issues, there were more participants who disagreed than agreed that they were barriers.

As with the focus group participants, the issues that were of most concern to the respondents were related to resources, namely, lack of financial resources and lack of staff. A lack of financial resources was the issue that the largest number of survey respondents perceived as a critical barrier to serving victims (79% agreed that this constituted a critical barrier, whereas only 9% disagreed). Lack of sufficient staff to meet the demand for services was cited as a critical barrier by 68% of participants. Other issues of concern related to problems connecting to potential clients, either because victims did not know about the services available to them or because the organization faced challenges reaching out to underserved populations. Sixty-seven percent of respondents agreed that a lack of general public awareness regarding the programs and services offered by their organizations was a critical barrier to providing these services to victims of crime. Most respondents (60%) agreed that one of the most critical barriers facing their organizations was reaching underserved victim populations.

The lack of transportation available to victims in order to access services was considered a critical barrier by 55% of respondents. Half of the individuals considered the lack of services designed for victims of particular crimes (such as identity theft or stalking) to be a significant barrier. Similarly, just under half of the respondents saw staff retention as a critical barrier facing their organization. Forty-three percent of service providers agreed that a lack of knowledge regarding the specific needs of victims of certain crimes—such as military sexual trauma or human trafficking—was a critical barrier. Lack of training and educational opportunities for staff and volunteers was viewed as a critical barrier by 41% of individuals. Lack of interagency collaboration and coordination was viewed as a critical barrier by 40% of the survey respondents. Lack of knowledge regarding other services available in the catchment area was seen as a critical barrier by 38% of participants, though 32% of participants disagreed that this was a critical barrier.

¹¹ Respondents were given the options *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*. For parsimony, we collapsed *strongly disagree* with *disagree* and *strongly agree* with *agree*. Thus, we eased interpretation without changing the general patterns presented in the chart.

Organizations' Most Critical Barriers to Providing Services to Victims



For the remaining issues, more participants disagreed than agreed that they were critical barriers for their organizations. Thirty-two percent of individuals did not view the lack of culturally accessible services to be a critical barrier for their organizations, while only twenty-seven percent considered this issue to be an important barrier. Similarly, 33% of participants failed to view eligibility restrictions as a significant barrier, whereas 27% considered these restrictions to be a barrier. Lack of accessible services for victims with disabilities was not viewed as a critical barrier by 32% of the participants; only 22% saw lack of accessibility as a critical barrier. Thirty-two percent of individuals did not perceive a lack of language accessible services for non-English speakers to be a significant barrier, while twenty-one percent of participants did view this issue as a critical barrier for their organization in providing services to victims of crime. Finally, just under half (48%) of respondents did not think that a lack of in-house policies and procedures to guide organizational practices served as a critical barrier, whereas a mere 18% of participants saw this issue as a major barrier for their organization.

After rating the barriers to service delivery, participants were provided space to discuss ways to alleviate the barriers. Twenty-nine individuals suggested ways to address these barriers. Generally, the responses focused on several areas for improvement: outreach and public awareness, funding (especially for staff), transportation options for victims, and mental health care options (particularly in regards to insurance). One individual commented that “though many of these services are offered in the neighboring town, 15 miles away, many people cannot get to those services.” Funding and resources for underserved areas, less populated locations, and reservations in particular, were also highlighted in responses. Another participant stated that “insurance-imposed limitations on [the] number and duration of sessions is also a barrier.”

Overall, a majority of participants viewed five of these issues as critical barriers preventing organizations from serving victims of crime. These issues fell into two categories: (1) lack of sufficient funding and (2) barriers preventing organizations from reaching potential clients. The top two issues mentioned by participants were lack of financial resources and lack of staff. These service providers believed that if there were more money to support their organizations and to hire more staff, they would be able to better provide services to victims of crime. The other major theme was that organizations have difficulty reaching out to victims who need the services they provide. Participants indicated that critical barriers for their organizations were: the public does not know what services the organization offers, difficulty reaching underserved populations, and victims lacking transportation options necessary to access the services. These all speak to problems reaching victims in need of help: victims are unaware of the services, the organization does not know how to reach certain victims in need, and victims cannot reach these services. Ultimately, these results suggest that the central issues preventing organizations from serving victims of crime are limited budgets and the difficulties of reaching potential clients.

BARRIERS FOR VICTIMS

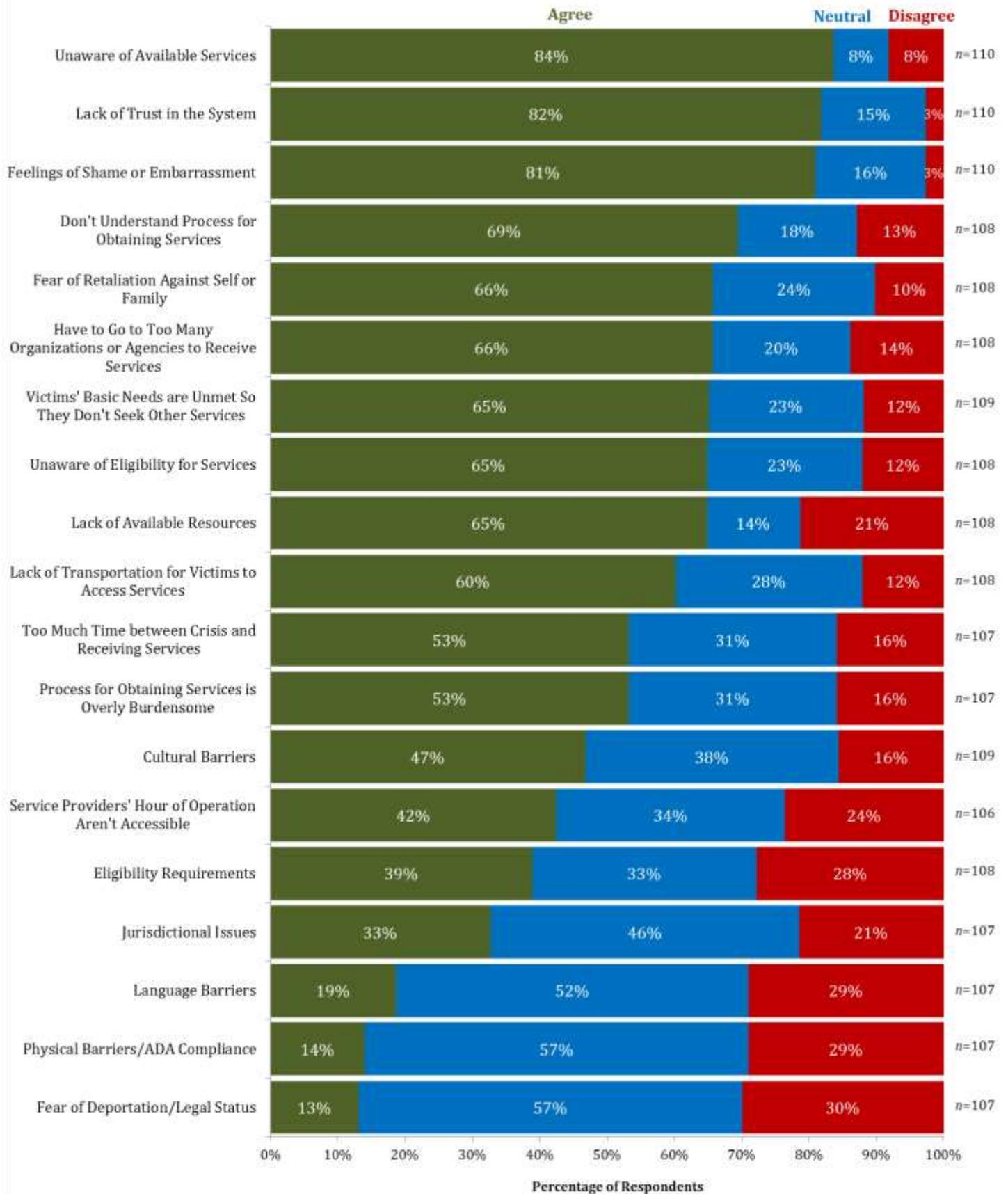
Now, we will turn to the issues that serve as barriers for victims of crime seeking services. Similar to the previous set of questions, respondents considered 19 different issues and said whether they thought each issue was a critical barrier for victims to the services that they require.¹² The results are presented in a chart on the next page. The barriers are listed on the left side of the chart, and the bars reflect the extent to which respondents agreed that the issue served as a significant barrier for victims of crime. The number of responses for each issue is listed on the right side of the chart (responses ranged from 106 to 110 individuals). Most of the issues (12 of 19) were viewed as critical barriers for victims by a majority of service providers. For three of the issues, more participants disagreed than agreed that they constituted critical barriers.

The most commonly cited issue was that victims are not aware of the services that are available to them: 84% of participants agreed that this was one of the most critical barriers facing victims, while 8% of respondents disagreed (lack of awareness among the public of the services offered by the organization was a significant concern in the previous section, though it was not viewed as the most significant barrier for organizations). Almost as important was a general lack of trust in the system among victims of crime. Eighty-two percent of individuals viewed this as one of the most critical barriers for victims (only three percent disagreed). Similarly, feelings of shame or embarrassment were cited as a significant barrier by 81% of respondents, whereas a mere 3% thought this was not the case. Continuing the theme of victims' lack of knowledge constituting a barrier, 69% of individuals viewed as a critical barrier the fact that some victims do not understand the process for obtaining service. Another emotion, fear, was cited as a critical barrier: 66% of individuals thought that victims' fear of retaliation—against themselves or against their families—was an important barrier.

Several other issues were viewed as significant barriers by a majority of the participants. Inconvenience or frustration in dealing with complex systems was reflected in the responses: 66% of individuals agreed that victims having to go to too many agencies or organizations in order to receive the services that they require constituted a critical barrier. Sixty-five percent of participants thought that a critical barrier was the fact that many victims do not have their basic needs met—such as housing, food, or medical care—and therefore do not seek out other services. Lack of knowledge regarding eligibility was viewed as a concern: 65% of individuals thought that victims being unaware that they are eligible for services served as a barrier. A majority of individuals (65%) thought that lack of resources constituted a significant barrier for victims of crime. Related to the personal resources of victims, a lack of transportation was seen as a barrier preventing victims from accessing services because they are unable to get to these services (60% agreed this was a critical barrier). Fifty-three percent of participants thought that a significant problem was the fact that too much time elapses between the victim's crisis and the point where they receive services. Similarly, 53% of individuals thought that a critical barrier was the process for obtaining services, which can be overly burdensome to victims.

¹² As with the previous sets of questions, respondents were given the options *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*. As before, we collapsed *strongly disagree* with *disagree* and *strongly agree* with *agree* for parsimony, easing interpretation without affecting the overall patterns.

Victims' Most Critical Barriers to Services



A plurality of individuals thought that cultural barriers (47%), organizations having inaccessible hours of operation (42%), and not meeting eligibility requirements, such as income limitations (39%), all constituted critical barriers to victims in need of services. Jurisdictional issues—such as the crime occurring in a different county—preventing victims from receiving services was seen as a critical barrier by 33% of respondents.

More participants disagreed than agreed that the remaining issues were critical barriers for victims. Twenty-nine percent of service providers thought that language barriers were not critical barriers, while only nineteen percent viewed them as a significant issue. Physical barriers or issues surrounding compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) were not viewed as an important barrier by 29% of participants (14% saw these issues as critical). Finally, fear of deportation or a victim's legal status was viewed as a critical barrier by a mere 13% of individuals, whereas 30% disagreed that this issue was a significant barrier for victims seeking services.

After assessing the issues that serve as barriers to victims seeking services, the respondents were given the opportunity to elaborate on ways to alleviate these barriers (eighteen participants provided answers). In general, the service providers' responses to this question closely resembled the suggestions for dealing with the barriers that prevent organizations from serving victims, with funding again being frequently mentioned. Participants also reported that working to reduce the stigma of victimization and normalizing support systems and services would alleviate the barriers faced by victims. Another common solution was increased outreach and publically available information for victims and their support systems. Finally, a number of individuals suggested that increased connection and cooperation between agencies, law enforcement, and victims would alleviate the barriers for the victims. Now that we have discussed the needs of crime victims and the barriers preventing those needs from being met, we will examine collaboration between organizations.

Compared to previous analyses in this report, some unique patterns emerged here. When discussing the issues that organizations face when in providing services to victims, lack of resources—such as financial resources and staff—were cited as the two most critical barriers. These concerns were also reflected in the focus groups with service providers. However, focusing on the 12 issues that most participants viewed as critical barriers, lack of resources is a less emphasized concern. Rather, the two most important barriers for victims of crime were: (1) knowledge-based concerns and (2) emotion-based concerns. Three secondary concerns were: (3) complexity of the system, (4) unmet non-legal needs, and (5) lack of resources.

Several of the most critical barriers involved a lack of knowledge on the part of the victim: victims are unaware of services, victims do not understand the process for accessing services, and victims do not know they are eligible for services. The knowledge barriers overlap somewhat with one of the two major patterns of barriers for organization from the previous section: barriers preventing organizations from reaching clients. This lack of knowledge regarding the services available to them and how to attain these services is directly related to the concerns for organization that the public is unaware of their services and the inability of organizations to effectively reach certain victims. This further suggests that organizations need to develop more effective approaches to outreach and publicizing their services in the community.

Three of the other most critical obstacles were emotional barriers: victims did not trust the system, victims felt shame or embarrassment, and victims feared retaliation if they sought services. This issue is more complex to alleviate. Distrust, shame, and fear are powerful emotions. Based on the victim interviews discussed in the previous chapter, some of this distrust may stem from negative interactions with law enforcement following the crime. Several victims felt that law enforcement did not believe them or take them seriously. So, perhaps improved interactions with law enforcement, often the victim's first point of contact, could increase an individual's trust in the system. Having faith in law enforcement could also decrease a victim's fear of retaliation, since they may feel more protected and secure from retribution. Similarly, many interviewees discussed the great help that they received from crime victim advocates. Advocates could help address some of the emotional concerns of crime victims. Additionally, earlier in the chapter we discussed that mental health and counseling services are in great need in Montana. It is possible that expanding access to these services could help address the emotional barriers preventing victims of crime from utilizing other services.

The remaining critical barriers fell into three categories: complexity of the system, unmet non-legal needs, and lack of resources. Participants indicated that an overly complex and confusing system can be a barrier for victims: having to go to too many organizations to receive services and enduring an overly burdensome process in order to receive services can prevent victims from seeking these services. This suggests the need to streamline the process of accessing services or to provide assistance to victims navigating this system.

In addition, victims need to have their non-legal needs met: if victims' basic needs—such as housing or medical care—are unmet or if they lack the necessary transportation, then they are not able to access services. The focus groups highlighted that lack of housing or transportation can form a barrier to civil legal services, and many interviewees discussed housing problems resulting from their victimization. Additionally, services—such as transportation—that facilitate access to other services were emphasized as a major unmet need earlier in this chapter. This further demonstrates the need to ensure that the non-legal needs of victims are being met so that these issues do not become barriers to civil legal assistance.

Finally, limited resources were viewed as a critical barrier: lack of available resources and long waits to receive services both serve as barriers for victims of crime. This echoes the finding from the previous section that the most critical barriers facing organizations is a lack of resources. Organization with limited budgets will not be able to serve many victims of crime, and they will be forced to put victims on long waitlists.

COLLABORATION

In this section, we will address various issues surrounding collaboration between victim service organizations. Service providers answered questions examining successful collaboration, the benefits of collaborating with other organizations, and ways to improve collaboration.

First, we will examine successful cross-organizational collaborative efforts.¹³ Respondents indicated the extent to which they agreed that their organizations have had success collaborating with 13 types of organizations.¹⁴ These results are presented in the first chart on the following page. The types of organizations are listed on the left side of the chart. The bars represent the extent to which participants agreed that their organizations had engaged in successful collaboration with the different organization types. The number of participants who answered each question is listed on the right side of the chart (the valid responses ranged from 102 to 108 individuals).

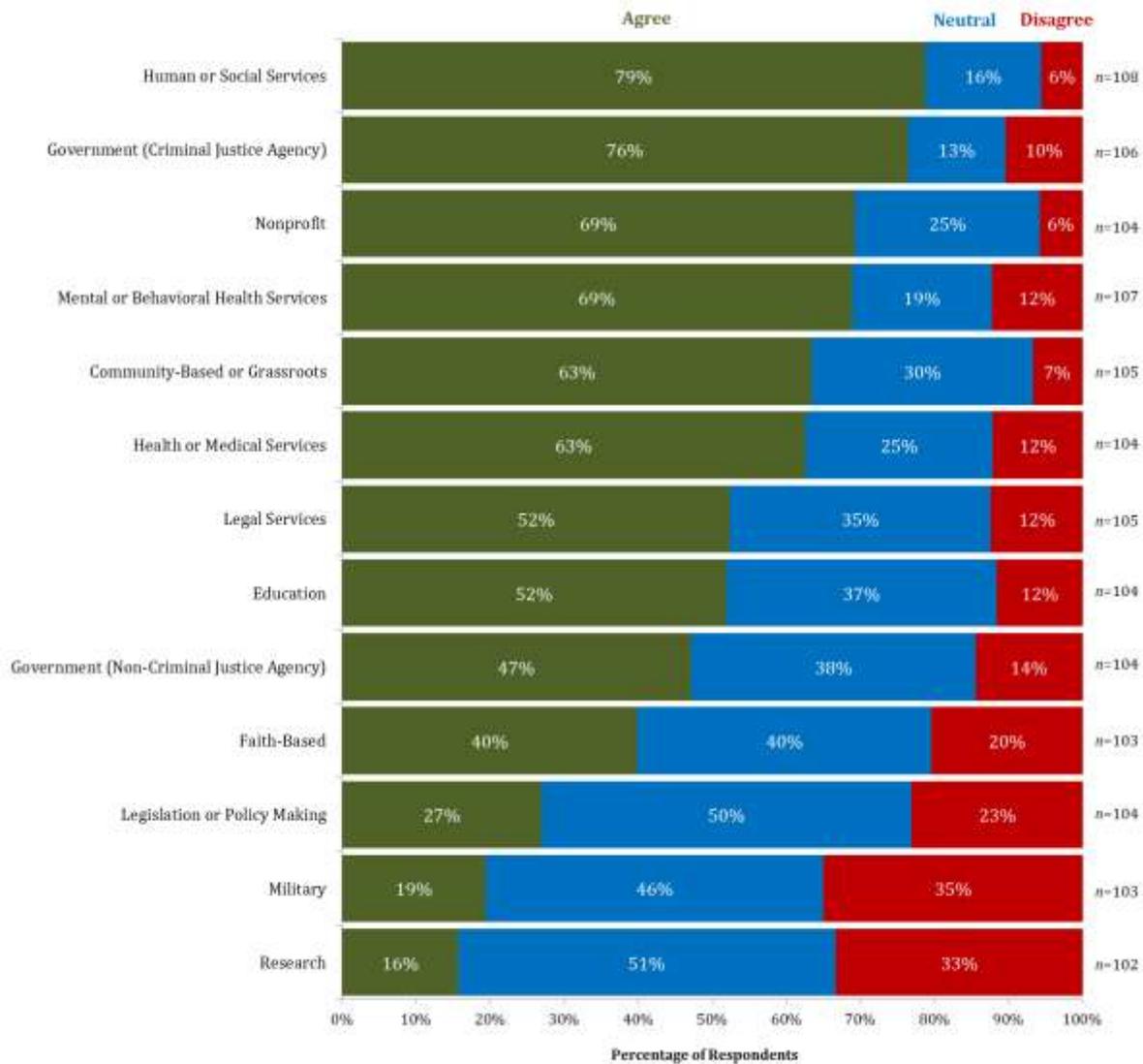
On average, respondents indicated that their organizations had found success collaborating with eight of the thirteen types of groups. For two types of organizations, negative sentiments exceeded the positive. Large numbers of participants agreed that their organizations had successful collaborations with human or social service organizations (79%), criminal justice governmental agencies (76%), nonprofit groups (69%), and mental or behavioral health service organizations (69%). Similarly, a majority of respondents also agreed that their organization had found success collaborating with community-based or grassroots organizations (63%), health or medical service organizations (63%), legal services organizations (52%), and education organizations (52%). A plurality of respondents agreed that their group had successful collaborations with government agencies unrelated to the criminal justice system (47%). Forty percent of individuals said that they had successfully collaborated with faith-based groups. Only 27% of participants indicated they had successful collaborations with legislation or policy making groups, while almost as many (23%) said they had not found success collaborating with these groups. For the final two types of groups, more respondents disagreed that they had successful collaborations than agreed. Nineteen percent of respondents said they had successful collaborations with the military, whereas thirty-five percent disagreed that they had successfully worked with the military. Finally, only 16% of individuals agreed they had success collaborating with research organizations, while 33% disagreed.

These results are encouraging, as most participants agreed that they had success collaborating with just under two-thirds of the organization types listed. As discussed in the Focus Group chapter, collaboration between organizations is vital to meeting the legal and non-legal needs of victims. As we have seen throughout this chapter, victims face many challenges and barriers that are not related to access to civil legal services, but when these issues are left untreated, they can serve as a barrier to effectively dealing with their civil legal needs. Next, we will examine the benefits that came from these successful collaborations.

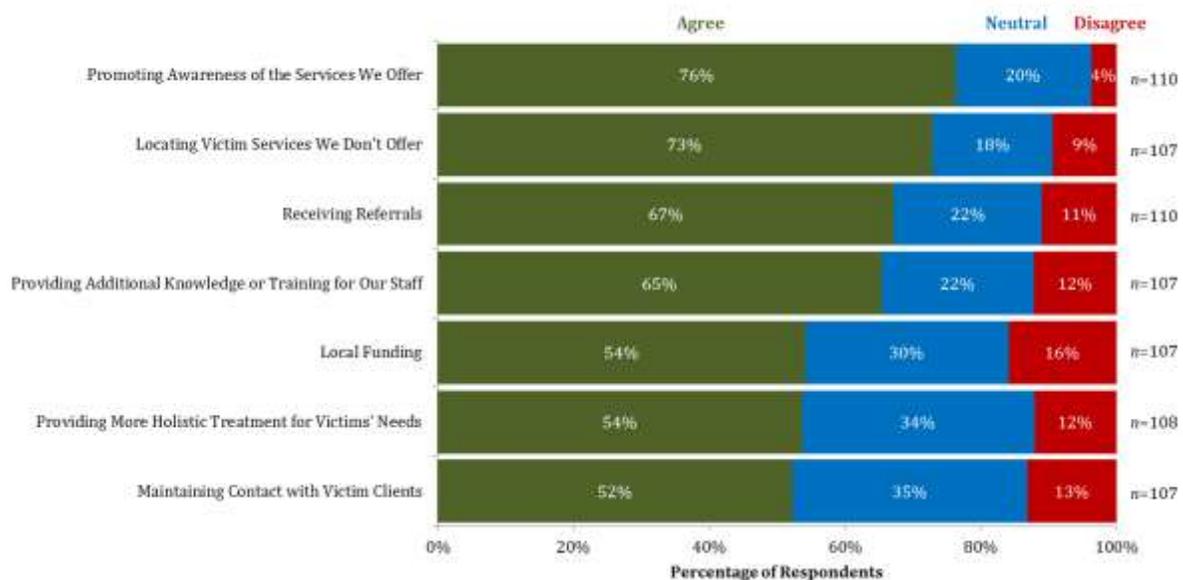
¹³ We also asked respondents the types of organizations they had difficulty collaborating with. The results largely mirrored the findings related to successful collaboration; therefore, we omitted these from the report.

¹⁴ Respondents were given the options *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*. For the analyses presented here, we collapsed *strongly disagree* with *disagree* and *strongly agree* with *agree*. This parsimonious approach eases interpretation without changing the overall patterns found in the data.

Successful Collaboration with Other Organizations, by Type



Benefits from Collaboration with Other Organizations



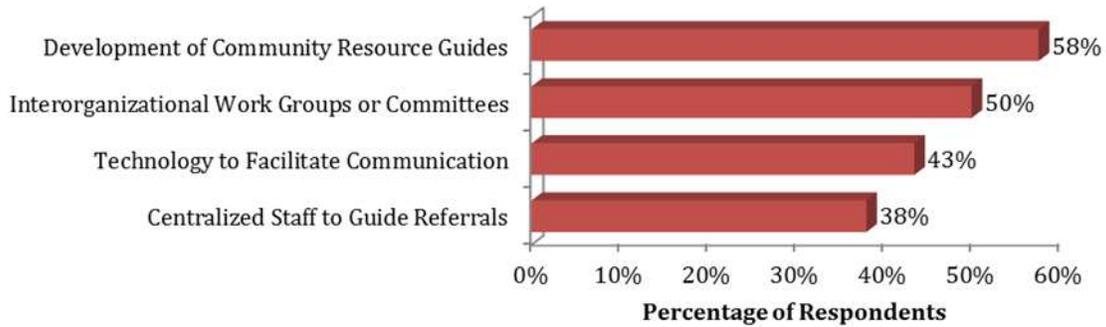
Respondents also provided information on the types of benefits their organizations had received through cross-organizational collaboration. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed that their organizations had reaped seven different benefits from collaboration with other organizations.¹⁵ These results are presented in the second chart on the previous page. The various benefits of collaboration are listed on the left side of the chart, with the bars representing the extent to which participants agreed that their organization had received the benefits through collaboration. We list the number of respondents who answered each question on the right side of the chart (valid responses ranged from 107 to 110 individuals).

Overall, a majority of individuals agreed that their organization had received each of the benefits of collaboration. The benefit of promoting awareness of the services offered by their organization had the highest level of support, with 76% of participants agreeing that this was a benefit that their organization had received through collaboration. Seventy-three percent of individuals agreed that their organization had benefited through locating victims services that they did not offer. Sixty-seven percent of participants agreed that their organization benefited through collaboration by receiving referrals. Almost as many (65%) thought that their organization had benefited through collaborations that provided additional knowledge or training for their staff. Local funding was seen as a benefit of collaboration by a majority of respondents (54%). Fifty-four percent of individuals also thought that collaborations had provided more holistic treatment for victims' needs. Finally, 52% of participants thought that their organizations had benefited through collaboration by maintaining contact with victim clients.

Next, we will discuss different ways to improve collaboration. Respondents indicated the ways in which they believed cross-organizational collaboration could be improved. The results are presented in the chart at the top of the following page. A majority of participants (57%) thought that the development of community resource guides could improve collaboration. Half of participants said that interorganizational work groups or committees could serve to improve collaboration between organizations serving victims of crime. Technology to facilitate communication was viewed as a way to improve collaboration by 43% of individuals. Finally, 38% of respondents thought that having a centralized staff to guide referrals could improve collaboration.

¹⁵ Respondents were given the options *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*. For the analyses presented here, we collapsed *strongly disagree* with *disagree* and *strongly agree* with *agree*. This allowed us to ease interpretation without changing the overall patterns found in the data.

How to Improve Collaboration? (n=92)



Note: Because participants could select multiple options, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

Now that we have examined collaboration between organizations serving victims of crime, we will move to the topic of civil legal services for victims.

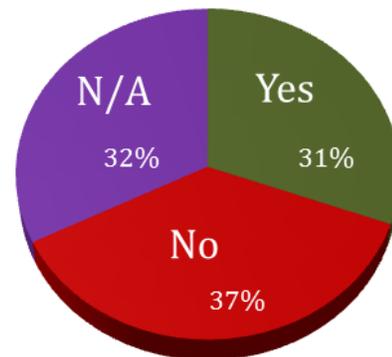
CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES

In this section, we will examine civil legal services for victims of crime, including referrals for civil legal services, meeting the civil legal needs of clients in tribal courts, difficulties surrounding civil legal needs, and ways to improve the delivery of civil legal services to victims.

REFERRALS FOR CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES

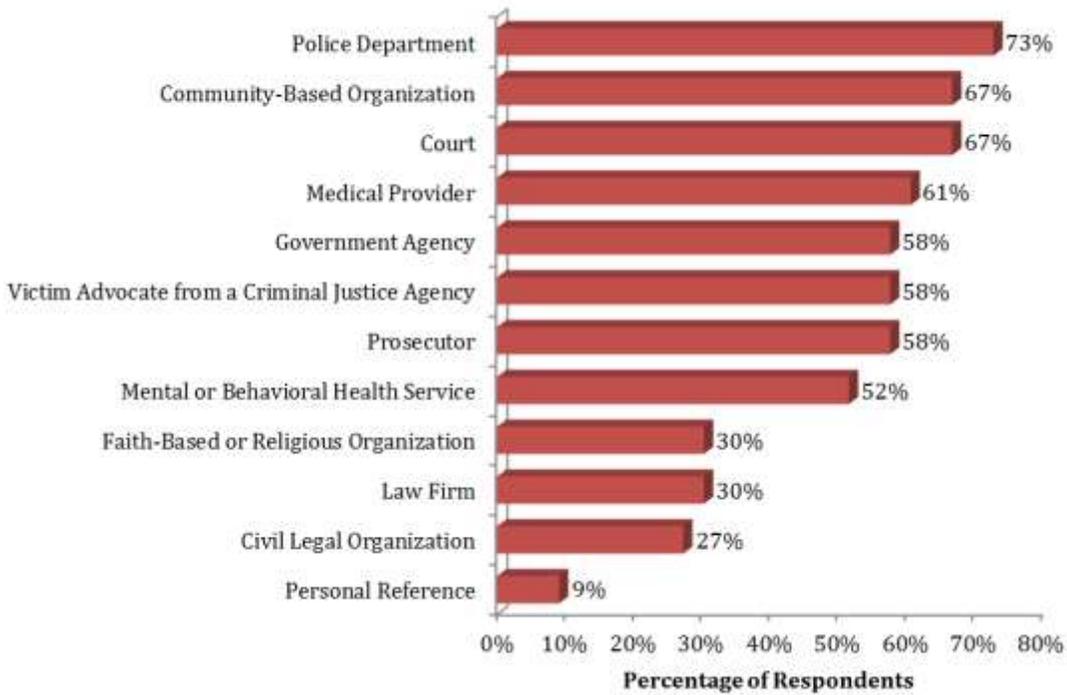
First, we will discuss the extent to which organizations received referrals for civil legal services within the last two years as well as the sources of these referrals. As the chart shows, roughly equal numbers of organizations received such referrals (31%), did not receive any referrals (37%), or the question of referrals did not apply to the organization (32%). The 31% of service providers who worked for organizations that had received referrals for civil legal services then indicated the source of these referrals.

Organization Received Referrals for Civil Legal Services in the Past 2 Years (n=108)



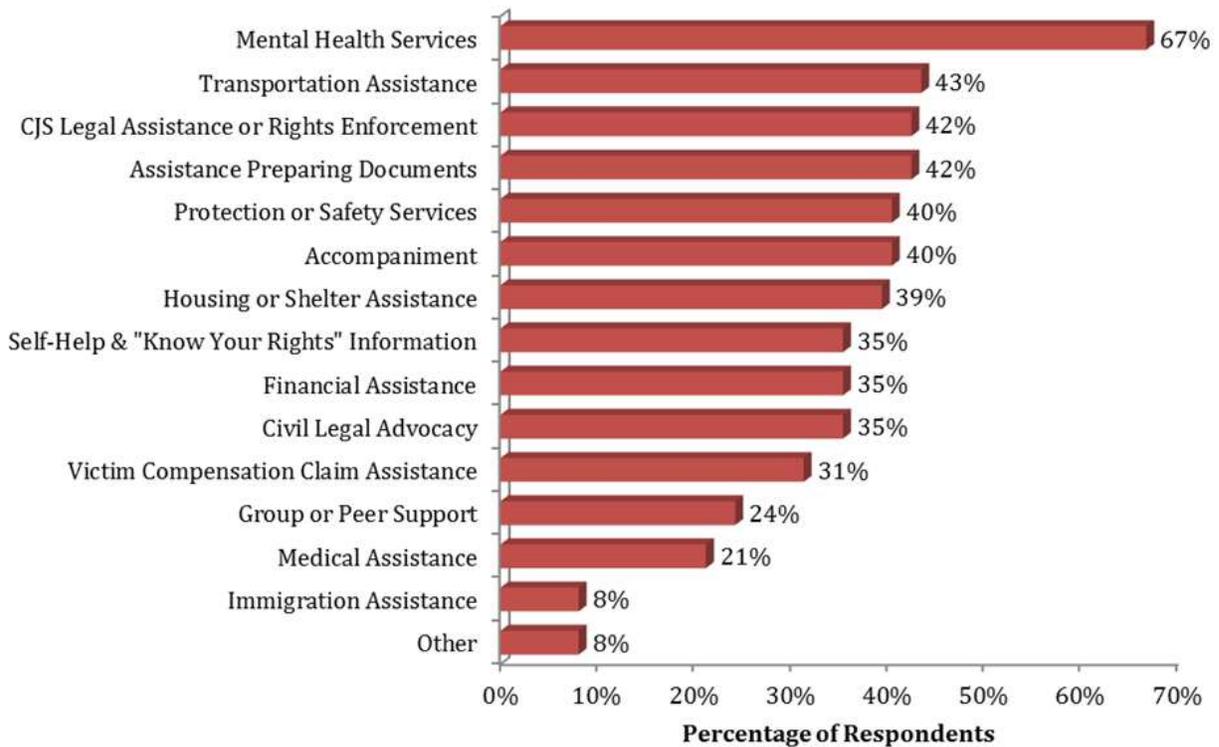
The first chart on the following page shows the various sources. Participants selected all applicable sources. The most common source of referrals for civil legal assistance was law enforcement, with 73% of organizations having received referrals from the police. Sixty-seven percent of these groups had received referrals from a community-based organization. Similarly, 67% of organization had referrals from a court. Medical providers—such as hospitals, doctor’s offices, or clinics—provided referrals to 61% of organizations. Government agencies were a source of referrals for 58% of organizations. Fifty-eight percent of organizations received referrals from a victim advocate (working with the police, a prosecutor’s office, or other criminal justice agency). Prosecutors were the source of referrals for 58% of groups. Fifty-two percent of organizations had received referrals from mental or behavioral health service providers.

Source of Referrals for Civil Legal Services (n=33)



Note: Because participants could select multiple options, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

Types of Referrals/Requests Received in Past 2 Years (n=99)



Note: Because participants could select multiple types of referrals, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

Only 30% of groups had received a referral from a faith-based or religious organization. Similarly, law firms were the source of referrals for only 30% of organizations. Civil legal services groups were the source of only 27% of referrals. Finally, only 9% of organizations had referrals from personal references, such as a service provider’s friend or family member.

Overall, many of these referral sources fall into two main categories. Focusing on these sources that a majority of participants had received referrals from, we find they are either part of the criminal justice system—police departments, courts, government agencies, victim advocates from a criminal justice agency, or prosecutors—or health care professionals—medical providers or mental and behavioral health services. In addition to the criminal justice system and health care organizations, many participants received referrals from community-based organizations.

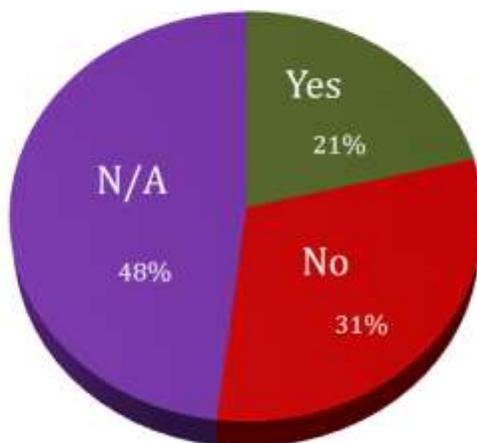
Now, we will examine the nature of the referrals or requests for assistance that these organizations received, including a variety of civil legal services. The respondents indicated what types of referrals their organization had received within the past two years. The results are displayed in the second chart on the previous page.

Mental health services were the most commonly requested service, with 67% of organizations having received these referrals. Forty-three percent of organizations received referrals for transportation assistance. Forty-two percent of groups received referrals for legal assistance or rights enforcement within the criminal justice system. Many organizations (42%) received requests for assistance in the preparation of legal documents or forms. Forty percent of groups had referrals for protection or safety services. Forty percent of organizations had requests for accompaniment to legal proceedings, medical appointments, and so forth. Thirty-nine percent of organizations received referrals for housing or shelter assistance. About a third of groups had referrals for self-help and “know your rights” information (35%), financial assistance (35%), civil legal advocacy (35%), or assistance with victim compensation claims (31%). Twenty-four percent of groups had requests for groups or peer support services. Twenty-one percent of organizations had referrals for medical assistance, and eight percent of groups had referrals for immigration assistance. Finally, 8% of groups had some other form of referrals or requests for assistance.

It should be noted that the top four most commonly requested services also fall into the three main categories of unmet needs discussed earlier in the chapter: legal and advocacy services, mental health and counseling services, and “facilitating” services. By far, the most commonly requested services were mental health services. This further suggests a strong need for mental health services for victims of crime in Montana. Additionally, organizations received many requests for legal assistance, including victims’ rights enforcement and assistance preparing legal documents. Finally, many organizations received requests for transportation assistance. Again, though the focus of this project is delivering legal services to victims of crime, it is important to keep in mind that other needs must be met in order to successfully serve the legal needs of clients. If a client’s mental health needs or needs for services that can facilitate access to other services (transportation to services, child care, etc.) are unmet, then they can form a barrier to accessing legal services.

Next, we will examine the extent to which organizations were forced to turn away requests for civil legal services and the reasons these groups were unable to meet the requests. The chart below shows the extent to which groups had to turn away requests for civil legal assistance in the past two years. Only 21% of organizations turned away civil legal requests (31% of groups did not have to turn away requests for civil legal aid and the question did not apply to 48% of organizations).

Organization Turned Away Requests for Civil Legal Services in the Past 2 Years (n=104)



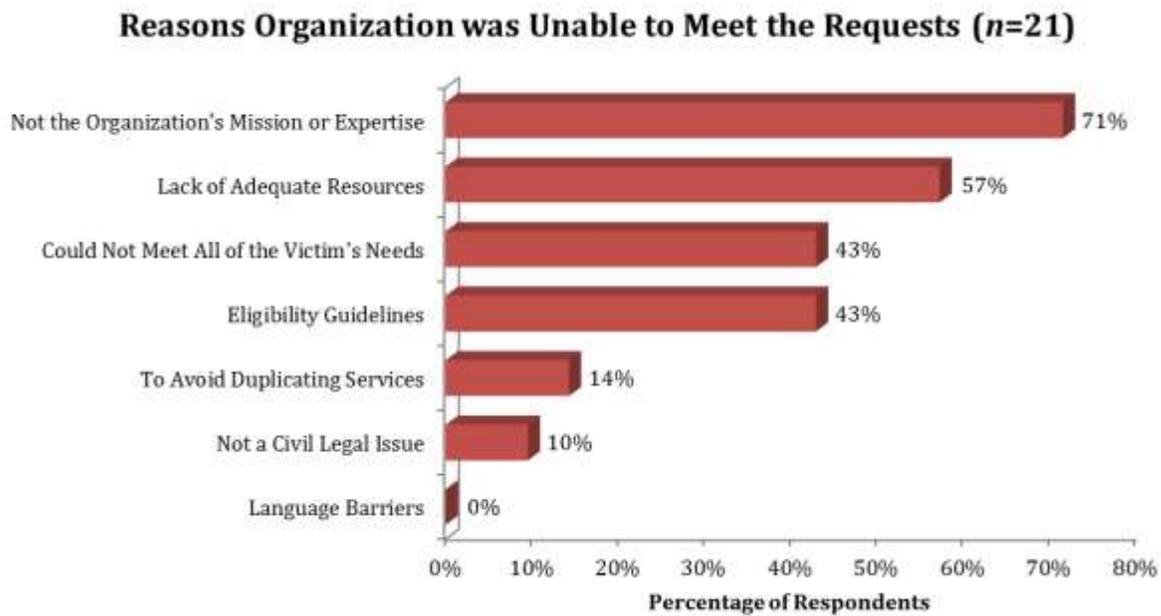
The 21% respondents who said "Yes" reported that their organizations turned away an average of 40% of the requests for civil legal assistance that they received (responses ranged from 5% to 100%).

Of the organizations that did turn away civil legal requests, they had to turn away an average of 40% of the total requests for civil legal assistance that they had received over the past two years (responses ranged from turning away only 5% of requests to turning away all the requests). The reasons that these groups were forced to turn away these requests for civil legal aid varied. The chart on the following page shows why the organizations were unable to meet these requests.

The most common reason (71%) for rejecting a request for civil legal assistance was that the requests fell outside of the organization's mission or area of expertise. A majority of organizations (57%) also turned away requests because the agency did not have adequate resources to handle the matter.

Forty-three percent of organizations turned away requests for civil legal services because they were unable to meet all of the victim's needs. Eligibility requirements were an issue, as well: 43% of groups were unable to meet requests because the party making the request fell outside of the organization's eligibility guidelines. A desire to avoid duplicating services caused 14% of groups to turn away requests for civil legal aid. Ten percent of groups turned away requests because the matter did not involve a civil legal issue. Finally, language barriers did not prevent any organizations from providing services.

Overall, about one-fifth of organizations had to decline requests for civil legal assistance, these organizations, on average, rejected a little under half of these requests. The most common reason for turning away requests for civil legal assistance was that the organization did not provide civil legal assistance. However, a majority of organizations also turned away requests for aid due to a lack of resources. So, for organizations that do provide civil legal aid, the most important reason that they are forced to turn away potential clients is that the organization does not have the resources to serve the legal needs of these victims. This reflects one of the major barriers facing organizations discussed in a previous section: limited budgets. By providing additional funding to these legal aid organizations, increasing the resources and staff, we could decrease the number of clients that may not receive civil legal assistance.



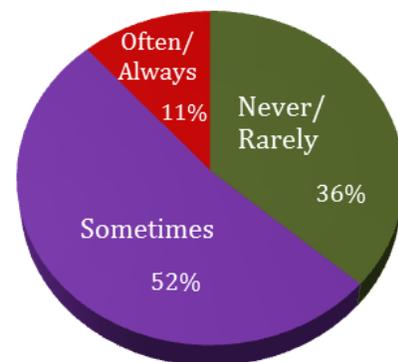
Note: Because participants could select multiple reasons, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

SERVING CLIENTS IN TRIBAL COURTS

Next, we will examine the extent to which jurisdictional issues affected the ability to meet the needs of clients—with a particular focus on serving clients in the tribal court system.

We asked participants how often jurisdictional issues presented a barrier when attempting to meet the civil legal needs of a client. The results are displayed in the chart to the right. About two thirds of participants said that these issues either sometimes (52%) or often/always (11%) served as a barrier. Only 36% of the service providers indicated that

Jurisdictional Issues Presented a Barrier When Attempting to Serve a Client (n=96)



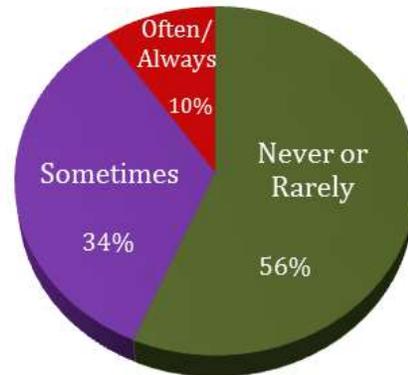
jurisdictional issues never or rarely presented a barrier when addressing a client’s civil legal needs.

Examining a particular form of jurisdictional issue not uncommon in Montana—home to seven Indian reservations—we also asked how often the respondents had clients with civil legal issues that involved a tribal court. These results are displayed in the chart to the right. A majority of service providers (56%) either rarely or never had clients with a civil legal need involving a tribal court, 34% said that these issues arose sometimes, and 11% of service providers often or always worked with clients who had civil legal needs in tribal court.

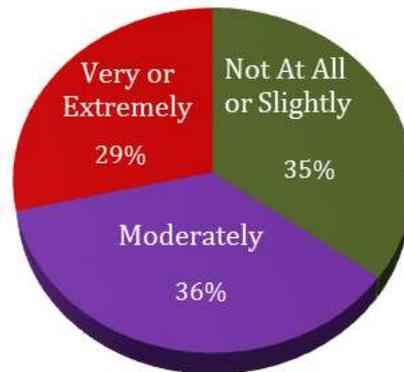
Civil cases involving tribal courts can present unique challenges. We asked respondents how difficult it had been for their organization to meet the civil legal needs of clients in tribal courts. These results are displayed in the chart to the right. The responses were roughly split across categories: 35% said that there was either no difficulty at all or it was slightly difficult, 36% said that it was moderately difficult, and 29% said that serving the needs of a client in tribal court was could prove very difficult or extremely difficult.

When an organization did have an issue arise involving tribal law, there was variability in the ways in which they could deal with it. We asked respondents whether their group had someone familiar with tribal law or a resource to refer to when the need occurred, and the chart below shows their responses. A little less than one third had an internal resource in the organization (31%) and a little over one third used an external resource (34%). Seventeen percent said that their organization had no available resources for issues related to tribal law. Fifteen percent said that their organization’s resource is in need of improvement. Finally, 21% of participants did not know whether their organization had a resource for tribal law.

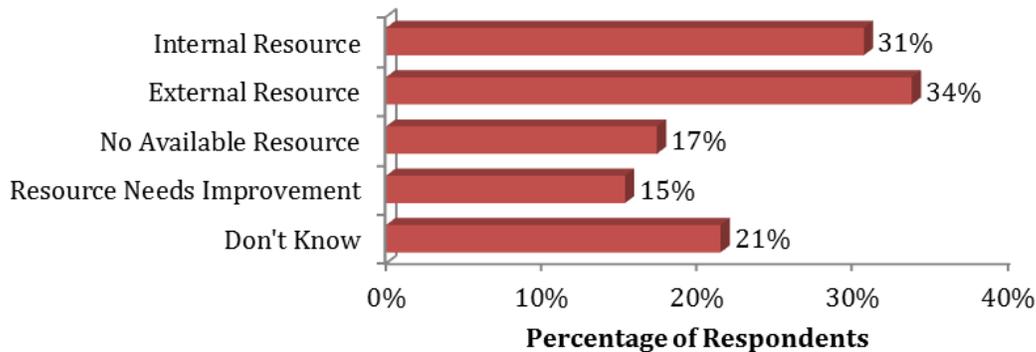
Client Presented a Civil Legal Need Involving a Tribal Court (n=94)



Difficulty Meeting the Needs of Clients in Tribal Court (n=77)



Does Organization Have Someone Familiar with Tribal Law or a Resource to Refer to When Needed? (n=98)



Note: Because participants could select more than one response, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

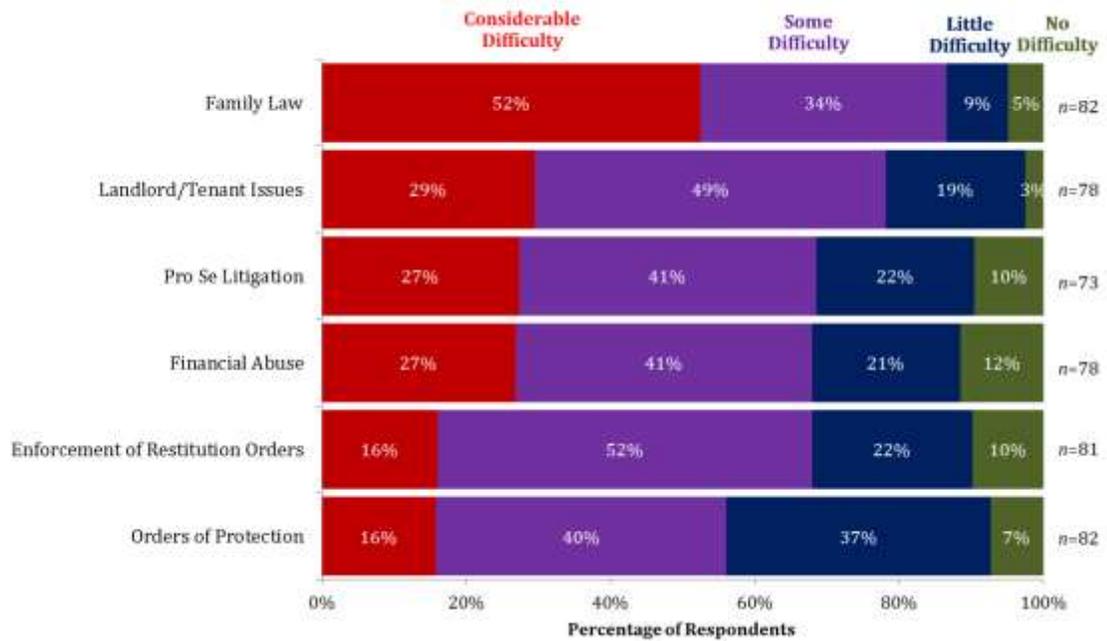
Taken together, these data demonstrate that most respondents have had at least periodic problems with jurisdictional barriers, just under half of the service providers reported at least periodically dealing with civil legal issues involving tribal courts, and when serving clients in tribal courts, about two thirds of respondents encountered at least a moderate degree of difficulty, with almost one third experiencing a high level of difficulty. Additionally, over one third of respondents either had no resource for tribal law or did not know if their organization had one. This is problematic, since just under half of respondents either periodically or consistently work with clients possessing civil legal needs involving tribal courts.

CIVIL LEGAL PROBLEMS

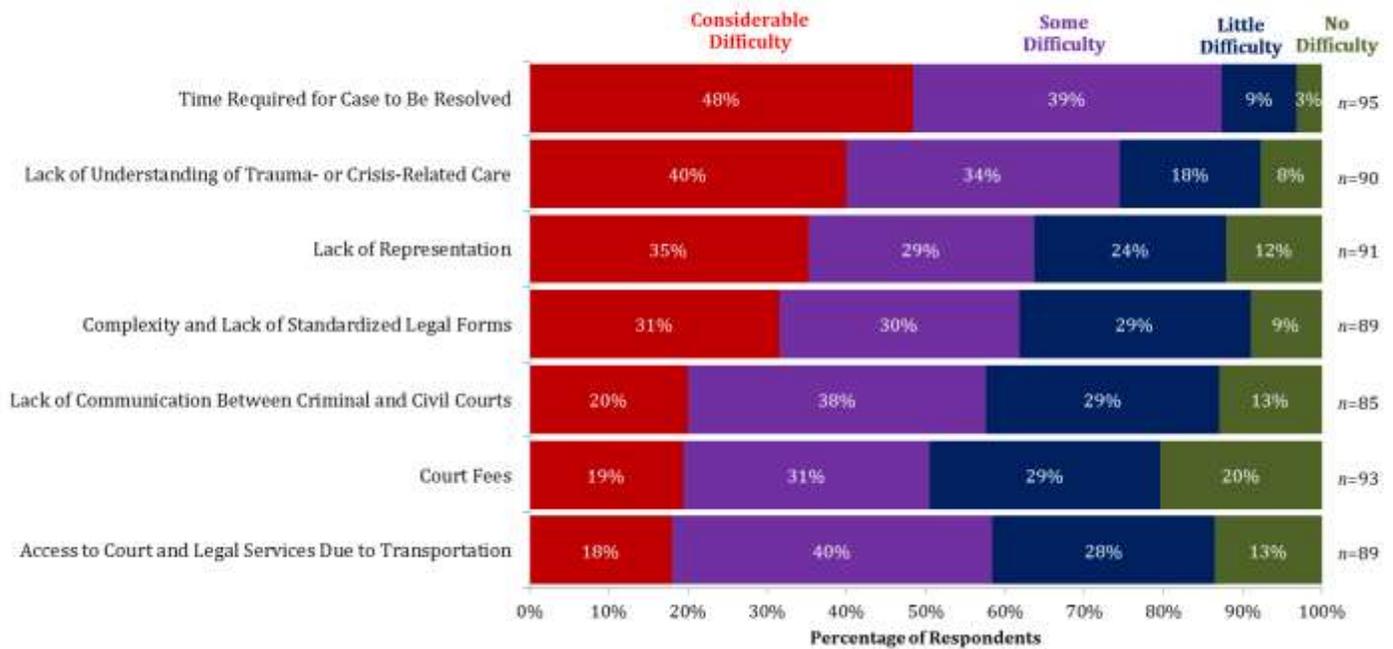
Now, we will examine the civil legal problems facing clients, including the legal issues that they face and the problems they encounter with the court system. First, we will examine the specific civil legal issues that present difficulty for victims of crime. Respondents were asked to rate the difficulty that their victim clients encountered with six different civil legal issues. These results are presented in the first chart on the following page. The various civil legal issues are listed on the left side of the chart, with the bars representing the degree of difficulty associated with the particular legal issue. The number of participants who responded to each item is listed on the right side of the chart (the valid responses ranged from 73 to 82 individuals).

Overall, most respondents said that their clients had either considerable difficulty or some difficulty with each of the civil legal issues, but some—such as family law—presented more problems than others—like orders of protection. Family law stood out as the most problematic area for victim clients. A majority of respondents (52%) said that their clients encountered considerable difficulty with family law. Thirty-four percent indicated that their clients had some difficulty with family law. Only a handful of participants said that their clients had either little (9%) or no difficulty (5%) with family legal issues.

What Level of Difficulty Do Clients Encounter with Civil Legal Issues?



What Level of Difficulty Do Clients Encounter with Aspects of the Court System?



Landlord/tenant law also presented a high level of difficulty for clients: over three quarters of respondents said that their clients either had considerable difficulty (29%) or some difficulty (49%) with landlord/tenant issues, while far fewer reported little difficulty (19%) or no difficulty (3%). Twenty-seven percent of respondents indicated that their clients experienced considerable difficulty with *pro se* litigation, while forty-one percent said that it caused some difficulty, twenty-two percent said that it caused little difficulty, and ten percent said that it caused no difficulty at all. Similarly, financial abuse was an issue that presented problems for many clients: about two thirds of participants said that financial abuse presented either considerable difficulty (27%) or some difficulty (41%) for their clients, with only about a third of participants indicating that this issue presented either little difficulty (21%) or no difficulty (12%).

Sixteen percent of participants said that their clients encountered considerable difficulty with the enforcement of restitution orders, while fifty-two percent said that their clients had some difficulty; twenty-two percent said that their clients encountered little difficulty when dealing with the enforcement of these orders, and ten percent indicated that their clients encountered no difficulty with this particular issue. Finally, orders of protection seemed to present the least amount of difficulty for victim clients; however, most respondents said that their clients encountered either considerable difficulty (16%) or some difficulty (40%) with this issue. That said, 37% of respondents reported that their clients had little difficulty with orders of protection, and 7% said that their clients encountered no difficulty with the issue.

Overall, respondents indicated that each of these civil legal issues presented either considerable difficulty or some difficulty for their victim clients; however, family law and landlord/tenant issues seemed to be the most challenging civil legal issues facing their clients. This reflects the findings discussed in the Focus Group chapter. In the focus groups that we conducted with service providers across the state, the two most frequently mentioned civil legal issues were family law problems and landlord/tenant problems.

PROBLEMS WITH THE COURT SYSTEM

Next, we will discuss the problems that clients encountered with the judicial system. Respondents were asked to rate the difficulty that their clients encountered with seven different aspects of the court system. The results are presented in the second chart on the previous page. The potentially problematic aspects of the court system are listed on the left of the chart, while the bars show the degree of difficulty that participants ascribed to each issue. The number of service providers who answered each item is listed on the right side of the chart (the valid responses ranged from 85 to 95 individuals).

In general, all of these aspects of the court system caused clients difficulty. For each of the seven issues, a majority of respondents reported that their clients encountered either considerable difficulty or some difficulty when facing the issue. However, some aspects of the judicial system caused more problems for clients than others. The most difficult aspect involved time: just under half of participants (48%) said that the amount of time required for cases to be resolved caused considerable difficulty for their clients, and 39% indicated that it caused their clients some difficulty. In contrast, only a fraction of respondents reported this issue caused their clients little difficulty (9%) or no difficulty (3%). Lack of understanding of trauma-related or crisis-related care was also seen as causing problems for clients: 40% of respondents said that this lack of understanding caused their clients considerable difficulty and 34% said that it caused some difficulty, while only 18% said that it caused little difficulty and 8% said that it resulted in no

difficulty for their clients. Two thirds of service providers reported that lack of representation caused their clients either considerable difficulty (35%) or some difficulty (29%); the remaining participants said that their clients encountered either little difficulty (24%) or no difficulty (12%) with lack of representation.

Legal forms—in particular, their complexity or the lack of standardization—presented problems for clients, as well: 31% of participants said that their clients encountered considerable difficulty with these issues and 30% said that their clients experienced some difficulty, whereas 29% said that their clients encountered little difficulty and 9% said that their clients had no difficulty with legal forms. The lack of communication between criminal courts and civil courts caused considerable difficulty for the clients of 20% of respondents and some difficulty for the clients of 38% of respondents. Twenty-nine percent of participants reported that their clients experienced little difficulty with this lack of communication between courts, and thirteen percent said that their clients encountered no difficulty with this issue.

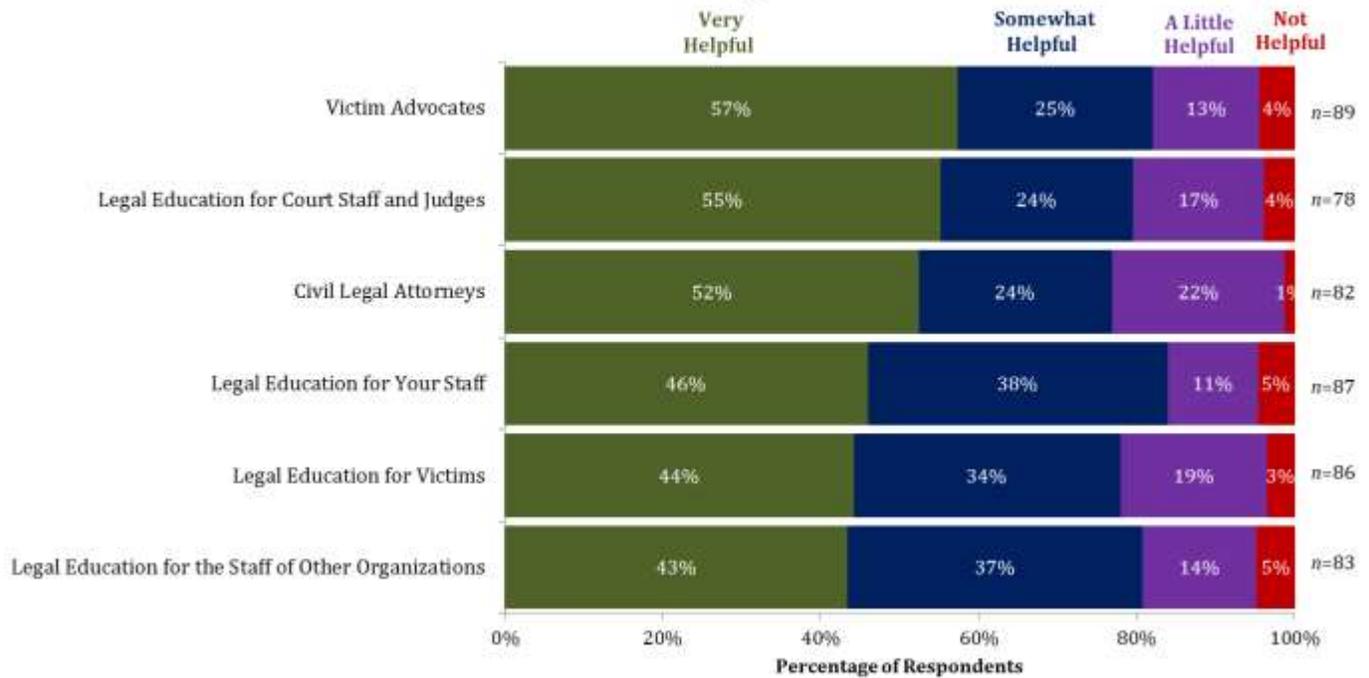
Just over half of respondents said that court fees caused either considerable difficulty (19%) or some difficulty (31%) for their clients, though a large number of participants indicated that court fees caused their clients either little (29%) or no difficulty (29%). Finally, access to court and legal services due to a lack of transportation was an issue that caused some degree of difficulty for the clients of most service providers: 18% of individuals said that their clients encountered considerable difficulty with transportation and 40% said that transportation caused some difficulty. Twenty-eight percent of participants indicated that their clients encountered little difficulty with transportation issues, and thirteen percent said that transportation did not cause any difficulty for their clients.

Overall, some of these problems victims encounter with the courts are systemic and could require changes to the entire court system in order to solve, such as the lack of communication between civil and criminal courts. In fact, the issue that caused clients the most difficulty—the time required for cases to be resolved—falls within this category. Similarly, to the extent that judges and prosecutors do not understand trauma-related care, the second most concerning problem also requires changes to the court system itself. However, other issues can be ameliorated more directly by service provider organizations themselves. For example, organizations who work with victims of crime can take steps to train their staff in trauma-related care, provide legal representation for clients, assist clients with legal forms, and provide transportation to clients. Of course, limited resources can restrict an organization’s ability to enact these changes.

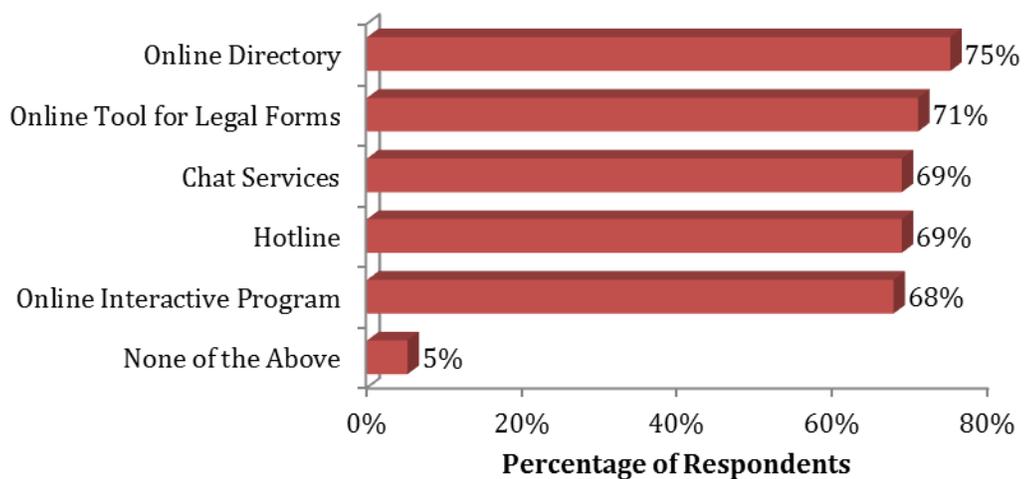
IMPROVING CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES FOR VICTIMS

Now, we will examine the types of resources that could help organizations meet the civil legal needs of victims. Respondents were presented with six different resources. They were asked to rate the degree to which their organization would find these additional resources helpful for the purposes of assisting victims with their civil legal needs. The results are displayed in the first chart on the following page. The various additional resources are listed on the left side of the chart, with bars representing the degree of helpfulness of each resource. The number of individuals who responded to each item is listed on the right side of the chart (valid responses ranged from 78 to 89 participants).

What Additional Resources Would Help Organizations Assist Victims with Their Civil Legal Needs?



What Would Be Helpful Resources for Victims? (n=96)



The vast majority of service providers indicated that their organization would find each of these additional resources either very or somewhat helpful in serving the civil legal needs of crime victims. The resource that was seen as the most helpful was victim advocates. Most respondents (57%) said that more victim advocates would be very helpful and 24% said that they would be somewhat helpful. In contrast, only 13% indicated that additional victim advocates would be a little helpful and 4% said they would not be helpful at all. Almost four-fifths of participants said that legal education for court staff and judges would be very helpful (55%) or somewhat helpful (24%), while 17% would find this education a little helpful and a mere 4% would not find it helpful.

Over three-quarters of participants also indicated that additional civil legal attorneys would prove very helpful (52%) or somewhat helpful (24%), while fewer suggested that more civil legal attorneys would be a little helpful (22%) or not helpful (1%). Over four-fifths of participants said that legal education training for their staff would be either very helpful (46%) or somewhat helpful (38%) for their organization (11% said that it would be only a little helpful and 5% said that it would not be helpful). Almost as many participants said that legal education for victims would be either very helpful (44%) or somewhat helpful (34%), while relatively few individuals said that this legal education would be a little helpful (19%) or not helpful (3%). Finally, four-fifths of participants said that legal education for the staff of other service organizations would be very helpful (43%) or somewhat helpful (37%) for their organization, whereas a minority said that it would be merely a little helpful (14%) or not helpful at all (5%).

Overall, this suggests a strong need for more crime victim advocates, legal education for court staff and judges, and more civil legal attorneys. Most participants said that each of these would be very helpful in their mission to serve the civil legal needs of crime victims. Earlier in the chapter, lack of legal and advocacy services was discussed as one of the most critical gaps in services in the state. These responses further support the need for more advocates and attorneys to serve the needs of victims.

Finally, we will discuss the types of resources that would be helpful for victims of crime. Respondents were provided with a list of five resources and asked to indicate whether they believed that any of these things would be a helpful resource for crime victims. The results are presented in the second chart of the previous page. Overall, the large majority of participants said that each of the resources would be useful to victims; however, some had slightly more support than others. Seventy-five percent of participants indicated that an online directory would be useful for victims. This online directory would be used by both service providers and victims of crime in order to locate organizations to fulfill their needs. Almost as many participants (71%) said that an online tool for legal forms would be useful. This tool would be designed to assist crime victims with the completion of legal forms, which could prove valuable given that we have previously shown that complex legal forms are a source of difficulty for clients. A large number of service providers (69%) thought that chat services would help victims. These chat services would allow victims of crime to communicate with an off-site attorney from designated locations. The same number of respondents (69%) also said that a hotline would be helpful. This phone service or hotline would be designed to assist victims of crime in locating organizations to fulfill their needs. Finally, almost as many participants (68%) indicated that an online interactive program would be helpful for victims of crime. This online interactive program would help either service providers or victims identify and navigate civil legal needs as well as other needs. Only a small number of participants (5%) thought that none of these things would be helpful resources for victims of crime.

In general, it seems that the strong consensus among service providers is that any and all of these potential resources would prove helpful to victims of crime. It should be noted that Montana does currently have some form of many of these resources. For instance, the state has a 211 online resource directory that victims can use to search for community resources. Similarly, the Montana Court Help Program—a service provided by the Montana Supreme Court to assist with civil legal problems—and MontanaLawHelp.org—a project of the Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA)—both have tools that help with legal forms. Additionally, MontanaLawHelp.org provides a Live Help service in which victims can ask questions through an online chat. Finally, MLSA provides the HelpLine, a 1-800 phone service that victims can call during the week; however, this is an intake tool, and victims are not provided assistance through the hotline. So, though Montana does have versions of many of these resources, they could be expanded or revised in order to provide greater assistance to crime victims. In the previous chapter, many crime victims said that they found the available resources confusing or unhelpful, suggesting that these resources could be improved. During interviews, a number of victims also seemed to be unaware that these resources were available, suggesting a need for improved outreach or publicity for these services.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we discussed the results from the Service Provider Survey, an online survey of individuals who work with victims of crime in Montana. The survey examined a range of issues, including the participants' characteristics, unmet needs of crime victims, barriers to services, cross-organizational collaborative efforts, and civil legal assistance. The participants in the sample represented a wide variety of organizations from across the state of Montana. To conclude this chapter, we will summarize some of the most pertinent findings from this survey, focusing on gaps in services, barriers to services, and civil legal services.

Participants discussed the gaps in services in their communities. The most important unmet needs fell into three major categories: (1) legal and advocacy services for victims, (2) mental health and counseling services, and (3) "facilitating" services. This lack of legal and advocacy services for victims of crime strikes at the core of this Needs Assessment. Victims of crime in Montana are facing gaps in legal and advocacy services, thereby creating a barrier to justice for these individuals. Potentially exacerbating these gaps are the unmet needs in the areas of mental health/counseling services and facilitating services. When victims are not having their mental health needs met or are unable to arrange to meet with service providers or appear in court, these unmet needs themselves form barriers to accessing legal and advocacy services. It is important to expand legal services for victims of crime and to ensure that these other barriers do not prevent victims from being able to effectively access these services.

Participants also discussed barriers to services: both barriers that prevent organizations from serving victims of crime and barriers faced by victims in need of services. The most important barriers for organizations could be condensed into two major issues: (1) limited budgets and (2) the difficulties of reaching potential clients. The most critical barriers facing victims all fell into two categories: (1) knowledge barriers and (2) emotional barriers. Additionally, several secondary barriers were identified: (3) complexity of the system, (4) unmet non-legal needs, and (5) lack of resources.

To an extent, the barriers facing organizations and those facing victims are interrelated. Because organizations face challenges spreading awareness of their services to the public and because they

also struggle to reach underserved populations, it is unsurprising that many victims do not receive services because they are unaware of the services available, they do not understand how to access these services, or they do not know that they are eligible for these services. This suggests that organizations need to develop more effective outreach programs to publicize their services in the community.

The emotional barriers that victims face (e.g., distrust, shame, and fear) are more difficult to address. As discussed earlier, improving victims' interactions with law enforcement could help to increase their trust in the system and decrease fear of retaliation from the offender. Crime victim advocates could also help address some of the emotional issues faced by victims. Additionally, we have noted that the state has significant gaps in mental health and counseling services. Expanding access to these services may reduce the emotional barriers preventing victims of crime from utilizing other services. Victim advocates may also help clients navigate the complex systems of services.

Additionally, better collaboration between organizations could alleviate some of this burden from clients who need to access services from multiple groups. Increasing collaboration between organizations could also help to ensure that the non-legal needs of crime victims—such as housing, health, and transportation—are being met; otherwise, these unmet needs can serve as barriers, as discussed earlier. Finally, organizations need more resources to serve victims; limited staff and budgets lead victims to endure long waits and denial of services.

Many organizations received referrals and requests for services. The most common sources of referrals were entities within the criminal justice system or health care professionals. The most requested services were those discussed as gaps above. The strongest demand was for mental health services, and many organizations also received requests for legal services and transportation. This continues to emphasize the need to meet the mental health and transportation needs of victims in order to also serve their civil legal needs.

Jurisdictional issues—particularly those involving tribal courts—also presented barriers for providers addressing the civil legal issues of clients. Most participants had some level of difficulties with jurisdictional issues and almost half of them dealt with civil legal issues in the tribal court system. This jurisdictional issue had the potential to create problems: most providers encountered difficulty meeting the needs of their clients in tribal courts. Contributing to this problem, many service providers either had no resource for tribal law or did not know if their organization had one. Taken together, this is clearly problematic, since the state of Montana has seven Indian reservations. Many service providers assist clients in tribal court at some point, and when they do, many of them experience difficulties. Unfortunately, many of them do not know where to turn when they encounter these problems. This suggests more training is needed in tribal law and in how to access tribal law resources.

Participants also discussed the civil legal issues and aspects of the courts system that caused their clients the most difficulty. The specific civil legal issues that presented the greatest challenges for victim clients were family law and landlord/tenant issues, reflecting the findings in the focus groups. The most challenging problems encountered with the courts were systemic in nature and therefore complicated to change (e.g., the time required for cases to be resolved or judges and prosecutors not understanding trauma-related care). However, other serious problems related to lack of legal representation and the complexity of legal forms, both of which could be addressed by legal aid, provided that the organization possesses the necessary resources.

Participants also identified additional resources that would help them meet the civil legal needs of crime victims. The responses demonstrated a strong need for more crime victim advocates and civil legal attorneys. This continues the theme that legal and advocacy services are one of the most serious unmet needs in the state, lending additional support for hiring more attorneys and advocates.

Finally, respondents identified several resources that would be useful to victims of crime. In general, it seems that the strong consensus among service providers is that any and all of these potential resources would prove helpful to victims of crime, including: an online directory that allows victims and service providers to locate organizations to fulfill their needs; an online tool to aid in the completion of legal forms; chat services enabling victims to communicate with an off-site attorney from designated locations; a phone service or hotline to help victims locate organizations to meet their needs; and an online interactive program to help either service providers or victims identify and navigate civil legal needs as well as other needs. Many of these services currently exist in some form, but the current versions do not necessarily provide the services discussed above. However, based on the interviews with victims, many crime victims were confused by the current self-help resources, and many other victims displayed a general lack of awareness that these resources exist in Montana. Given the strong support for all of these options among service providers and the lack of victim satisfaction or even awareness of the current resources, the state victim legal assistance network should consider improving and expanding upon the currently available resources.

In the next chapter, we will discuss the Victim Survey.

VICTIM SURVEY

In this chapter, we will discuss the Victim Survey, an online survey which was completed by victims of crime from across Montana. First, we will present the methodology for this survey. Then, we will examine the survey results. Finally, we will conclude the chapter.

RESEARCH METHODS

The Victim Survey was an online survey created and distributed using the research software Qualtrics. The survey consisted of 32 questions, though many of these questions were contingency questions, meaning that participants were asked these questions only if they provided particular responses to previous questions (see Appendix for the complete Victim Survey). The survey gathered information about the victim, including their personal demographics and their past experiences with victimization. The main focus of the survey was examining the legal problems that individuals faced following their victimization and their subsequent experiences with civil legal services.

In order to recruit our sample, we included a link to the survey in the email invitations for the Service Provider Survey that we sent to the individuals who work with victims of crime in the state of Montana.¹⁶ We described the nature of the Victim Survey and asked these service provider participants to share the research opportunity with victims who they believed may be interested in participating in the brief survey. We also provided a flyer that these service providers could display in their offices, notifying victim clients of the opportunity to share their experiences.

Our sampling strategy yielded 36 participants. These were the respondents who answered “yes” to the screening question: “In the past 5 years, have you (or a person close to you, such as a family member or a partner) been the victim of a crime in Montana?”¹⁷ However, the practical sample size is smaller for some items for two reasons. First, participants could skip any question they did not want to answer. Second, most sections of the survey were contingent upon responses to previous screening questions. For example, if a participant indicated that they did not experience any family law problems following their victimization, then they would not be asked follow-up questions regarding their experiences with particular family legal issues. Therefore, the number of valid responses varied depending on the question, with several items having responses from a fraction of participants.¹⁸ Because some of the analyses have particularly small numbers of responses, we would like to note that caution should be used when drawing broad conclusions based on findings derived from very few participants.

¹⁶ The specific details of the Service Provider Survey distribution can be found in the Research Methods section of the previous chapter.

¹⁷ Thirty-seven participants answered “yes” to the screening question, indicating that they had experienced victimization; however, one of these participants skipped every other question in the survey. Therefore, we dropped this case from the analyses presented in this report, reducing the sample size to 36 respondents.

¹⁸ For each chart and table in the Findings section, we indicate the number of respondents who answered the item(s) involved.

FINDINGS

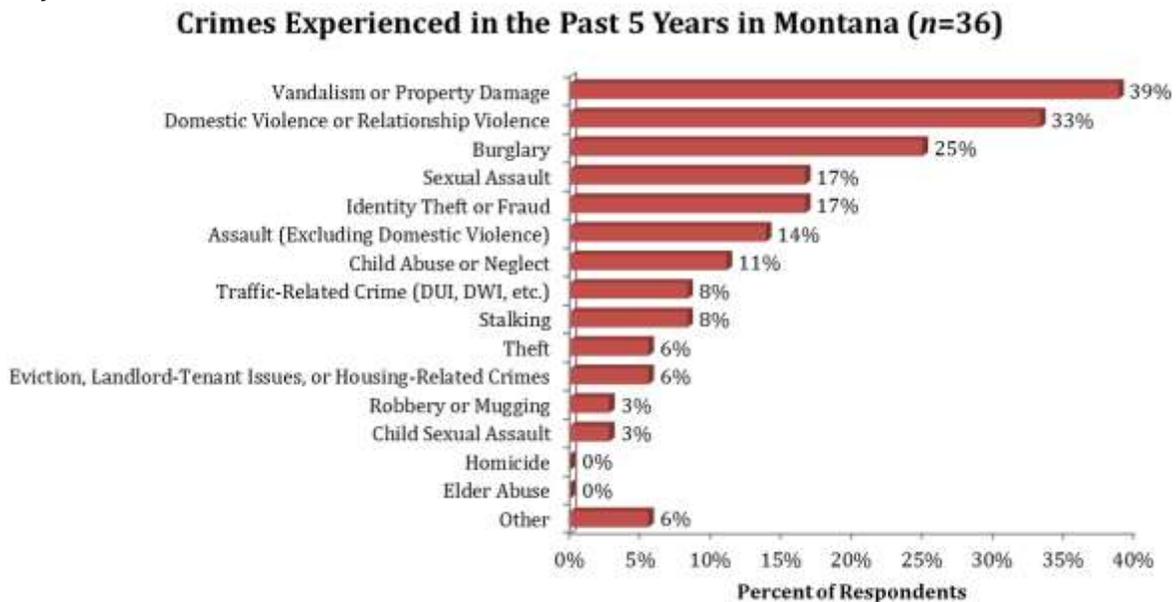
In the Findings section, we will examine the results from the Victim Survey.¹⁹ First, we will examine the characteristics of the respondents. Next, we will discuss the civil legal problems that participants faced following their victimization—including financial issues, housing problems, family legal issues, and employment issues. Then, we will discuss the experiences that victims had with civil legal services. Finally, we will conclude this chapter.

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

In this section, we will briefly discuss the characteristics of the survey respondents, including their demographics and their experiences with criminal victimization. The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in the table on the following page. The demographics are displayed on the left side of the table, along with the number of participants who provided responses to each question. The percentage of respondents who fell within each category is listed on the right.

The participants were predominantly female (76%) and overwhelmingly white (97% white and 3% Native American). The individuals ranged in age from 28 to 63 years old. The average age of participants was 44 years old, and most participants were in their forties (55%).

The educational level of participants ranged from less than a high school degree to postgraduate degrees. Most participants had either bachelor's degree (38%) or a postgraduate degree (35%). The household income of the survey respondents varied widely, from less than \$10,000 to \$100,000 or more a year. The median income category was \$50,000 to \$59,999, while the largest income category was \$100,000 or more. Additionally, all participants spoke English as the primary language in their home. A few individuals were disabled (11%). A few respondents were veterans (10%).



Note: Because respondents could select all applicable crimes, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

¹⁹ The analyses of the survey data were completed using the statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics 22.

Finally, we also asked participants about their experiences with victimization. Participants could report each type of victimization that they (or someone close to them) had experienced in the past five years in Montana. These results are displayed in the chart on the previous page, with the crime types listed on the left and the bars representing the percentage of respondents who reported experiencing the particular crimes. Because respondents could select more than one type of crime, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%. In fact, most participants (58%) reported experiencing—either directly or indirectly—more than one type of victimization (at the upper end, 6% indicated that they had experienced six different types of victimization). Overall, the crimes reported were almost evenly divided between violent crimes (53%) and property crimes (47%).

Vandalism or property damage was the most frequently reported crime (39%), followed closely by domestic violence or relationship violence (33%). Next was burglary (25%), sexual assault (17%), and identity theft or fraud (17%). The next most frequently selected crime types were assault, which excluded assaults that took place within the context of domestic violence (14%), child abuse or neglect (11%), traffic-related crimes, such as crimes related to driving under the influence or driving while intoxicated (8%), stalking (8%), theft (6%), and eviction, landlord/tenant issues, or housing-related crime (6%). A few participants reported experiencing robbery or mugging (3%) and child sexual assault (3%). No participants indicated they or someone close to them had been the victim of homicide or elder abuse. Finally, a few participants (6%) said that they had also experienced a crime that did not fall into one of these categories. Now that we have examined the characteristics of the survey participants, we will move to discuss the civil legal problems that these individuals faced following their experience with crime.

Characteristics of Participants

Demographics	Percentage
<i>Gender (n = 29)</i>	
Male	24 %
Female	76 %
<i>Race/Ethnicity (n = 29)</i>	
White (Non-Hispanic)	97 %
Native American	3 %
<i>Age (n = 29)</i>	
20 to 29 Years Old	3 %
30 to 39 Years Old	21 %
40 to 49 Years Old	55 %
50 to 59 Years Old	14 %
60 to 69 Years Old	7 %
<i>Education (n = 29)</i>	
Less Than a High School Degree	3 %
High School Degree	7 %
Some College	14 %
Associate's Degree	3 %
Bachelor's Degree	38 %
Postgraduate Degree	35 %
<i>Household Income (n = 29)</i>	
Less Than \$10,000	3 %
\$10,000 to \$19,999	14 %
\$20,000 to \$29,999	0 %
\$30,000 to \$39,999	14 %
\$40,000 to \$49,999	14 %
\$50,000 to \$59,999	7 %
\$60,000 to \$69,999	0 %
\$70,000 to \$79,999	3 %
\$80,000 to \$89,999	10 %
\$90,000 to \$99,999	0 %
\$100,000 or more	35 %
<i>Other Characteristics</i>	
English as Primary Language (n = 29)	100 %
Disabled (n = 28)	11 %
Veteran (n = 30)	10 %

CIVIL LEGAL PROBLEMS

In this section, we will examine the civil legal problems that participants reported experiencing subsequent to their victimization. We will also discuss whether the respondents felt that they needed help with these civil legal issues, whether they got the help that they needed, and how they acquired this assistance. We will examine a variety of legal problems, including: (1) financial legal issues, (2) family law issues, (3) problems related to housing law, (4) issues regarding employment law, and (5) several miscellaneous civil legal issues. Overall, only a minority of participants reported experiencing any particular type of problem following their victimization (ranging from a low of 24% who indicated that they had employment law issues to a high of 42% who said that they experienced problems in the category of miscellaneous civil legal issues).

FINANCIAL LAW PROBLEMS

First, we will examine a variety of financial legal problems faced by victims of crime. When asked whether they experienced issues related to financial law following their victimization, about one third (34%) of participants indicated that they had encountered these problems (as displayed in the chart to the right).

The respondents who said that they had experienced financial law problems then answered a series of questions examining the nature of these problems. These questions asked about specific financial problems—including credit card problems or credit issues, trouble paying bills, and bankruptcy. For each problem, participants were asked: whether they needed help or did not need help with the problem, whether they received help, whether they received free legal help, and whether they paid for legal help with the problem. These results are presented in the three charts on the following page. Each chart represents a different financial legal problem. The respondents' various experiences with the problem are listed on the left side of the chart, and percentage of the respondents who reported each experience is displayed in the chart.²⁰

Financial Law Problems (n=34)



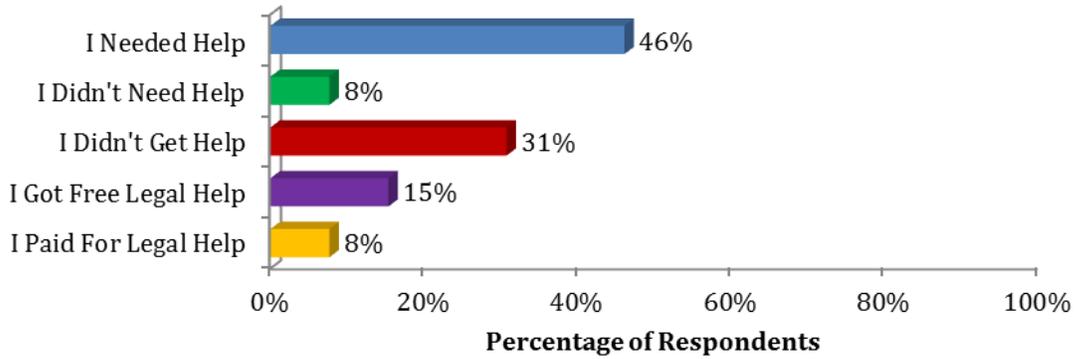
Regarding problems with credit cards or other credit issues, just under half (46%) of the victims who had financial issues said that they needed help with this particular issue (only 8% said that they did not need any help). About one-third (31%) of individuals who had financial law problems did not get help with credit problems. A small minority of individuals got free legal help (15%) or paid for legal help (8%) for their credit issues. If we limit the analysis to those individuals who indicated that they needed help with credit problems, we find that half of them (50%) did not get the help that they needed, and very few of these victims received legal help with their credit problems, with only 17% getting free legal help and only 17% paying for legal help.²¹

²⁰ The percentages displayed in these charts are out of the total respondents who reported having a financial problem, not out of the entire sample of participants.

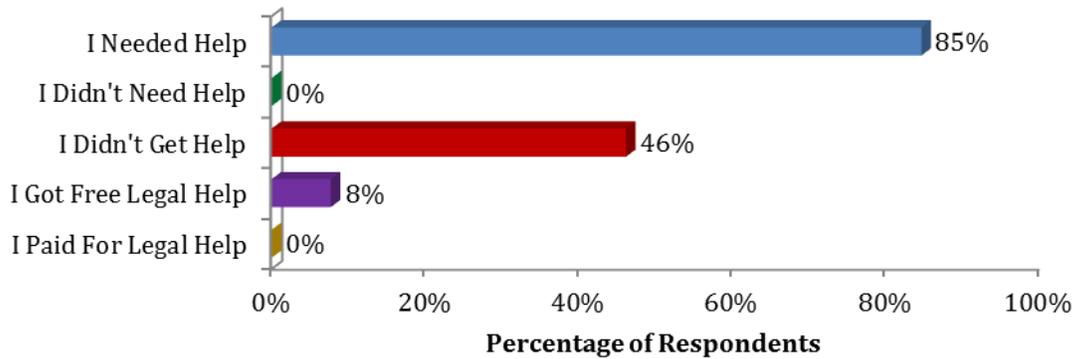
²¹ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

Financial Law Problems

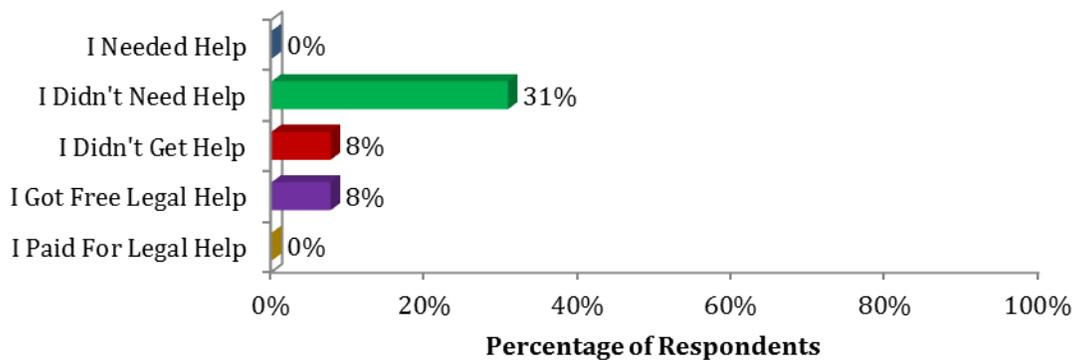
Credit Card Problems or Credit Issues (n=13)



Trouble Paying Bills (n=13)



Bankruptcy (n=13)



The vast majority (85%) of victims who reported financial problems said that they encountered difficulty paying their bills following their experience with crime (none said that they did not need help in this area). Almost half (46%) of the participants who reported financial legal problems in general said that they did not get help paying their bills. A very small portion of participants (8%) said that they received free legal help with this problem, and none said that they paid for legal help. Focusing only on the participants who reported trouble paying bills can be enlightening: over half (55%) of the victims who faced problems paying their bills got any help with this issue, with only 9% receiving free legal help and none paying for legal help.²²

Finally, bankruptcy did not seem to be a problem among the participants who faced financial legal issues. None of the participants said that they had problems with bankruptcy (31% said that they did not need help), though a small minority of respondents (8%) said that they did receive free legal help related to bankruptcy.

Overall, financial legal issues presented a number of problems for victims in this survey. About one-third of victims had these problems. Most of these individuals had trouble paying bills; about half of the participants who had problems paying bills did not receive any help, whereas a small fraction reported getting free legal help. Credit issues also created problems for the participants with financial troubles: half of them faced problems with credit, and half of those with credit problems received no help with the issue. Bankruptcy did not seem to present a problem for the individuals in this survey. This suggests that more focus should be placed on meeting the financial civil legal needs of victims, as most of these needs seem to be currently unmet. In particular, victims need help with paying bills, and, to a lesser extent, with their credit issues.

FAMILY LAW PROBLEMS

Next, we will examine problems related to family law. One third (33%) of participants indicated that they experienced some sort of family legal problem following their victimization. These results are displayed in the chart to the right.

The participants who indicated experiencing a family law problem were asked several questions further examining these problems. They answered questions about specific family law issues—including parenting plans or child custody, divorce or separation, and orders of protection. With each of these issues, participants indicated: whether they needed help or did not need help with the problem, whether they received help, and whether they received free legal help or paid for legal help. The results are presented in the three charts on the following page. Each chart represents one of these family legal issues. The charts display the extent to which participants reported having various experiences with the issues.²³

Family Law Problems (n=33)

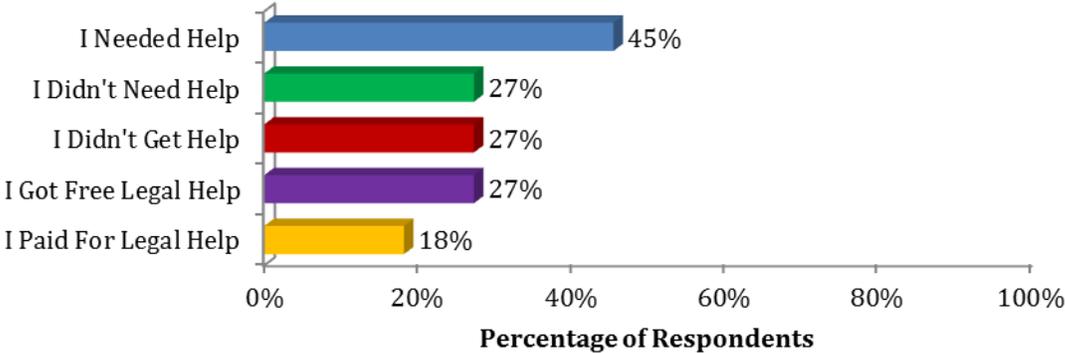


²² These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

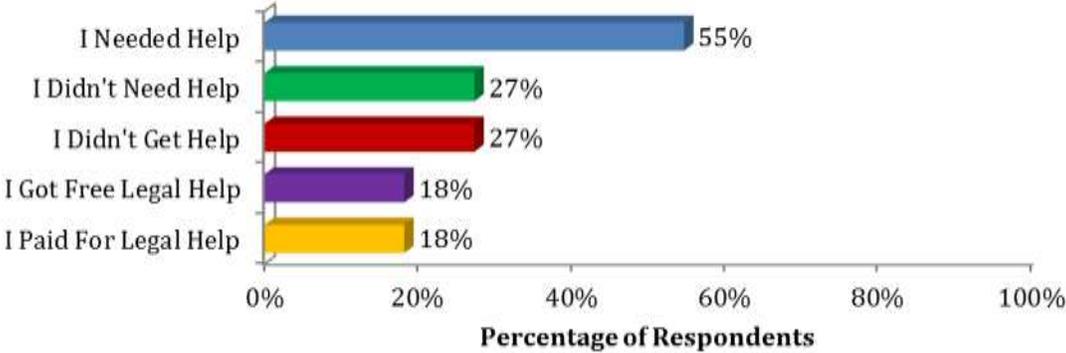
²³ The percentages displayed in these charts are out of the total respondents who reported having a family law problem, not out of the entire sample of participants.

Family Law Problems

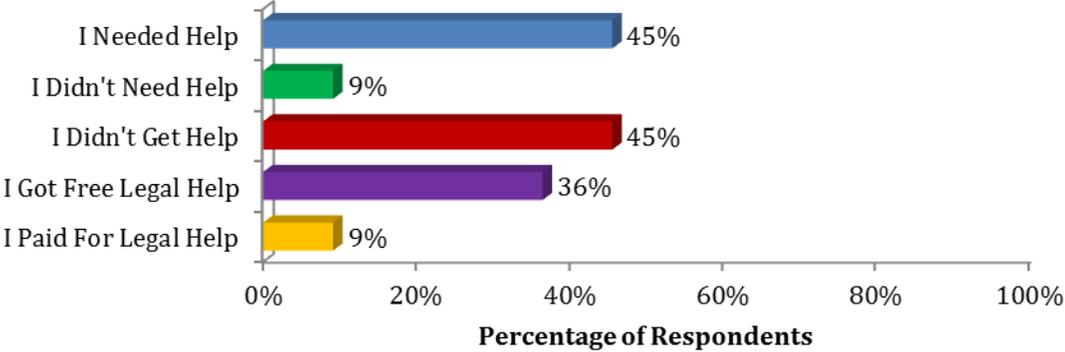
Parenting Plans or Child Custody (n=11)



Divorce or Separation (n=11)



Orders of Protection/Restraining Orders (n=11)



Almost half (45%) of the respondents who reported having family legal problems said that they needed help with parenting plans or child custody, while about one-quarter (27%) said that they did not require help with this issue. About one-quarter (27%) of these participants did not get help with parenting plans, while about a quarter received free legal help (27%) and fewer paid for legal help (18%). If we focus only on the approximately half (45%) of participants who said that they needed help with parenting plans, most of them (60%) did not end up receiving help with parenting plans or child custody issues, and none of them reported receiving any legal help, free or otherwise.²⁴

A little over half (55%) of the participants who had some sort of family law problem said that they needed help issues related to divorce or separation from their partner; about one-quarter (27%) said that they did not require help with these issues. About one-quarter (27%) of these participants said that they did not get help with their divorce or separation, while fewer reported receiving either free legal help (18%) or paying for legal help (18%). Examining only those individuals who reported that they needed help with a divorce or separation, half of those who needed help did not receive it, while none of them reported receiving any legal assistance with the problem.²⁵

Finally, just under half (45%) of participants who faced family legal problems had issues related to orders of protection, while very few (9%) did not need any help with this issue. Additionally, almost half (45%) of these individuals said that they did not receive any help with an order of protection. Many of these participants did receive some form of legal help: 36% reported getting free legal help and 9% said that they paid for legal help. If we focus only on the victims who said that they needed legal help with an order of protection, we find that most (60%) of these individuals did not get the help they needed, one-fifth (20%) received free legal help, and none of those who needed help paid for legal help.²⁶

Overall, family law issues were a problem for about one-third of the participants in this study. Parenting plans, divorces, and orders of protection were all equally problematic among these victims (about half of them reported needing help with each of these issues). However, among the participants who reported needing help with each of these problems, either half or more than half did not receive any help, and in most cases, no one who needed help received any legal assistance (though a minority of those requiring help with orders of protection did get free legal help). Family law was an area that was discussed at length in the focus groups with service providers. Additionally, participants in the Service Provider Survey indicated that the area of family law presented their clients with the most difficulty. The results presented here also suggest a significant gap in the civil legal area of family law. The victims who faced family law issues after their experience with crime needed help with parenting plans, divorce, and orders of protection; however, for the most part, these individuals were not getting the legal help that they needed.

²⁴ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

²⁵ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

²⁶ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

HOUSING LAW PROBLEMS

Now, we will discuss the problems that victims faced related to housing law. About one-quarter (24%) of the participants said that they had some sort of housing law problem following their victimization. The results are displayed in the chart to the right.

These victims who reported having a housing law problem were asked several questions further examining these issues. These participants answered questions about specific housing law issues: eviction, foreclosure, and problems with Section 8 housing. Participants indicated whether they needed help or did not need help with the problem, whether they got help, and whether they got free legal help or paid for legal help. The results are presented in the three charts on the following page. Each chart represents one of these housing issues. The charts display the extent to which participants reported having various experiences with the issues.²⁷

Housing Law Problems (n=33)



Of the participants who said that they experienced some form of housing problems, half (50%) of them said that they needed help with issues surrounding eviction, while one-quarter (25%) said that they didn't experience any problems with eviction. One quarter (25%) of these individuals did not get help with their problems, and none of them said that they received any legal help with the eviction problems. Shifting the focus to those individuals who said that they needed help with eviction, half of them did not get help, and none of them got any legal help.²⁸

Foreclosure did not appear to be a problem that participants experienced after their victimization. No respondent who had housing problems said that they needed help with foreclosure, while one quarter (25%) said that they did not need help with the issue. None of these participants said that they didn't get the help that they needed, and none of them reported getting any legal assistance.

One quarter (25%) of the participants who faced housing problems said that they needed help with issues related to Section 8 housing, and an equal number (25%) said that they did not need help with these problems. A small fraction (13%) said that they did not get the help that they needed with this issue, and none of these participants reported receiving any legal assistance with Section 8 housing problems. Examining only the individuals who indicated that they needed help with Section 8 housing, half of them said that they did not get any help, and none of them reported getting any legal help.²⁹

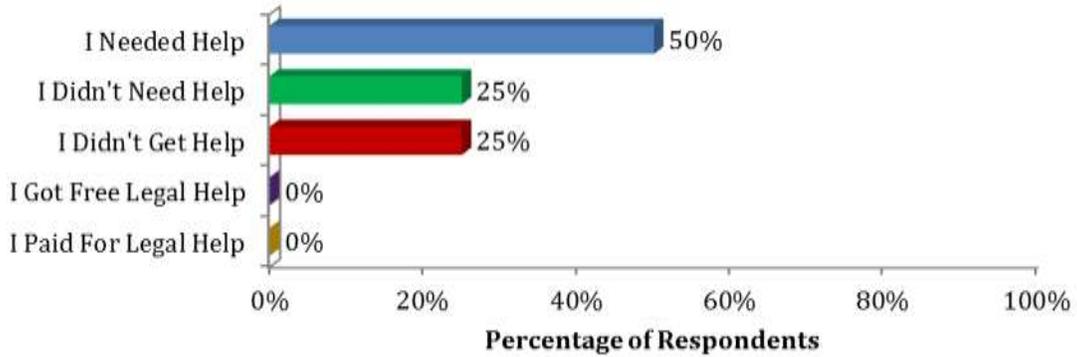
²⁷ The percentages displayed in these charts are out of the total respondents who reported having a housing problem, not out of the entire sample of participants.

²⁸ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

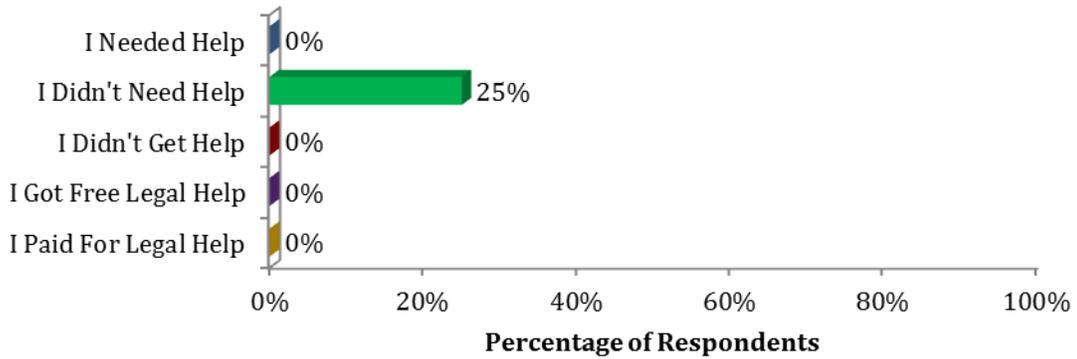
²⁹ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

Housing Law Problems

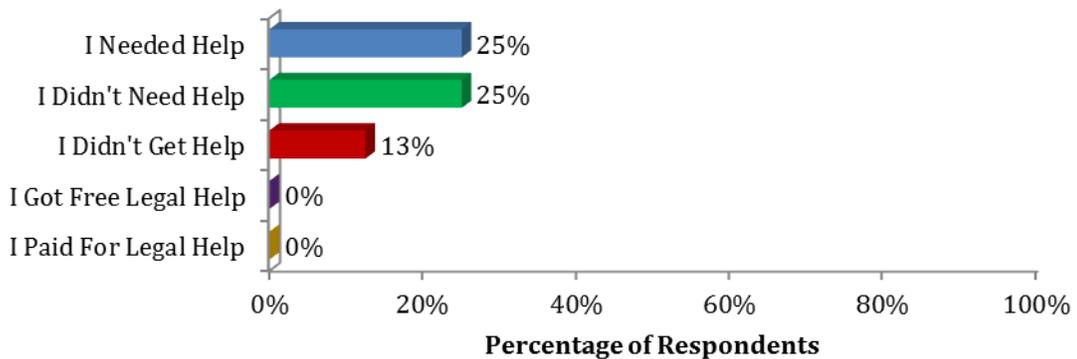
Eviction (n=8)



Foreclosure (n=8)



Problems with Section 8 Housing (n=8)



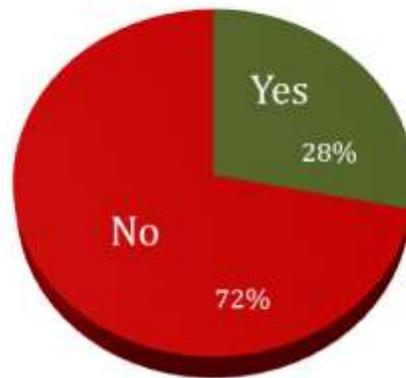
Overall, housing law issues did not seem to cause as much of a problem for the survey participants as the previously discussed issues. A little under a quarter of the respondents reported having housing problems in general. The most frequent problem was eviction: half of the individuals who reported housing law problems needed help related to eviction, while one quarter of these participants needed help with Section 8 housing. Half of the individuals who said that they needed help with these problems did not receive any help, and none of them received any legal help. So, though housing law—and eviction and Section 8 housing, in particular—does not appear to be an issue broadly impacting the victims in this study, it should be noted that none of the victims in this study received any form of legal help with housing law. This suggests that the gap in housing law assistance for victims may not be widely felt, but that those who require this form of civil legal assistance are unable to get the help that they need. This is concerning, given the significant and wide-ranging impact that housing problems can have on an individual's life.

EMPLOYMENT LAW PROBLEMS

Next, we will examine problems related to employment law. A little over one-quarter (28%) of victims indicated that they experienced some sort of employment law problem following their experience with crime. These results are displayed in the chart to the right.

The respondents who said that they had experienced employment law problems next answered several questions examining the nature of these problems. These questions asked about three particular employment law problems: getting fired or having hours cut, missing work, or applying for unemployment benefits. For each issue, participants were asked: whether they needed help or did not need help with the problem, whether they received help, whether they received free legal help, and whether they paid for legal help with the problem. These results are presented in the charts on the following page. Each chart represents a one of these employment problems. The respondents' experiences with the problem are listed on the left side of the chart, and percentage of the respondents who reported each experience is displayed in the chart.³⁰

Employment Law Problems (n=32)



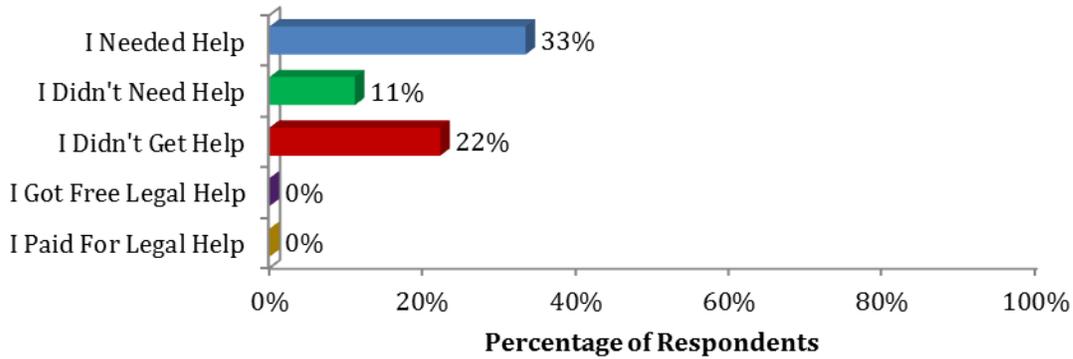
One third (33%) of participants who reported having employment problems said that they needed help with issues related to getting fired or having their hours cut following their victimization, while fewer (11%) said that they did not need any help with these issues. About one-quarter (23%) of these individuals did not get any help, and none of them received any legal assistance with the issue. Looking only at those victims who said that they needed help with this particular issue, two-thirds (66%) of them did not get the help that they needed, and none of them had any legal help.³¹

³⁰ The percentages displayed in these charts are out of the total respondents who reported having an employment problem, not out of the entire sample of participants.

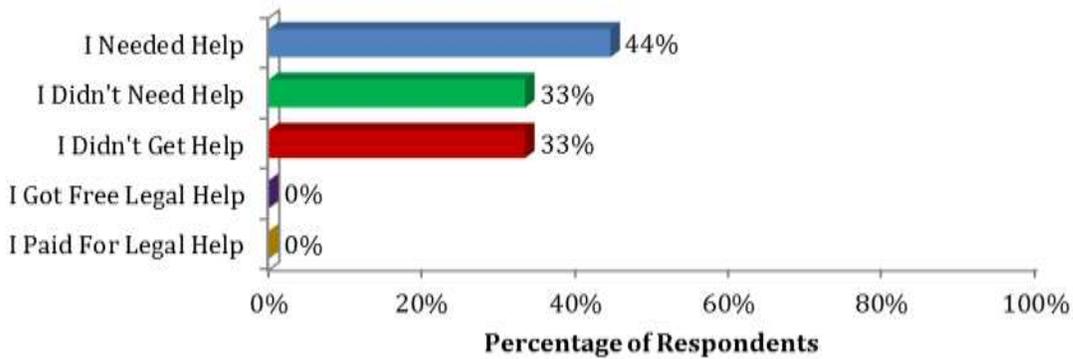
³¹ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

Employment Law Problems

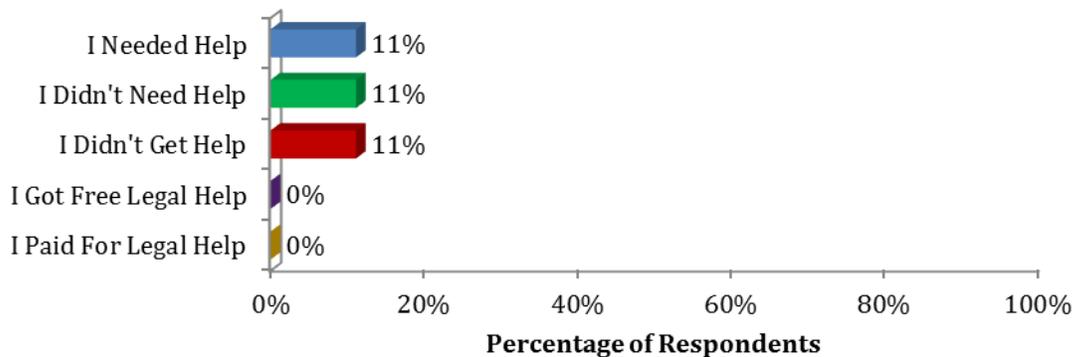
Got Fired or Had Hours Cut (n=9)



Missed Work (n=9)



Applied for Unemployment Benefits (n=9)



Of the participants with employment problems, almost half (44%) reported needing help with problems related to missing work, while one third (33%) said that they did not need help with these issues. One third (33%) said that they did not get help with the problems caused by missed work, and none of the participants received any legal help with these issues. Limiting the focus to those victims who indicated that they needed help with missed work, half of them said that they did not get any help, and none of them received any legal assistance.³²

Finally, only a small portion (11%) of participants who had employment issues after their victimization said that they needed help with applying for unemployment benefits, while an equally small number (11%) said that they did not need help with this issue. Similarly, 11% of these participants said that they did not get any help with this problem, and no participants said that they got legal assistance with unemployment benefits. Focusing only on the participants who reported needing help with unemployment benefits, none of them got the help that they needed, and none of them received any legal help.³³

Overall, employment problems were somewhat less common than some other issues faced by victims, such as financial and family law problems. However, there was a striking absence of legal assistance for the individuals who did need help with employment issues. Anywhere from half to all of the individuals who needed help with these particular employment issues did not get the help that they needed, and no one received any legal services in the area of employment law. Though these employment problems were not as wide-spread as other issues discussed earlier, these victims were not able to access any legal help to deal with their employment issues, suggesting a problematic gap in civil legal services related to employment law for victims of crime.

OTHER LEGAL PROBLEMS

To conclude this section, we will examine several miscellaneous civil legal issues facing victims. We asked participants if they had experienced any other legal problems stemming from their victimization, and 42% indicated that they had faced other legal difficulties. These results are presented in the chart to the right.

The participants who said that they had experienced other legal problems were asked several additional questions examining the nature of these problems. These questions focused on three legal problems: immigration problems, issues related to public assistance (other than housing assistance), and issues related to enforcing one's rights as a victim in a criminal case. For each issue, participants indicated: whether they needed or did not need help with the problem, whether they got help, whether they got free legal help, and whether they paid for legal help with the problem. These results are presented in the charts on the following page.³⁴

Other Legal Problems (n=31)



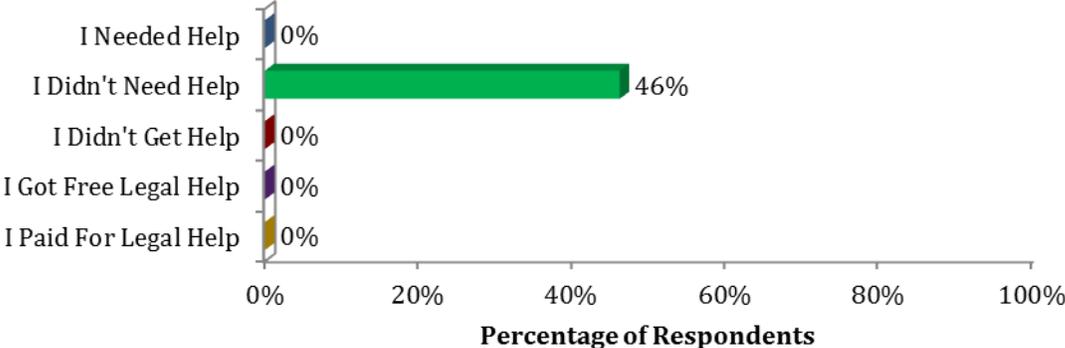
³² These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

³³ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

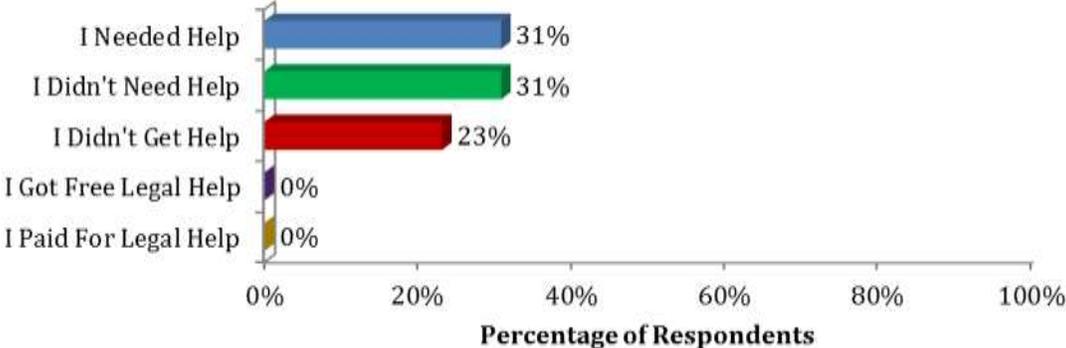
³⁴ The percentages displayed in these charts are out of the total respondents who reported having an employment problem, not out of the entire sample of participants.

Other Legal Problems

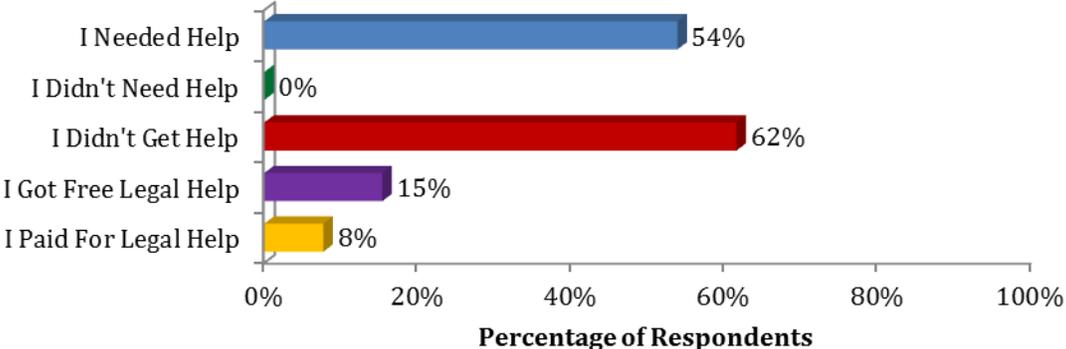
Immigration Problems (n=13)



Public Assistance—Not Housing Assistance (n=13)



Enforcing Rights as a Victim in a Criminal Case (n=13)



Immigration issues did not seem to pose a problem for the participants in this study. None of the participants who indicated that they had other legal problems said that they needed help with immigration issues, while almost half (46%) stated that they did not need any help. None of the respondents received any legal help with the issue.

Public assistance (excluding housing assistance) did cause issues for some of the participants. Of the individuals who said that they faced other legal problems, about one-third (31%) said that they needed help with public assistance, while an equal number (31%) said that they did not need any such help. About one-quarter (23%) said that they did not get any help with public assistance, and none of the participants received any legal assistance. Focusing exclusively on the individuals who indicated that they needed help with public assistance, half of them said that they did not get help, and none of them reported getting any legal help.³⁵

Finally, enforcing one's rights as a victim in a criminal case was an issue of particular concern for the participants in this study. Most of the individuals (54%) who said that they encountered other legal problems said that they needed help enforcing victims' rights, while none of them said that they did not require help with this issue. Most (62%) said that they did not get help enforcing their rights, while 15% said they received free legal help and 8% said that they paid for legal help. Limiting the focus to those individuals who said that they needed help enforcing their rights, almost three-quarters (71%) said that they did not get any help, whereas none of them indicated that they received free legal assistance and 14% said that they paid for legal help.³⁶

Overall, a large number of victims in our survey reported having a miscellaneous legal problem that did not fall into one of the other categories. Of the individuals with these legal problems, most of them needed help with enforcing their rights as victims, but very few of them received any help with the issue, with most not getting any help at all. Additionally, about one-third of individuals needed help with public assistance issues, while only half of these people received help. Taken together, these suggest that more resources could be focused on helping victims enforce their rights and, to a lesser extent, helping them with public assistance problems following their victimization. Immigration issues were not a concern for the participants in this survey.

Now that we have discussed the civil legal problems facing victims of crime, we will examine the legal help that victims received.

CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES

In this section, we will discuss participants' experiences with civil legal services following their victimization. First, we will examine the extent to which respondents received legal help and reasons that participants did not get any legal assistance. Then, we will examine the nature of the legal assistance that participants received, including the source of the legal help and the usefulness of that assistance. Finally, we will discuss problems that participants reported encountering in the civil legal process.

³⁵ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

³⁶ These findings are based on analyses not presented in the chart.

RECEIVING LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Respondents were asked whether they received legal assistance and, if so, where they got help from—including attorneys, case managers/legal advocates, or information found in brochures or online. Given the range of responses, it was possible for participants to select more than one option, though very few did. These results are presented in the first chart on the following page. The first item of note is that almost half (48%) of the individuals did not get any form of civil legal assistance. Among the participants who did get help, the most common source (31%) was an attorney without the additional assistance of a case manager. About half as many individuals (14%) got legal assistance and information from brochures and the internet. A few remaining participants either got help from a case manager/legal advocate without the assistance of an attorney (10%) or had both an attorney and a case manager (7%).

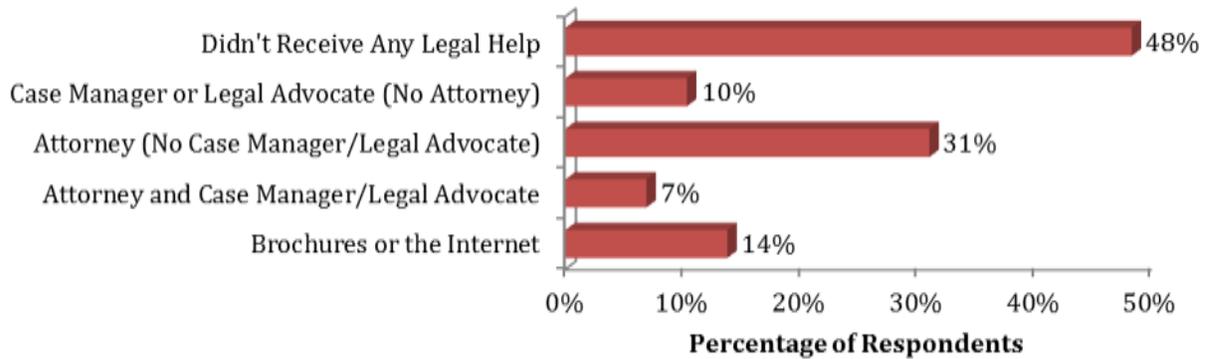
The individuals who did not receive any legal help were asked about their reasons for not getting legal assistance. Most of them provided responses, which are presented in the second chart on the following page. Around two-thirds (67%) of these individuals said that they did not get legal assistance because they did not want any legal help. The remaining participants faced a number of barriers to legal help, with a many participants reporting more than one obstacle. Twenty-two percent of individuals said that they tried to get legal assistance from an attorney, but that they were unable to do so. Smaller numbers of participants said that they did not try to get help from an attorney (11%), could not afford the help of an attorney (11%), did not take any steps to address their civil legal problems (11%), or did not get help because they were afraid of the person who committed the crime (11%). None of the participants reported handling their legal issues *pro se*.

THE NATURE AND HELPFULNESS OF LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The participants who indicated receiving legal assistance were asked a series of questions about the nature and helpfulness of this assistance. As discussed earlier, several participants received legal help exclusively from an attorney, while relatively small numbers of participants had only a case manager/legal advocate, had both a case manager and an attorney, or used brochures or online materials for legal help. Because of this, we discuss these findings for the latter three groups in the text without presenting them in chart form, as the small number of responses could be misleading when displayed as percentages.

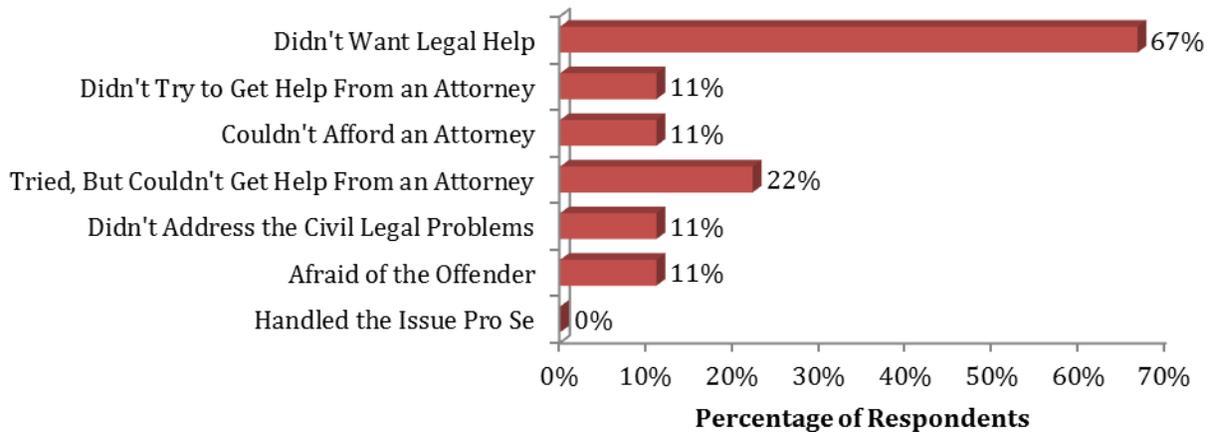
Nine participants indicated that they received help from an attorney but did not have a case manager or legal advocate. These respondents were asked several questions about their experiences with their attorney. These results are presented in the third chart on the following page. Regarding the services that they received from an attorney, one-third (33%) of participants said that their attorney represented them in court, while none of the participants had an attorney help them fill out legal forms. The participants also indicated how helpful they found the legal assistance provided by their attorney. A little under half (44%) said that they found their attorney to be a little helpful with their legal problems, while one third (33%) said that their attorney was very helpful. Finally, one third (33%) of individuals said that their attorney was helpful, but they wished that they also had a case manager or legal advocate to assist with other problems that arose after the crime.

Experiences with Legal Assistance (n=29)



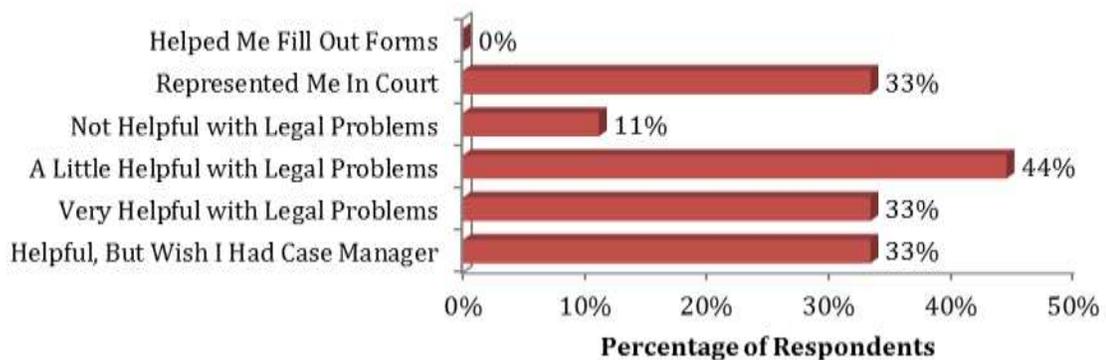
Note: Because respondents could select multiple responses, the percentages in the chart slightly exceed 100%.

Reasons for Not Getting Legal Help (n=9)



Note: Because respondents could select multiple responses, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

Experiences with Attorney (n=9)



Note: Because respondents could select multiple responses, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

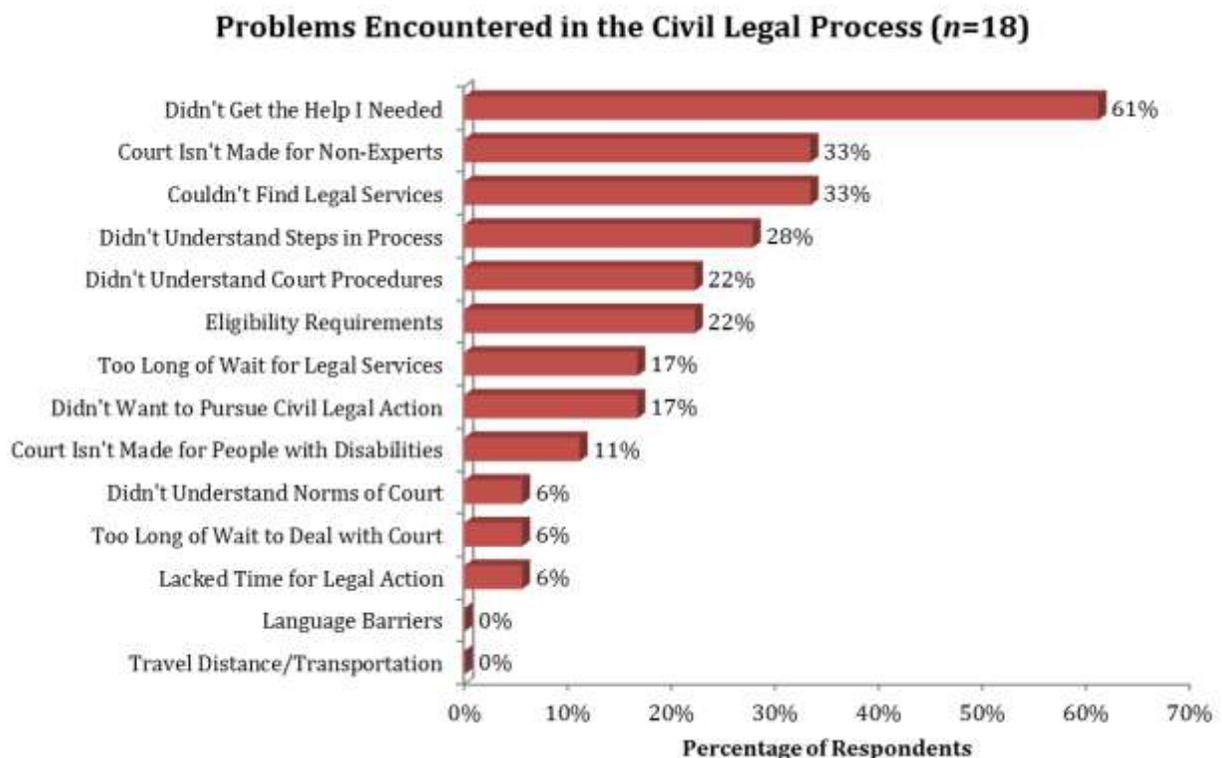
Three participants only had assistance from a case manager or legal advocate. The individuals in this situation were asked about their experiences with the case manager. One respondent said that they found their case manager to be very helpful. Two participants indicated that they found the case manager a little helpful with their legal problems, but they also said that they wished that they had an attorney to assisting them, as well.

Two participants said they received services from both a case manager/legal advocate and an attorney. These respondents were asked about the relative helpfulness of the case manager and the attorney. One individual indicated that their case manager/legal advocate was more helpful than their attorney, while the other individual said that both their attorney and their case manager were very helpful.

Finally, four participants said they tried to get legal help and information from brochures or the internet. These participants answered questions about regarding the utility of this written and online legal information. Two of these individuals indicated that they found online legal information to be the most helpful. One individual said that they found neither written information (e.g., brochures) nor online information to be helpful, while the remaining participant said they found online and written legal information to be only slightly helpful.

PROBLEMS WITH THE CIVIL LEGAL PROCESS

Now, we will examine the various problems that victims reported encountering while navigating the civil legal process. Participants could select every problem that they experienced. The results are presented in the chart below. Overall, many of the problems—including the top two-thirds of the issues cited by participants—fell into two categories: lack of access to legal services and lack of knowledge about the civil legal system.



Note: Because respondents could select multiple responses, the percentages in the chart exceed 100%.

The most common problem was a failure to receive necessary assistance. A majority of participants (61%) said that they did not feel that they got the help that they needed. We can delve deeper into this statistic, since participants also noted a number of potential barriers preventing them from receiving legal assistance. One-third (33%) of participants said that they could not receive legal help because they did not know where to look for these services. Additionally, many participants (22%) indicated that they could not get legal services because they did not meet certain eligibility requirements, such as making too much money to qualify. Other participants (17%) said that there was too long of a wait to access services.

Another common theme in the problems that participants experienced when going through the civil legal process was a lack of knowledge or confusion about the process. One-third (33%) of respondents indicated that the court system is not designed for people who are not experts in the law, suggesting problems with *pro se* legal representation. Over a quarter (28%) of victims said that they did not understand the steps in the civil legal process. Similarly, just under one-quarter (23%) of respondents indicated that they did not understand court procedures. Finally, some participants (6%) said that they experienced problems because they did not understand the norms of the court, such as how they should dress in court or what they should do in court.

In addition to barriers preventing access to legal services and knowledge barriers causing problems in the civil legal process, participants encountered several other issues. Some participants (17%) said that they did not want to pursue civil legal action, while others (6%) said that they lacked the time to pursue civil legal action. Several participants mentioned issues related to access to the court system: some individuals (11%) said that the court system was not designed to accommodate people with disabilities, while other participants (6%) said that there was too long of a wait to deal with the court. Finally, no participants indicated that language barriers prevented them from understanding things and no one said that a lack of transportation or long travel distances made it too hard to access legal services.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we discussed the results from the Victim Survey, an online survey of victims of crime from across the state of Montana. The survey examined the legal problems that these individuals faced after their victimization and their experiences with civil legal services.

The participants in our sample were mostly female, white, and in their 40s. They were highly educated, with most possessing a bachelor's or postgraduate degree. On average, they were fairly financially well-off, with a median income higher than the state's median income and with over one-third having household incomes at or exceeding \$100,000. These individuals reported a wide range of victimization experiences. Victimization types were almost evenly divided between violent and property offenses, and most of the participants reported experiencing multiple victimizations in the past five years.

These individuals faced many different civil legal problems as a result of their victimization, including financial problems, family law problems, employment problems, housing problems, and miscellaneous civil legal issues. The survey results suggest that many of these civil legal needs are not currently being met. Many of the financial legal needs of victims are not being met. Specially, victims expressed needing help with paying bills, and, to a more limited degree, with their credit issues. Though many victims said that they needed help with family law issues—including

parenting plans, divorce, and orders of protection—very few of these individuals were getting the legal assistance that they required. Only a few participants said that they needed help with housing law—specifically eviction and problems with Section 8 housing. However, none of these individuals received any legal assistance with their problems, suggesting a problematic gap in services made all the more disconcerting since housing problems can have a negative ripple effect throughout a victim’s life. Similarly, not many participants needed help with employment law issues—such as getting fired or having hours reduced, missing work, or applying for unemployment benefits—but none of these individuals were able to get legal help with their problems. Many victims indicated that they needed help with miscellaneous legal issues that did not fall into these categories. Though some individuals needed help with public assistance following their victimization, the most dominant concern was enforcing one’s rights as a victim. Very few of these people received help with victims’ rights, and none received any legal help with public assistance issues.

Victims of crime face a wide range of civil legal problems as a result of their victimization, and—to a large extent—it appears that they are not receiving the legal assistance that they require. This is further supported by the finding that almost half of the participants said that they received no form of legal assistance, be that an attorney, a case manager/legal advocate, or even reading information online or in brochures. Examining the experiences of individuals who did have an attorney, a case manager, or both, it appears that most people wanted to have an attorney, but they found their case managers to be very helpful. Several who lacked case managers expressed a desire for one. Overall, it seems that attorneys are vital for addressing the civil legal needs of victims, but that case managers play a very important complementary role that provides important support for the victim. This suggests utility in providing clients with both an attorney and a case manager.

When examining the problems that victims faced in the civil legal process, the majority of issues were related to either a lack of access to legal services or a lack of knowledge or confusion about the process. This lack of access stemmed from not knowing where to look for the services, not meeting eligibility requirements for the services, or being forced to wait too long to receive services. This lack of access could be improved by (1) increased outreach so that victims are aware of the services and how to access them and (2) increased capacity—possibly through more attorneys or a combination of more attorneys and case managers—so that victims are not turned away or forced to endure long waits. The lack of knowledge and confusion regarding the civil legal process resulted from the legal system being byzantine and confusing for non-lawyers and victims not understanding the steps in the legal process, court procedures, and court norms. Many of these issues could be addressed by having an individual with experience in the legal system—such as an attorney or a case manager—help guide the victim through this sometimes complex process.

In the next chapter, we will conclude this Needs Assessment Report, summarizing the research findings and providing recommendations based on the evidence.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final chapter, we will first briefly review the findings from each chapter of this report. Then, we will examine the overall patterns that emerged from these results. Finally, we will lay out the recommendations based on these results. In order to assess the civil legal needs in Montana, we engaged in four major pieces of research across two phases. This research gathered information from both service providers who work with victims of crime and with victims themselves.

The first phase of research consisted of two elements: (1) we conducted focus groups with services providers in communities across the state and (2) we also conducted interviews with victims of crime from across Montana.

The second phase of research involved two surveys. Based on the results of the focus groups and interviews, we developed: (3) a service provider survey and (4) a victim survey.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Here, we will discuss the main findings from each stage of the research, including the focus groups, the interviews, and the two surveys.

FOCUS GROUPS WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS

We conducted focus groups with 67 service providers in 7 communities across the state of Montana—including two tribal communities. We discussed the resources available to crime victims in the community, the legal needs of these victims, and the barriers that these victims face when attempting to address their civil legal issues. These conversations revealed several patterns:

❖ Need for Legal Services

- Family law and landlord-tenant issues were the most frequently discussed civil legal issues.
- Intimate partner violence was the most commonly discussed form of victimization, and these victims presented a wide range of legal and non-legal needs.
- Victims' civil legal needs were often not met because they were unable to retain legal representation or receive adequate self-help assistance.

❖ Barriers to Civil Legal Services

- Organizational barriers were one of the most significant barriers preventing victims from accessing civil legal services. These barriers could take many forms, such as lack of resources, staff retention and burnout, and lack of knowledge or expertise on a particular issue.
- Non-legal issues—such as lack of transportation, lack of housing, or substance abuse problems—were the other most significant barrier for victims. When these needs are not met, they can form a barrier to civil legal services.
- Many of these organizational barriers and non-legal issues stemmed from a lack of financial resources—including both organizational funding and the personal

finances of crime victims. The costs associated with the legal process and the costs involved with resolving the non-legal needs of the victims were both barriers to resolving civil legal issues.

INTERVIEWS WITH VICTIMS

We conducted phone interviews with 24 crime victims from across the state. During these approximately 30-minute interviews, we asked victims about their experiences following their victimization, including the problems that they faced, the services that they received, and the services that they needed but were unable to access. These interviews highlighted several patterns:

❖ Crime Victim Advocates

- Victims had very positive experiences with advocates. These victim advocates assisted victims with a number of civil legal issues, such as helping victims file orders of protection and other paperwork and helping to connect victims to other resources they needed, from counseling to housing.

❖ Lack of Legal Representation

- Many victims were unable to find attorneys to meet their needs, generally due to financial barriers.
 - Financial barriers also impacted some victims beyond not being able to retain an attorney, such as court fees.
- Because victims lacked knowledge of court procedures, it was difficult for them to overcome this lack of legal representation.
- Current self-help resources were confusing and not an adequate replacement for an attorney.
- Victims also expressed a desire to know more about their legal rights as victims of crime.

❖ Negative Experiences

- Victims reported that victimization negatively impacted many aspects of their lives, including their mental health, housing, and employment.
- Many victims also had negative interactions with law enforcement following their victimization.

SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY

We conducted an online survey of 189 service providers across the state. We asked these participants about themselves and their organizations, the needs of crime victims, barriers to services, interorganizational collaboration, and civil legal services. Several patterns emerged from the results:

❖ Gaps in Services

- There are major unmet needs for legal and advocacy services among victims of crime.
- The need for mental health services and counseling services greatly exceeds the capacity.
- There was also a strong need for transportation assistance and child care.

❖ Barriers for Organizations

- One of the most critical barriers preventing organizations from serving victims of crime was a lack of sufficient funding, which is seen through lack of financial resources and lack of staff.
- The other most critical barrier to serving victims was difficulty reaching potential clients. Organizations cannot reach victims in need of their services because the public is unaware of the services the organization provides, there are inherent difficulties in reaching underserved victim populations, and victims lack the transportation necessary to access services.

❖ Barriers For Victims

- Knowledge barriers were one of the most critical barriers preventing victims from accessing services. Victims are unaware of services, they do not understand how to access the services, and they do not know that they are eligible for services.
- Emotional barriers were the other most critical barrier for crime victims. Victims do not access services because they do not trust the system, they feel shame and embarrassment, or they are afraid of retaliation from the offender.
- Several lesser barriers for victims were also identified:
 - The complexity of the system can prevent victims from receiving services because victims have to go to too many organizations to receive services or they must endure an overly burdensome process to access the services that they need.
 - Unmet non-legal needs also create a barrier for victims. When victims' housing, medical, or transportation needs are not met, then they will not access services.
 - Limited resources also served as a barrier for crime victims in the forms of long waits to receive services and a general lack of available resources.

❖ Requests and Referrals for Services

- The most requested services were similar to the services indicated as being unmet needs in the communities.
 - Mental health services had the strongest demand.
 - Legal services and transportation assistance were some of the most frequently requested services.

❖ Jurisdictional Issues

- Jurisdictional issues could present barriers for providers serving crime victims. Most service providers faced problems with jurisdictional issues.
- Tribal courts were a common form of jurisdictional issue, with almost half of service providers working with clients in tribal courts.
- Most service providers encountered difficulty serving their clients in tribal courts. Compounding this issue, many service providers either lacked a resource for tribal law or did not know if their organization had one.

❖ Most Difficult Civil Legal Issues

- Family law and landlord-tenant issues were the civil legal issues that presented the greatest challenges for victim clients.

❖ Most Difficult Aspects of the Court System

- The most challenging problems victims encountered with the court system were systemic, including the time required for cases to be resolved and a lack of understanding trauma-related care within the courts. Victims also faced serious difficulties with the lack of legal representation and the complexity of legal forms.

❖ Additional Resources

- For Service Providers
 - In order to help serve the civil legal needs of victims, service providers wanted more victim advocates, legal education for court staff and judges, and more attorneys.
- For Victims
 - Service providers identified several types of resources that would be helpful for victims, including an online directory for services, an online tool to assist in the completion of legal forms, chat services enabling victims to talk with off-site attorneys, a hotline to help victims reach organizations to meet their needs, and an online interactive program to help victims navigate their legal and non-legal needs. Many of these services exist in some form in Montana, but they could have greater impact if they were revised, expanded, and effectively advertised.

VICTIM SURVEY

We conducted an online survey with crime victims from across the state. Thirty-six victims participated in the survey. The survey examined the legal problems these individuals faced following their victimization and their subsequent experiences with civil legal services. We found several patterns from the results:

❖ Civil Legal Problems

- Victims encountered a range of civil legal issues. Overall, victims did not receive the help that they needed with these problems and very few received any form of legal help.
- Financial Law
 - Victims needed help paying bills and assistance with credit issues.
- Housing Law
 - Some victims needed help with eviction and problems with Section 8 housing, but none of these victims received any legal assistance.
- Employment Law
 - Some victims needed help with issues related to getting fired or having their hours reduced, missing work, or applying for unemployment benefits, but none of these victims received legal help with these problems.
- Miscellaneous Civil Legal Issues
 - Many victims needed help enforcing their rights as victims of crime.

❖ Legal Assistance

- Victims received various forms of legal assistance, including an attorney, an advocate, both an attorney and an advocate, or getting legal information from brochures or online. Almost half of victims did not get any legal help.
 - Attorneys are vital for addressing civil legal needs, but advocates play a very important complementary role that provides support for the victim.

❖ Problems with the Civil Legal Process

- Many of the most serious problems that victims encountered in the civil legal process stemmed from a lack of access to civil legal services. Victims did not know where to look for services, they did not meet eligibility requirements for services, or they were forced to wait too long for legal services.
- The other most serious problems that victims experienced resulted from a lack of knowledge or confusion about the civil legal process. The legal system is confusing for non-lawyers; victims did not understand court procedures or the steps in the civil legal process.

OVERALL FINDINGS

Several central themes emerged across the results of the focus groups, interviews, and surveys. In this section, we will discuss these major findings related to the need for services and the barriers to legal services for victims of crime. We will also detail the potential limitations of this research.

NEED FOR SERVICES

❖ Need for Legal Services

- According to service providers, the greatest civil legal needs in Montana are in the areas of: (1) family law—such as parenting plans, divorce or separation, and orders of protection—and (2) housing law—mainly focused on landlord/tenant legal issues.
- Though these specific areas of law may represent the most frequent civil legal issues, it should be noted that victims of crime reported that their legal needs are not being met across all areas of civil legal issues.
- The need for legal assistance appears to outstrip the resources available. Victims are often not able to retain legal representation or access adequate self-help resources.
- Advocates are needed to help guide victims through the legal processes that follow victimization.
- Many service providers need more education or resources related to tribal law. Serving clients with issues in tribal courts is a common form of jurisdictional issue that arises in Montana, and both service providers and victims face challenges when dealing with the tribal court system.

❖ Need for Non-Legal Services

- The need for services related to mental and behavioral health was highlighted throughout this study. Service providers emphasized the need for more mental health services, such as counseling, substance abuse treatment, crisis intervention and so forth, while victims discussed the deleterious effects that victimization had on their mental health.
- Some services facilitate access to other services. Two such services—transportation and child care—were discussed as unmet needs for victims of crime.
- In addition to the housing law needs mentioned above, housing and shelter were discussed by both service providers and victims as a need for some crime victims.

BARRIERS TO LEGAL SERVICES

❖ Organizations and Victims Face Financial Barriers

- In many instances, victims cannot afford legal representation. Additionally, they may not qualify for free legal services based on restrictive eligibility requirements.

Ultimately, this results in victims of crime not receiving the civil legal assistance that they require.

- Organizations face budgetary limitations. Scarcity of resources—such as limited staff—can force service providers to either turn away victims seeking legal aid or put these individuals on long waitlists, which can also be problematic. Overburdened staff are not able to adequately serve the needs of victims.

❖ Lack of Knowledge is a Barrier for Victims

- Victims of crime are often unaware of the legal services available in their communities. Because they do not know about these services, they are unable to access them.
- Even when victims are aware of the services available, they may not know how to obtain these services or they may not realize that they are eligible for these services.
- Without assistance, victims of crime encounter significant difficulty navigating the court system. They experience confusion and frustration dealing with things such as court procedures and legal forms. Self-help resources do not seem to be an adequate solution for this lack of legal knowledge.
- Victims expressed a desire to know more about their rights as victims of crime. Because they lack the knowledge about their legal rights, they face significant challenges enforcing these rights.

❖ Victims Face Emotional Barriers

- Lack of trust in the system was a critical barrier for victims. Negative interactions with law enforcement in particular can leave victims feeling alienated and skeptical. Many victims characterized the police as dismissive or nonresponsive.
- Shame and embarrassment is another potential barrier that may prevent victims from reporting a crime or accessing services.
- Fear of retaliation by the offender was also a critical barrier. Victims need to feel safe in order to access services.

❖ Non-legal Needs of Victim are Not Being Met

- These unmet non-legal needs can form a barrier to legal services.
- As discussed earlier, there is a very pronounced need for mental and behavioral health services in Montana. If a victim of crime has untreated mental health or substance abuse issues, they may not access legal services or these services may not be as productive. For civil legal organizations to effectively serve their clients, they must also provide their clients with referrals to mental health providers.
- As discussed above, there is a need for “facilitating” services for crime victims, such as transportation and child care. Without these services, victims may not be able to access legal and advocacy services.
- Housing is also a vital concern for victims. A lack of safe and secure housing is a significant barrier to addressing civil legal needs.

LIMITATIONS

Of course, no research is without limitations. Before we discuss the recommendations based on these results, we would like to offer a few words of caution by discussing the limitations of this project. The most important potential concerns relate to the victim participants in the study and the extent to which their experiences are representative of victims across the state.

The victims who participated in interviews and completed the survey were a self-selecting group. They encountered the invitations to participate in the project and they were comfortable sharing their experiences with researchers. These two characteristics could mean that these participants differ from victims who did not participate. Despite our efforts to widely disseminate the interview and survey invitations, it is possible that the participants were primarily individuals who had accessed some form of victim services. Many victims do not receive any form of services, and their experiences may be underrepresented here. Similarly, people find it traumatic to discuss issues related to their victimization; these individuals are likely to be underrepresented in our samples. To the extent that our participants are fundamentally different from other victims in the state, the results we found could be biased. If this is the case, generalizing these findings to victims across Montana is problematic. Finally, the victim survey had a relatively small sample overall and low response rates to particular questions. Therefore, a measure of caution is advisable when interpreting some of these results.

It is less likely that similar concerns of representativeness exist for the service providers in our focus groups and survey. Compared to crime victims, it is significantly easier to identify and contact service providers, decreasing the likelihood that relevant service providers were not presented with the opportunity to participate in the research. Additionally, service providers are not as likely as victims to face emotional barriers to participating in research. That said, service providers face many demands on their time, and the most overburdened may have decided not to participate in the research. If the service providers in our samples are systematically different from the larger population of service providers in Montana, our results would be skewed. However, this is less of a concern than it is with victims of crime.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Now, we will discuss the recommendations we have crafted based on the findings of this Needs Assessment. These recommendations fall into three main categories: (1) increasing interorganizational collaboration, (2) increasing awareness of civil legal services, (3) and increasing the capacity to deliver civil legal services to crime victims.

COLLABORATION

- ❖ It is important for organizations to collaborate and interface with one another in order to meet all of the needs of their victim clients. Legal aid organizations need to be able to connect victims to providers who can give the non-legal services that they need, and other service providers need to be able to effectively refer their clients to civil legal aid providers.
- ❖ By working with other service providers, civil legal organizations will be able to ensure that victims' non-legal needs are treated so that unmet needs do not form barriers to legal

services. In particular, organizations providing civil legal services to victims must help their clients access mental health services, housing, transportation, and child care.

INCREASE AWARENESS

- ❖ Civil legal aid organizations need to increase public awareness of their services. Community outreach and advertising are needed to educate victims about the services that are available, who is eligible for these services, and how to access the services.

INCREASE CAPACITY

- ❖ An increased number of attorneys are needed to serve the civil legal needs of crime victims. Organizations need hire more attorneys or dedicate more of their current legal staff to victim clients to address victims' largely unmet civil legal needs.
 - Most victims are not getting the legal assistance they require. They are not able to retain legal representation because are cannot afford an attorney or are unable to find an appropriate attorney and they are turned away from legal aid organizations.
 - Victims need legal assistance to navigate the civil legal system. Without an attorney, victims face great difficulty addressing their civil legal issues, and alternatives—such as current self-help resources—are not sufficient replacements for legal representation.
- ❖ It is also important to increase victims' access to advocates. Legal aid organizations should provide clients with advocates in order to most effectively meet the needs of crime victims.
 - Advocates meet many needs of victims. They can help victims effectively navigate aspects of the legal system and the sometimes complex processes of accessing other services. Victims have very positive experiences with advocates, and there is a strong desire for advocates among victims who lack these services. Victims will experience the best outcomes when they are being served by an attorney and advocate working together.

APPENDIX

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Hello, my name is Jackson Bunch, and I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Montana. My research team is working with the Montana Legal Services Association and the Montana Board of Crime Control to examine the civil legal needs of victims of crime in the state of Montana. Today, I would like to talk with you about your work with victims.

Can you please introduce yourself and briefly discuss your work with victims of crime in the community?

With your assistance, I would like to try to map out the services available to victims in your community. If I were a victim of crime (if necessary, differentiate by type of crime), who would I interact with? (Draw out flowchart showing the interconnection of the various groups providing services to victims in the community)

To what extent does the work done by the groups and organizations on this map relate to or address the civil legal needs of victims, either directly or indirectly?

Can you talk about the specific substantive legal issues facing your clients who are victims of crime? For example, do they have issues in the areas of family law, employment law, housing law, consumer law, orders of protection, bankruptcy, tax issues, and so forth? Can you rank the need and the level of services or barriers to services in your community?

What are the challenges that you and other professionals face when providing services to victims in your community?

Can you talk about some specific instances?

What are your recommendations for addressing these issues?

What are your most valued resources? What is the thing that you would miss most, were it taken away?

What resources do you need to more effectively serve victims of crime?

To conclude, is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you think needs to be addressed?

FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM

SUBJECT INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT

Title: Vision 21: Victim Legal Assistance Network

Sponsor: Montana Board of Crime Control (MBCC) and the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC)

ORSP Proposal No.: 59-15

Investigators:

Principal Investigator: Jackson Bunch, Ph.D., University of Montana, (406) 243-5863

Co-Principal Investigator: Dusten Hollist, Ph.D., University of Montana, (406) 243-2843

Special instructions:

If any part of this consent form is confusing to you, please ask for clarification from the research team.

Purpose:

You are being asked to take part in a focus group examining the services available for civil legal needs of victims of crime. You have been selected based on the professional position that you hold as a service provider for victims of crime in your community. The objective of the study is to assess the needs of crime victims for civil legal assistance services.

Procedures:

If you agree to take part in this focus group, you will be asked about your professional opinions and experiences with services for victims of crime in your community. The focus group discussion will address the services available to victims of crime in your community. The focus group will be audio recorded and your answers may be used in the final report. All personal identification will be omitted in an effort to preserve your anonymity. The discussion is expected to last approximately an hour and a half.

Risks/Discomforts:

Anticipated risks and discomforts in this group discussion are minimal, however, you will be asked to answer questions that may be sensitive in nature that you may feel uncomfortable answering. To minimize this discomfort we ask you to only answer those questions you feel comfortable with. Your participation in this discussion is completely voluntary which is explained in more detail in the Voluntary Participation subheading below.

Second, you may be concerned about the information you will provide and how it will be used and reported. All respondents who participate in the focus group will be anonymous in the reporting of information obtained from them. At no time will a person's name or identity be associated with the information that is obtained or any report following. Your confidentiality is expressed in more detail in the Confidentiality subheading below.

Benefits:

Your participation and input in this study will help improve the services available to victims in the state of Montana. The information from this focus group will inform a needs assessment survey that will be administered statewide this fall. All participants will be provided with a copy of the final report.

Confidentiality:

All data collected from you will be de-identified. No information that could identify you will be used in any reports or presentations. The audiotape will be stored in secure data storage within the Social Science Research Lab (SSRL) at the University of Montana. It will be transcribed without any

information that could identify you. Once transcribed, the audiotape will be erased and/or destroyed. Your signed consent form will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the academic office of the primary investigator. Only the project directors and assistant researchers will have access to these files.

Although we believe that the risk of taking part in this study is minimal, the following liability statement is required in all University of Montana consent forms. "In the event that you are injured as a result of this research you should individually seek appropriate medical treatment. If the injury is caused by the negligence of the University or any of its employees, you may be entitled to reimbursement or compensation pursuant to the Comprehensive State Insurance Plan established by the Department of Administration under the authority of M.C.A., Title 2, Chapter 9. In the event of a claim for such injury, further information may be obtained from the University's Claims representative or University Legal Counsel."

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal:

Your decision to take part in this focus group is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to take part in or you may withdraw from the focus group at any time for any reason without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are normally entitled. To ensure your voluntary participation we ask you only answer questions you feel comfortable with.

Questions:

During the focus group please ask the facilitator to clarify any information or questions that may be confusing or misleading. If you have questions about the research or how the information that you provide will be used, contact Dr. Jackson Bunch at (406) 243-5863. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the University of Montana Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (406) 243-6672.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above description of this research study. I have been informed of the risks and benefits involved and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. Furthermore, I have been assured that any future questions I may have will also be answered by a member of the research team. I voluntarily agree to take part in this focus group. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Printed (Typed) Name of Participant

Participant's Signature

Date

Statement of Consent to be Audio Taped:

I understand that audio recordings will be taken during the focus group. I consent to having my answers recorded on the audiotape. I understand that if audio recordings are used for presentations of any kind, names or other identifying information will not be associated with them. I understand that audio recording will be destroyed following transcription, and that no identifying information will be included in the transcription.

Participant's Signature

Date

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND INFORMED CONSENT

Verbal Informed Consent Script

Hello, my name is _____, and I am calling from the University of Montana. I am trying to reach _____ (Participant's name). (If participant is not the individual who answered the phone, wait until they are on the phone and then reintroduce yourself). Is now a good time to talk? (If yes, proceed. If no: "OK, then we will reach out to you to set up a better time. Have a good day.") Did you expect to receive this call? (If yes, proceed. If not, apologize for the confusion and end the call.)

As Melissa Fisher informed you, we are conducting research examining the services available to victims of crime. The conversation is expected to last no more than one hour. Your participation is voluntary and any information that we discuss will be kept anonymous, meaning that we will remove your name and any personally identifying information. You have the option to not respond to any questions that you choose and have the option to end the conversation at any point.

Are you willing to voluntarily participate in the research? Yes/No _____ (Researcher's initials)

I would like to record this conversation. You may have noticed that I am on a speaker phone. This is because I will be using the speaker phone to record what we talk about. I wanted to let you know that I am in a private research office on the UM campus, and there is no one else listening to our conversation. Once we are done today, the audio file of our conversation will be written out and then it will be deleted.

Do I have your permission to record the conversation? Yes/No _____ (Researcher's initials)

Interview Questions

To begin, can you talk about the services that you received following the crime that was committed against you?

What was the most important or most helpful service that you received?

Is there any type of assistance that you needed but were unable to receive?

Did you have any legal issues as a result of the crime that was committed against you? Potential areas could include family law, employment law, housing, orders of protection, bankruptcy, tax issues, etc.?

Did you receive legal assistance from the service providers in your community to help you with these problems?

To conclude, is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you think needs to be addressed?

Thank you for talking with me today. I really appreciate you sharing your experiences. Do you have any questions? If you have any questions that come up later about the research, then you should contact the lead researcher, Dr. Jackson Bunch. When you are ready to write it down, I'll give you his number: (406)-243-5863. Also, if you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you can speak to someone at the University of Montana Institutional Review Board. This is the group that oversees all research done at the university. Their number is (406) 243-6672.

SERCIVE PROVIDER SURVEY QUESTIONS

Note: The Service Provider Survey was an online survey created and distributed through using the research software Qualtrics. We would like to note that the format of the survey presented here differs from the survey completed by participants. The online survey had different font size and spacing than the survey in this section, and each survey question was displayed on a separate page. Additiionally, the survey contains several contingency questions; however, the skip logic for these questions is not included here. This is because participants did not receive these directions. Instead, the program automatically displayed the proper questions based on previous responses.



You are invited to participate in a research project about civil legal services for crime victims in the state of Montana. This online survey should take about 20 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and responses will be kept anonymous. You have the option to not respond to any questions that you choose. Submission of the survey will be interpreted as your informed consent to participate and that you work for a service organization in Montana. No personally identifiable information will be used in any reporting of the research. All written information provided will be reported in a summary format to protect the anonymity of participants. Your organization's name and physical address will never be used in any report or analysis of the data obtained from this survey. The results from this survey will be shared with the Statistical Analysis Center at the Montana Board of Crime Control, Montana Legal Services Association, and the Office for Victims of Crime in Washington, D.C. The findings will be used to better understand and plan civil legal services for crime victims in Montana. The results will also be used by the Criminology Research Group at the University of Montana to contribute to the scientific knowledge on civil legal services for crime victims. If you have any questions about the research, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Jackson Bunch, via email at jackson.bunch@mso.umt.edu or via telephone at (406)-243-5863. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the University of Montana Institutional Review Board at (406) 243-6672. Please print or save a copy of this page for your records.

Due to limited mobile compatibility, if you experience any difficulty responding to questions present on the survey please attempt to respond via desktop, laptop, tablet or a device with a wide viewing area. The survey will automatically save your progress as long as you have cookies enabled on your web browser. To return and continue, please use the same link. If you would like to have multiple participants take the survey from a single workstation, please ensure that they each complete the survey before allowing the next to start.

The first section of the survey asks questions about you and your organization. If at any time you would like to exit the survey, your responses will be saved and by using the link you were initially provided you will be able to resume.

What is the name of your organization? (Optional) If applicable, what is the name of the division or program within your organization responsible for serving victims?

In what county is your organization located? _____

Please specify the catchment area served by your organization: (Select only one)

- Statewide
- Countywide
- Multi-county
- Citywide
- Multi-city
- Tribal
- Other

Which of the following best describes the organization in which you work? (Select all that apply)

- Community-Based/Grassroots
- Criminal Justice Government Agency
- Education
- Faith-Based
- Human/Social Services
- Health/Medical Services
- Legal Services
- Legislation/Policy Making
- Military
- Non-Criminal Justice Government Agency
- Non-Profit
- Research
- Mental/Behavioral Health Services
- Other (please specify) _____

Which of the following best describes your primary role in your current position? (Select all that apply)

- Direct Service Delivery/ Front Line Staff
- Management/Administrative Staff
- Consultant/Trainer
- Volunteer
- Other (please specify) _____

Which of the following best describes the number of years of experience you have in the victim service or related field? (Select only one)

- Less than 3 years
- 3 to 5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- More than 10 years

This section of the survey asks questions regarding the demographics of the individuals your organization serves, eligibility criteria and available services. Your responses do not need to be exact, and estimations are completely appropriate.

Which of the following client demographics does your organization record? (Please select all that apply)

- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Victimization Type
- Age
- Language Proficiency
- Income
- Education
- None
- Military Service (Veteran Status)

Approximately what percentage of your victim clients identify as:

- ___ Male
- ___ Female
- ___ Transgender
- ___ Other

Approximately what percentage of your victim clients identify as:

- ___ White, Non-Hispanic
- ___ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ___ Black or African American
- ___ Hispanic or Latino
- ___ Asian
- ___ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ___ Two or More Races
- ___ Other

Approximately what percentage of your victim clients are:

- ___ Youth under 18 years of age:
- ___ Adults 18-21:
- ___ Adults 22-29:
- ___ Adults 30-39:
- ___ Adults 40-49:
- ___ Adults 50-59:
- ___ Adults 60 and older:

Approximately what percentage of your victim clients identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or intersex? (You can also leave this question blank or enter 'Unknown' if you do not have a rough estimate)

Approximately what percentage of your victim clients have a disability? (You can also leave this question blank or enter 'Unknown' if you do not have a rough estimate)

Approximately what percentage of your victim clients have limited English proficiency?(You can also leave this question blank or enter 'Unknown' if you do not have a rough estimate)

Approximately what percentage of your victim clients are veterans? (You can also leave this question blank or enter 'Unknown' if you do not have a rough estimate)

Approximately what percentage of your victim clients are at or below the poverty line? See the chart for reference. (You can also leave this question blank or enter 'Unknown' if you do not have a rough estimate)

Household Size	Poverty Line
1	\$11,880
2	\$16,020
3	\$20,160
4	\$24,300
5	\$28,440
6	\$32,580
7	\$36,730
8	\$40,890

For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,160 for each additional person.

_____ At or below the poverty line:

_____ Above the poverty line:

Which of the following best describes the type of victim populations that your organization serves? (Select all that apply)

- Assault
- Burglary
- Child Abuse
- Domestic Violence
- DUI/DWI/Other Traffic-Related Crimes
- Elder Abuse
- Human Trafficking
- Missing/Exploited Children
- Property Crime/Financial Fraud/Identity Theft
- Robbery
- Sexual Assault (Including Rape)
- Special Needs/Victims with Disabilities
- Stalking
- Survivor of Homicide Victims
- Unknown
- Other (please specify) _____

On average, approximately how many crime victims does your organization serve in one month? (Select only one)

- 0
- 1-10
- 11-30
- 31-50
- 51-100
- 101-200
- 201-500
- More than 500

On average, approximately how many crime victims do you serve in one month? (Select only one)

- 0
- 1-10
- 11-30
- 31-50
- 51-100
- 101-200
- 201-500
- More than 500

Please select the types of eligibility criteria your organization uses to deliver services: (Select all that apply)

- My organization does not use eligibility criteria.
- Age
- Legal Issue (e.g., protective orders, immigration, landlord/tenant)
- Service Area
- Specific Income Criteria
- Type of Victimization
- Gender
- Veteran Status
- Other (please specify) _____

What types of services does your organization provide? (Select all that apply)

- Hotline (24-hour or limited service)
- Case Management
- Child Care
- Counseling
- Criminal Justice System Advocacy/Assistance
- Crisis Intervention
- Education
- Emergency Financial Assistance
- Employment Assistance
- Immigration Assistance
- Information/Referrals
- Job Training
- Legal Advocacy (non-attorney)
- Legal Services (attorney)
- Medical Assistance
- Mental Health Services
- Notification (e.g., offender release from custody, court notification)
- Post-Conviction Services
- Protection/Safety Services/Law Enforcement
- Shelter/Housing Assistance
- Substance Abuse Services
- Transportation
- Victim Compensation Claim Assistance
- Other (please specify) _____

Are the services/assistance you provide to crime victims: (Select all that apply)

- Provided for free
- Provided on a sliding scale of charges
- Provided on a sliding scale of charges with some victims eligible for free services
- Provided for a set fee
- Other (please specify) _____

The next several questions of the survey ask about the needs and barriers faced by your organization and victim clients.

There is a need beyond the current capacity in my catchment area for crime victim services related to:
(Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Child Care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Counseling (short- and long-term)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Civil Legal Assistance (e.g., civil litigation related to criminal case, child custody, divorce, immigration, landlord/tenant)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Criminal Justice System Legal Assistance/Rights Enforcement (e.g., property return, intimidation protection, compensation assistance)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Criminal Justice System Advocacy/Assistance (e.g., filing a victim impact statement, court orientation, restitution assistance)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crisis Intervention/Counseling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emergency Services (e.g., financial assistance, housing, medical care)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employment Assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Group Treatment/Support (e.g., self-help, peer, and social support)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Immigration Assistance (e.g., VAWA petition, T-visa, U-visa)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information/Referrals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job Training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medical Assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental Health Services (e.g., therapy)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Notification (e.g., offender release from custody, court notification)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal Advocacy (e.g., employer intervention, landlord intervention, public benefits assistance)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Post-Conviction Services (e.g., Corrections orientation, offender apology, victim-offender mediation)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protection Safety Services (e.g., safety planning)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shelter/Housing Assistance (e.g., rental assistance)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Substance Abuse Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victim Compensation Claim Assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What other services do crime victims express a need for that are currently lacking or unavailable in your catchment area?

The most critical barriers my organization faces in providing services to crime victims include: (Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Lack of inter-agency collaboration and coordination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of knowledge regarding other available services in the catchment area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of general public awareness regarding programs and services offered by my organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eligibility restrictions (e.g., age, income, victimization type)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of sufficient financial resources to meet demand for services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of sufficient staff to meet demand for services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff retention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of training and educational opportunities for staff and volunteers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of in-house policies and procedures to guide organizational practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Language accessible services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of culturally accessible services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of accessible services for persons with disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of transportation for victims to access services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of knowledge regarding the needs of victims of certain crimes (e.g., military sexual trauma, human trafficking)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of services designed for victims of certain crimes (e.g., identify theft, stalking)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reaching underserved victim populations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What do you think could be done to alleviate the barriers to service delivery identified above?

The most critical barriers that victims face in seeking services include: (Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Lack of available services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of awareness regarding available services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victims are aware that services are offered but do not know they are eligible for assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victims do not meet income limitations or other eligibility requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jurisdictional issues (e.g., the crime occurring in a different county) prevent victims from receiving services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victims do not understand the process of obtaining services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The process for obtaining services is overly burdensome for victims	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of time between the crisis and receiving services is too long	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victims have to go to many different agencies/organizations to receive services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service Providers' hours of operation are not accessible (e.g., after work)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of transportation for victims to access services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victims are unable to get basic needs met (e.g., housing, food, medical care), which stops them from seeking other services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fear of deportation/legal status	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fear of retaliation against self and/or family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of trust in the system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feelings of shame or embarrassment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural barriers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language barriers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physical barriers/ADA compliance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What do you think could be done to alleviate the barriers victims face in seeking services?

This portion of the survey focuses on cross-organizational collaborative efforts within your community.

Collaboration with other organizations has been beneficial to my organization in... (Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Locating funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Locating victim services not offered by my organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promoting awareness of the services offered by my organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing additional knowledge and/or training for my organization's staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintaining contact with victim clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Receiving referrals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing more holistic treatment for victims' needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My organization has found success in collaboration with organizations best described as... (Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Community-Based/Grassroots	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Criminal Justice Government Agency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faith-Based	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Human/Social Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legislation/Policy Making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Military	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-criminal Justice Government Agency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-Profit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health/Medical Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental/Behavioral Health Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My organization has found difficulty in collaboration with organizations best described as... (Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Community-Based/Grassroots	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Criminal Justice Government Agency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faith-Based	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Human/Social Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legislation/Policy Making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Military	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-criminal Justice Government Agency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-Profit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health/Medical Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental/Behavioral Health Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Does your organization have resource guides to other services available in your community? (Select only one)

- No
- Yes, a resource guide for internal use
- Yes, a resource guide for victims
- Both a resource guide for victims and internal use

In what form(s) are these guides available? (Select all that apply)

- Electronic (document)
- Electronic (database)
- Physical copy (brochure, binder, etc.)
- Other _____

Who distributes or assembles the guide(s)? (Select only one)

- Internal staff member
- Local non-profit organization
- Regional or state-wide non-profit organization
- Local or state government organization
- Federal government organization
- Don't know
- Other

How often is this material updated? (Please enter in the following format: every X-X weeks, every X-X months, etc.)

In which ways do you believe collaboration with existing services in your community could be improved? (Select all that apply)

- Development of community resource guides
- Inter-organizational work groups/committees
- Technology to facilitate communication
- Centralized staff to guide referrals

Are there other ways in which collaboration may be improved within your community?

The last section of the survey asks questions aimed toward improving our understanding of civil legal services for victims of crime.

In the past two years, did your organization receive referrals for civil legal services? (Select only one)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

If yes, please identify the referral source. (Select all that apply)

- Civil legal services organization
- Law firm
- Police department
- Prosecutor/district attorney
- Court
- Victim advocate from the police, prosecutor's office, or other criminal justice agency
- Community-based organization
- Faith-based/religious organization or official
- Government agency/department (e.g., local department of social services)
- Medical provider (e.g., hospital, clinic, doctor's office, etc.)
- Mental/Behavioral health service (e.g., counselor, etc.)
- Other _____

In the past two years, what types of referrals/requests for assistance have you received? (Select all that apply)

- Accompaniment (to legal proceedings, medical appointments, etc.)
- Assistance in the preparation of forms/legal documents
- Civil legal advocacy
- Criminal justice system legal assistance/rights enforcement
- Financial/monetary assistance
- Group/peer support
- Housing/shelter assistance
- Immigration assistance
- Mental health services
- Medical assistance
- Protection/safety services
- Self-help and "know your rights" information
- Transportation assistance
- Victim compensation claim assistance
- Other _____

In the past two years, did your organization turn away requests for civil legal services? (Select only one)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

If yes, approximately what percentage of requests for civil legal services did your organization have to turn away?(You can also leave this question blank or enter 'Unknown' if you do not have a rough estimate)

In what areas were these requests? (Select all that apply)

- Child Care
- Counseling (short- and long-term)
- Civil Legal Assistance (e.g., civil litigation related to criminal case, child custody, divorce, immigration, landlord/tenant)
- Criminal Justice System Legal Assistance/Rights Enforcement (e.g., property return, intimidation protection, compensation assistance)
- Criminal Justice System Advocacy/Assistance (e.g., filing a victim impact statement, court orientation, restitution assistance)
- Crisis Intervention/Counseling
- Education
- Emergency Services (e.g., financial assistance, housing, medical care)
- Employment Assistance
- Group Treatment/Support (e.g., self-help, peer, and social support)
- Immigration Assistance (e.g., VAWA petition, T-visa, U-visa)
- Information/Referrals
- Job Training
- Medical Assistance
- Mental Health Services (e.g., therapy)
- Notification (e.g., offender release from custody, court notification)
- Personal Advocacy (e.g., employer intervention, landlord intervention, public benefits assistance)
- Post-Conviction Services (e.g., Corrections orientation, offender apology, victim-offender mediation)
- Protection Safety Services (e.g., safety planning)
- Shelter/Housing Assistance (e.g., rental assistance)
- Substance Abuse Services
- Transportation
- Victim Compensation Claim Assistance
- Other (please specify) _____

Why was your organization unable to meet these requests? (Select all that apply)

- The party making the request fell outside eligibility guidelines
- The subject area fell outside organization's mission/expertise
- The matter did not involve a civil legal issue
- My agency did not have adequate resources to handle the matter
- We did not want to duplicate services
- We could not meet all of the victims' needs
- Language barriers prevented us from providing services
- Other (please specify) _____

Do you know where to refer people who need civil legal assistance? (Select only one)

- Yes
- In some cases, but not all
- No

Where do you refer clients seeking civil legal services?

Of those listed below, please rate which civil legal issues your clients encounter difficulty with. (Select one option per line)

	No Difficulty	Little Difficulty	Some Difficulty	Great Difficulty
Enforcement of restitution orders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Pro se</i> litigation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Orders of protection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Landlord/tenant Issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family law (dissolution, parenting plans, custody, guardianship)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial abuse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How often have jurisdictional issues presented a barrier when attempting to meet the needs of a client? (Select only one)

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Very often
- Always

How often has a client presented a civil legal need which involved a tribal court? (Select only one)

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Very often
- Always

In cases involving a tribal court, how difficult has it been for your organization to meet your client's needs? (Select only one)

- Not at all
- Slightly
- Moderately
- Very
- Extremely

Does your organization have someone familiar with tribal law or a resource to refer to when the need arises? (Select all that apply)

- Internal resource
- External resource
- No available resource for issues related to tribal law
- The resource is in need of improvement
- Don't know

Of those listed below, please rate which aspects of the court system have presented difficulty to your clients. (Select one option per line)

	No Difficulty	Little Difficulty	Some Difficulty	Great Difficulty
The amount of time required for case to be resolved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Court fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of representation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Complexity and/or lack of standardized legal forms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to court and legal services due to transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of communication between criminal and civil courts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of understanding for trauma or crisis related care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For the purposes of assisting victims with their civil legal needs, please rate which additional resources your organization would find helpful. (Select one option per line)

	Not helpful	A little helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful
Civil Legal Attorneys	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victim Advocates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Education for Victims	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Education for Your Staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Education for Staff (other service organizations)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Education for Staff (court staff, judges)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you believe any of the following would be a helpful resource for crime victims? (Select all that apply)

- An online directory for both service providers and victims of crime to locate organizations to fulfill their needs
- A phone service/hotline designed to assist victims of crime locate organizations to fulfill their needs
- An online interactive program which helps either service providers or victims identify and navigate both civil legal and other needs
- Chat services allowing victims of crime to communicate with an off-site attorney from designated locations
- An online tool assisting with completion of legal forms
- None of the above

Thank you again for taking the time to participate in this survey. If you have any remaining questions regarding the research, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Jackson Bunch, at either jackson.bunch@mso.umt.edu or (406)243-5863.

VICTIM SURVEY QUESTIONS

Note: The Victim Survey was an online survey created and distributed through using the research software Qualtrics. We would like to note that the format of the survey presented here differs from the survey completed by participants. The online survey had different font size and spacing than the survey in this section, and each survey question was displayed on a separate page. Additionally, the survey contains several contingency questions; however, the skip logic for these questions is not included here. This is because participants did not receive these directions. Instead, the program automatically displayed the proper questions based on previous responses.



You are invited to participate in a research project about civil legal services for crime victims in the state of Montana. This online survey should take about 10 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and responses will be kept anonymous. You have the option to not respond to any questions that you choose. Submission of the survey will be interpreted as your informed consent to participate and that you affirm that you are at least 18 years of age. No personally identifiable information will be used in any reporting of the research. All written information provided will be reported in a summary format to protect the anonymity of participants. The results from this survey will be shared with the Statistical Analysis Center at the Montana Board of Crime Control, Montana Legal Services Association, and the Office for Victims of Crime in Washington, D.C. The findings will be used to better understand and plan civil legal services for crime victims in Montana. The results will also be used by the Criminology Research Group at the University of Montana to contribute to the scientific knowledge on civil legal services for crime victims. If you have any questions about the research, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Jackson Bunch, via email at jackson.bunch@mso.umt.edu or via telephone at (406)243-5863. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the University of Montana Institutional Review Board at (406) 243-6672.

Would you like to participate in this research?

- Yes, I have read the above information, and I would like to participate in the research.
- No, I do not want to participate in this research.

First, we would like to ask you about your experiences with crime. In the past 5 years, have you (or a person close to you, such as a family member or a partner) been the victim of a crime in Montana?

- Yes
- No

What crime or crimes have you, or someone close to you, experienced in the past 5 years in Montana? Please select all that apply.

- Burglary
- Identity Theft or Fraud
- Vandalism or Property Damage
- Eviction / Landlord-Tenant crimes / Housing-related crimes
- Domestic violence or relationship violence
- Assault (not including domestic violence)
- Sexual assault
- Stalking
- Child abuse or neglect
- Child sexual assault
- Robbery or Mugging
- Elder abuse
- Homicide
- DUI
- Other (please specify) _____

Of the crimes you just mentioned, which one has had the greatest impact on your life?

- Burglary
- Identity Theft or Fraud
- Vandalism or Property Damage
- Eviction / Landlord-Tenant crimes / Housing-related crimes
- Domestic violence or relationship violence
- Assault (not including domestic violence)
- Sexual assault
- Stalking
- Child abuse or neglect
- Child sexual assault
- Robbery or Mugging
- Elder abuse
- Homicide
- DUI
- Other (please specify) _____

For the rest of this survey, we would like for you to tell us about your experiences related to the crime that you have just selected as the most important.

If you'd like, you may provide any additional information related to the crime or crimes you have experienced in the box below. This will be used to help our researchers understand your experiences.

Now, we would like to ask you some questions about the civil legal problems that you may have had after the crime. Civil legal problems can include things like money problems, housing problems, family legal issues, and employment problems.

After the crime, did you have any money problems? Did you have problems with your credit or with debt? Did you have trouble paying bills related to the crime? Did you go into bankruptcy? Did you have any other money problems?

- Yes, I had money problems after the crime.
- No, I didn't have any money problems.

For each money problem, please select all that apply. If you had a money problem that is not listed below, please enter it in the box provided and select all options that apply.

	I needed help	I didn't need help	I didn't get help	I got free legal help	I paid for legal help
Credit card problems or credit issues	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Trouble paying bills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Bankruptcy	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other money problems:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

After the crime, did you have any housing problems? Were you evicted from your home? Did you go into foreclosure? Did you have problems with Section 8 Housing Assistance? Did you have any other housing problems?

- Yes, I had housing problems after the crime.
- No, I didn't have any housing problems.

For each housing problem, please select all that apply. If you had a housing problem that is not listed below, please enter it in the box provided and select all options that apply.

	I needed help	I didn't need help	I didn't get help	I got free legal help	I paid for legal help
Eviction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Foreclosure	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Problems with Section 8 Housing Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other housing problems:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

After the crime, did you have any legal problems related to family or relationship issues? Did you have problems with parenting plans or child custody? Did you get divorced or legally separated? Did you try to get an order of protection or restraining order against a spouse or partner? Did you have any other family problems?

- Yes, I had family problems after the crime.
- No, I didn't have any family problems.

For each family problem, please select all that apply. If you had a family problem that is not listed below, please enter it in the box provided and select all options that apply.

	I needed help	I didn't need help	I didn't get help	I got free legal help	I paid for legal help
Parenting plans or child custody	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Divorce or separation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Order of protection or a restraining order	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other family problems:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

After the crime, did you face any job problems? Did you get fired? Were your hours cut? Did you miss work? Did you apply for unemployment? Did you have any other job problems?

- Yes, I had job problems after the crime.
- No, I didn't have any job problems.

For each job problem, please select all that apply. If you had a job problem that is not listed below, please enter it in the box provided and select all options that apply.

	I needed help	I didn't need help	I didn't get help	I got free legal help	I paid for legal help
Got fired or hours cut	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Missed work	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Applied for unemployment benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other job problems:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

There are other types of problems that victims of crime sometimes face after the crime. Did you experience any of the following problems? After the crime, did you have problems with immigration? Other than problems with Section 8 Housing Assistance, did you have problems with public assistance, like SNAP or TANF? Did you have problems getting help enforcing your rights as a crime victim in a criminal case?

- Yes, I had one or more of these problems after the crime.
- No, I didn't have any of these problems.

For each problem listed below, please select all that apply.

	I needed help	I didn't need help	I didn't get help	I got free legal help	I paid for legal help
Immigration problems	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Public assistance (not Housing Assistance)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Help enforcing your right as a victim in a criminal case	<input type="checkbox"/>				

After the crime, did you experience any other legal problems that you have not told us about?

- Yes, I had other problems.
- No, I didn't have any other problems.

Can you please list your other legal problems below? For each problem, select all that apply.

	I needed help	I didn't need help	I didn't get help	I got free legal help	I paid for legal help
Other legal issue:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other legal issue:	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other legal issue:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

After the crime, did you try to get any legal help? We would like to ask you about your experiences with legal help. Please select all that apply.

- I did not get any legal help.
- I got help from a case manager or legal advocate, but I didn't have an attorney.
- I got help from an attorney, but I didn't have a case manager or advocate.
- I got help from an attorney and a case manager/legal advocate.
- I got help from brochures and/or the internet.

Why didn't you get legal help? Select all that apply.

- I didn't want any legal help.
- I didn't try to get help from an attorney.
- I couldn't afford an attorney.
- I tried, but I wasn't able to get help from an attorney.
- I didn't do anything about my civil legal problems.
- I was afraid of the person who committed the crime, so I didn't get any help.
- I handled my civil legal problems (pro se).
- If you want to, you can tell us more about why you did not get legal help: _____

What happened with your case manager or legal advocate? Select all that apply.

- My case manager/advocate wasn't helpful with my legal problems.
- My case manager/advocate was a little helpful with my legal problems.
- My case manager/advocate was very helpful with my legal problems.
- My case manager/advocate helped, but I wish I had an attorney helping me, too.
- If you want to, you can tell us more about what happened with your case manager/advocate:

What happened with your attorney? Select all that apply.

- My attorney helped me fill out forms.
- My attorney represented me in court.
- My attorney was not helpful with my legal problems.
- My attorney was a little helpful with my legal problems.
- My attorney was very helpful with my legal problems.
- My attorney helped, but I wish I had a case manager or advocate to help with other problems that came up after the crime.
- If you want to, you can tell us more about what happened with your attorney: _____

Who helped you more: your attorney or your case manager/advocate?

- My case manager/advocate was more helpful than my attorney.
- My attorney was more helpful than my case manager/advocate.
- My attorney and my case manager/advocate were both very helpful.
- Neither my attorney nor my case manager/advocate was helpful.
- If you want to, you can tell us more about who helped you the most: _____

What happened when you tried to get legal help from brochures and/or the internet?

- Written legal information (such as brochures) was most helpful.
- Online legal information was most helpful.
- Both written information (such as brochures) and online info were very helpful.
- Neither written information (such as brochures) nor online information was helpful.
- If you want to, you can tell us more about getting help from brochures and the internet: _____

What problems did you have when going through the civil legal process? Please select all that apply.

- I didn't feel like I had the help that I needed.
- I didn't know where to look for legal services.
- I couldn't receive legal services because of eligibility requirements (such as making too much money to qualify).
- I didn't have transportation or the travel distance made it too hard for me to get services.
- I didn't have the time for civil legal action.
- I didn't want to pursue civil legal action.
- There was too long of a wait to access legal services.
- There was too long of a wait to deal with the court.
- The court system is not made for people with disabilities.
- I didn't understand the court procedures and practices.
- I didn't understand what to wear and/or what to do in court.
- I didn't understand what the steps were in the process.
- The court system is not made for people who don't understand the law.
- I had problems understanding things because of language barriers.
- Discuss any other problems that you faced: _____

Finally, we would like to ask you a few demographic questions. What is your gender?

How old are you? Please enter your age in years:

What is your race and ethnicity? (such as White, Native American, Black, Hispanic, etc.)

What is your level of education?

- Less than a high school degree
- High school degree or G.E.D.
- Some college but no degree
- Associate's degree (2-year college degree)
- Bachelor's degree (4-year college degree)
- Postgraduate degree

What is the primary language spoken in your home? (English, Spanish, etc.)

Do you have any physical disabilities?

- Yes
- No

What is your household income?

- Under \$9,999
- \$10,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$59,999
- \$60,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$79,999
- \$80,000 to \$89,999
- \$90,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more

Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?

- Yes
- No

Is there anything else that we have not asked about that you would like to tell us?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We appreciate your willingness to share your experiences.