



BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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PRESS RELEASE

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District Attorney Commemorates National Crime Victims' Rights Week April 18–24, 2021

In commemoration of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 18 - 24, 2021, and in honor of those victims traumatized by violent crime, Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey dedicated this week to raise awareness about crime victims' issues and rights. Ramsey noted a substantial increase in victims of violent crime in Butte County in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ramsey said, "We must always remember that the faces of crime victims are those of our family, friends, neighbors, and community members. The Butte County District Attorney's Victim Assistance Bureau reached out to 4,145 new victims of violent crime in 2020. In 2019, that number was 3,435 – **an increase of 21%**. This, despite the COVID-19 lockdowns and the best efforts of our law enforcement and justice partners throughout Butte County."

Ramsey said, "Now is the time to redouble our efforts so that victimization declines and fewer Butte County residents suffer the trauma of violent crime."

Ramsey noted that the federal Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) leads communities throughout the nation in their annual observances of the Crime Victims' Rights Week by promoting victims' rights and honoring crime victims and those who advocate on their behalf.

"This year's theme – **Support Victims. Build Trust. Engage Communities.** – celebrates the contributions we all can make toward building trust in our community's capacity to support the healing journeys of crime victims. Trust is collective as well as individual, so we honor both the individual victims in our community and the groups engaged in building networks of understanding and support."

The DA's Victim Assistance Bureau is in its tenth year of operations with the District Attorney's Office. In the nine calendar years of operation under the District Attorney, victim services have been offered to 35,168 victims of violent crime.

The Bureau's victim advocates work closely with prosecutors and investigators to provide information to victims of the progress of their case through the criminal justice system. Advocates assess and refer for services, provide court escorts, education, and support, and offer California Victim Compensation program access to victims of violent crime. In addition to

medical and counseling expenses, this program offers reimbursement for funeral and burial expenses in homicide cases and relocation expenses for victims who must move for their safety.

Last year in 2020, the Bureau assisted in gaining \$407,789.65 for Butte County crime victims. In the nine fiscal years of operation under the District Attorney, over \$7,744,448 has been paid on behalf of crime victims.

Bureau staff are members of county-wide multidisciplinary teams including Butte County's Sexual Assault Response Team, Child Abuse Response Team, and Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Team. Victim Assistance Bureau continues to work closely under the Memorandum of Understanding with the Butte County Superior Court, Butte County Treasurer-Tax Collector and Auditor-Controller to enhance the collection and disbursement of restitution to crime victims.

For additional information about services available for local victims of crime, please contact the **Butte County District Attorney's Victim Assistance Bureau** at (530)538-7340 or visit <https://www.buttecounty.net/districtattorney/Victim-Assistance>.

For additional ideas on how to support victims of crime, visit OVC's website at www.ovc.ojp.gov.