



2024 Legislative Summary

The Office of The Victim Advocate actively monitors and comments on proposed legislation that will directly affect victims of crime.

Public Act No. 24-118 (House Bill No. 5262), An Act Concerning Child Sexual Abuse

- Beginning July 1, 2026, the Department of Public Health (DPH) must include a sexual abuse and assault awareness prevention survey for high school administrators in the Connecticut School Health Survey. (effective July 1, 2024)
- Replaces the term “child pornography” with “child sexual abuse material” in statutes that define the term, and criminalize the possession, importation, and transmission of this material. (effective October 1, 2024)
- Establishes a 22-member task force to study the responsiveness of the judicial branch and certain state agencies to child sexual abuse issues. The task force must report its recommendations to the Children’s and Judiciary Committees by July 1, 2025. (Effective from passage)
- Requires the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) to (1) review state agency practices and procedures for ensuring the care and protection of minors in probate court guardianship proceedings and (2) report the findings to the Children’s and Judiciary committees by January 1, 2025. (upon passage)



Photo: “Genius of Connecticut” (Randolph Rogers) Connecticut State Capitol building. Hartford, CT

Public Act No. 24-127 (House Bill No. 5399), An Act Concerning the Criminal Justice Response to Victims of Sexual Assault

- Establishes the Sexual Assault Criminal Justice Response, Enhancement, and Model Policy Advisory Council to (1) evaluate the current criminal justice response to sexual assault incidents involving adult victims; (2) develop a model policy for responding to these incidents; (3) submit the initial policy to the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) by July 1, 2025, and (4) annually review and, if necessary, update the policy and submit it to POST. (effective July 1, 2024) ***The OVA is a member of the Advisory Council.***
- Beginning September 1, 2025 POST must review, approve, and adopt a written model policy annually. This information must be distributed to law enforcement units and POST must also annually submit recommendations on the model policy to the Legislature.
- Provides additional assistance to sexual assault victims by establishing that it is a police officer's responsibility to provide immediate assistance to a victim at the scene of a sexual assault incident or at the time the complaint is filed. (effective October 1, 2024)

Public Act No. 24-129 (House Bill No. 5418), An Act Concerning Eligibility for Participation in a Pretrial Family Violence Education Program

- Allows a defendant to participate in the family violence education program (FVEP) if (1) he or she is charged with certain class C violations of risk of injury to, or impairing the morals of, a child and (2) good cause is shown for allowing participation. (effective October 1, 2024)

Public Act No. 24-137 (House Bill No. 5500), An Act Concerning Revisions to Various Laws Concerning Ignition Interlock Devices, the Department of Correction, Judicial Retirement Salaries and Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure (*in part*)

- Identifies the factors that a court must consider when determining the least restrictive placement for a person to restore their competency for trial. For misdemeanor cases requires the court, to presume that outpatient treatment is the appropriate placement. (effective October 1, 2024)
- Allows courts to issue, on a victim's behalf, a standing criminal protective order for someone found not guilty of a crime due to mental disease or defect, under the same standards and requirements that apply following a criminal conviction. (effective October 1, 2024)

Public Act No. 24-139 (House Bill No. 5508), An Act Concerning Recommendations from the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee

- Makes various changes in laws related to youth gender responsiveness, human trafficking data analysis, and the reentry success plan for juveniles being released from the Department of Correction (DOC) and the judicial branch's facilities and programs. (Effective from passage)

Public Act No. 24-5 (Senate Bill No. 200), An Act Concerning Changes to the Paid Family and Medical Leave Statutes (*in part*)

- Allows an employee who is a sexual assault victim to take paid family and medical leave if it is reasonably necessary to (1) seek medical care or psychological or other counseling, (2) obtain services from a victim services organization, (3) relocate, or (4) participate in a civil or criminal proceeding related to or resulting from the assault. (effective October 1, 2024)

Public Act No. 24-56 (Senate Bill No. 234), An Act Exempting Certain Law Enforcement Records from Disclosure Under the Freedom of Information Act

- Expands the exemption under the FOIA to include (1) the identity of mandated reporters not otherwise known and (2) sworn witness statements. (effective July 1, 2024)
- Expands a FOIA exemption for certain images where disclosure could constitute an invasion of personal privacy. (effective July 1, 2024)
- Exempts from disclosure a photograph, film, video, digital image, or other image created by law enforcement or other government agency of a minor unless disclosure is required by the state's body and dashboard camera law. (effective July 1, 2024)

Public Act No. 24-108 (Senate Bill No. 426), An Act Concerning Court Operations and Administrative Proceedings (*in part*)

- Requires police officers to give bail commissioners or intake assessment and referral specialists a crime victim's identifying information. (effective July 1, 2024)
- Allows all crime victims to make a statement on any plea agreement prior to its acceptance by the court instead of just those where the defendant pleads to a lesser offense than what was originally charged. (effective July 1, 2024)
- Removes the requirement that a crime victim's mental or emotional impairment require treatment through services to be eligible for victim compensation and expands permitted victim compensation by allowing payment for pecuniary loss for attending certain Psychiatric Security Review Board hearings. (effective July 1, 2024)
- Increases the membership of the Connecticut Advisory Council for Victims of Crime from 15 to 20 and specifies that the council's members may represent victims of gun violence. (effective July 1, 2024)
- Extends the time limits for applying to the OVS victim compensation program by one year and allows emotional harm victims to use the compensation for security measures. (effective July 1, 2024)

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