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New Restitution Resource Center Will Help States Improve Services for Crime Victims

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime has awarded the National Crime Victim Law Institute (NCVLI) and The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center funding to create a new resource center designed to help states improve their ability to effectively order, collect, disburse, and fulfill restitution sentences.

Victims frequently sustain financial losses as a result of the crimes committed against them. Repayment of those financial losses, or restitution, by the person convicted of the crime can be a crucial resource for victims. Orders for restitution are critical; however, even when courts order people to pay restitution, there is no guarantee that the amount ordered will be collected. Many state policymakers are unclear about restitution outcomes, impeding their ability to make policy improvements to help victims recover financially and ensure that people who owe restitution fulfill their obligations.

The Restitution Resource Center (RRC) will help states improve the quality of their restitution systems by providing a central source for best practices and successful innovations in the field as well as facilitating peer networks and information exchange. Technical assistance will be available to select states as they seek to advance data collection and sharing, improve coordination between various agencies, and develop policies that enhance the management of restitution practices.

Additionally, NCVLI, with support from the CSG Justice Center, will conduct a legal review of the laws and rules on crime victim restitution which will be used to develop a guide of the restitution processes and collection tools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. This guide will identify key similarities, differences, strengths, and weaknesses across the states, and build upon [current resources](#) NCVLI offers for post-conviction rights enforcement.

“Victims are promised financial restitution in law but often courts fail to order it and even when it is ordered, collection practices have been less than robust,” said Meg Garvin, Executive Director of NCVLI. “The RRC will help shine the light on this issue and help states improve their practices so that survivors do not have to pay for their own victimization.”

For further information, please contact:
Meg Garvin at garvin@lclark.edu.

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Founded in 2000, the [National Crime Victim Law Institute](#) is a national resource for crime victim lawyers and advocates to support the assertion and enforcement of victims' rights in criminal and civil processes. NCVLI continues to be the only national organization whose mission is focused on enforcement of victims' rights in the courts.