

TITLE 6: CRIMES AND CRIMINAL PROCEDURE
DIVISION 9: CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM COMPONENTS

§ 9102. Establishment of Victim Witness Advocacy Unit.

A Victim Witness Advocacy Unit is hereby established within the Office of the Attorney General, Criminal Division. The Victim Witness Advocacy Unit shall be headed by a Victim Witness Coordinator. The Victim Witness Coordinator shall be designated by and report to the Chief of the Criminal Division. The Victim Witness Coordinator may not hold any other position within the Commonwealth government, and shall not engage in any employment other than that of serving as the Victim Witness Coordinator. The Victim Witness Coordinator shall have the necessary education, training, and experience in criminal procedure, victims' rights and compensation and counseling to be an advocate for the victim.

Source: PL 10-81, § 4; PL 16-52, § 2 (January 29, 2010), modified.

Commission Comment: Public Law 16-52 (enacted on January 29, 2010) contained severability and savings provisions and the following:

Section 1. Findings. The Legislature finds that the Office of Victims' Rights was conceived in 1996 to be placed within the Office of the Attorney General rather than the Criminal Justice Planning Agency as presently set forth in 6 CMC § 9102. The Office of Victims' Rights was initially established to assist and support victims of domestic violence. Through the years, the Office of Victims' Rights in the Office of the Attorney General has served victims of all crimes.

The Legislature further finds that the Office of the Attorney General enforces all criminal laws and works closely with victims of crimes to prosecute criminal cases. Accordingly, in order to provide continuous and consistent victim advocacy services and to avoid any funding difficulties, the Office of Victims' Rights should legally exist within the Office of the Attorney General where it has existed as a matter of practice since its establishment.