

7 FAM 1900 CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE

7 FAM 1910 INTRODUCTION

*(CT:CON-98; 12-13-2004)
(Office of Origin: CA/OCS/PRI)*

7 FAM 1911 OCS CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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- a. The OCS Crime Victim Assistance Program began in June 2000, following a 1999 inter-agency agreement with the U.S. Justice Department. The overall goal of the consular victim assistance program is to help U.S. citizen/national victims of crime abroad and their families receive necessary and available services while still in the foreign country, and to continue receiving those services if appropriate and desired, upon return to the United States.
- b. The Bureau of Consular Affairs created the Crime Victim Assistance Program because the needs of victims of serious or violent crimes overseas are notably different from cases involving accidents, illness, or death by natural causes due to the nature of the trauma the victim experiences and involvement in the criminal justice process. You can be involved with victims of violent crime over a long period of time, providing information about progress in the criminal case and facilitating their return to the country for criminal justice proceedings. In addition, Congress and the states have provided hundreds of millions of dollars to support victim assistance and victim compensation throughout the United States and you have an important role in helping U.S. citizen/national victims of crime abroad obtain information about these resources.
- c. In these cases, the word “alleged” is used not to express skepticism, but merely to indicate that there has been no adjudication that a crime has occurred. Nonetheless, this fact should not detract from a sympathetic and helpful attitude towards persons who say they have been victimized. Your assistance is not conditioned upon whether a judicial finding has been made nor is it contingent upon your certainty that the crime did occur. Your role does not require you to satisfy yourself with respect to

the particular elements of what a person asserted happened nor do we require unquestioning belief of victims' statements as a criterion for providing assistance.

- d. The program primarily focuses on assisting victims of serious crimes, including:
- Homicide
 - Sexual assault
 - Child physical and sexual abuse
 - Domestic violence
 - Armed robbery, assault
 - Kidnapping
 - Other crimes in which the victim suffers serious physical injuries and/or emotional trauma
- e. This chapter applies to private U.S. citizens/nationals. For crimes against **official U.S. citizens and dependents**, see 3 FAM 1810 and 7 FAM 1700. 7 FAM 1700 also includes hostage taking and terrorism.

Factors that affect the impact of crime on victims are:

- **Quality and Timeliness of your Response;**
- **The Amount of Support from Family, Friends and Others;**
- **The Number and Quality of Choices and Options Offered.**

7 FAM 1912 THROUGH 1919 UNASSIGNED