

Victim Services – Regional Transition

Eastern Alberta Regional Victim Serving Society



Eastern Alberta
Regional Victim
Serving Society

This presentation provides an overview of the Regional Victim Serving Society, outlining the key steps for referral and services the RVSS provides.



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land on which we operate in the Eastern Alberta District is the traditional and ancestral territory of many Indigenous Peoples. This includes the Cree, Dene, Nakota Sioux, and Métis peoples, who have lived on and cared for this land for generations.

We recognize the deep historical significance and cultural connections that these nations have to this land. We are committed to fostering relationships built on respect, understanding, and reconciliation as we continue to serve all communities within this region.

We honor the resilience and strength of Indigenous Peoples and their ongoing contributions to the community. As part of our work with Victim Services in partnership with the RCMP, we strive to support all individuals, recognizing the importance of equity, healing, and justice for all.





Our Mission and Vision

Mission

To ensure that those who have been victimized by crime and/or have experienced extreme tragedy are best served, during the aftermath of an event, and while they navigate the criminal justice process.

Vision

To ensure victims of crime and tragedy can access the supports and information they need to enhance their safety, empower themselves, and restore their well-being.



Our Core Values

- We will strive to provide our services with compassion and empathy, and in a timely manner.
- We will maintain a high degree of privacy and confidentiality for our clients and their information, in all the work that we do.
- All members of our community will be treated with respect and dignity. We will be open and non-judgmental in our approach and interactions with our clients and community members.
- We will value equitable treatment of all clients, staff, volunteers, and community members. We value respect and embrace diversity and inclusion of all people.



Area served by EARVSS





EARVSS Regional Teams

- EARVSS will continue to provide services to victims in our region through local teams of Court & Support Navigators co-located within RCMP Detachments.
- Our local teams are as follows:

North Subregion

- Wabasca
- Slave Lake
- Athabasca
- Boyle
- Lac La Biche
- Cold Lake
- Bonnyville
- Barrhead
- Westlock
- Redwater
- Smoky Lake

South Subregion

- St. Paul
- Elk Point
- Two Hills
- Vegreville
- Vermilion
- Kitscoty
- Tofield
- Viking
- Wainwright
- Killam
- Provost
- Consort
- Coronation



EARVSS Service Structure



Eastern Alberta Regional Victim Services has a Central Office located in St. Paul. Staff working from there is:



CEO, DRO, ADO's, HR, Finance, Community and Cultural Liaison and Operations Administration



We have Court & Support Navigators (frontline workers) located in the local RCMP detachment to provide supports and services in our communities.



Some of our communities have volunteer advocates to help support clients after hours, go to court or attend community events.



We are governed by a board comprised of community members from within our regional zone.



Eligibility Criteria and Client Access

The following summarizes the RVSS referral criteria for the RCMP to refer for service/support.



No Wrong Door Approach

- All individuals seeking assistance, whether by way of referral or otherwise, and who are not confirmed eligible for services, will be supported through a no wrong door approach when an appropriate service provider can be identified.
- With consent, the RVSS will facilitate a warm hand off to an appropriate service provider. A warm hand off will involve:
 - Identifying appropriate service provider; and
 - Providing the person contact information of the appropriate service provider and/or making a direct connection to the service provider.

RVSS Services fall within 2 categories

General Support
Services

Criminal Justice
System Navigation
Services

General Support Services

Information about programs and services available to victims of crime and individuals of tragic circumstances;

Needs assessments to facilitate access and referrals for additional services (e.g. community, and government services, indigenous and other culturally specific agencies)

Information, and referral to the victim's assistance program;

Assistance with completing applications and forms, as appropriate;

Assistance with safety planning

- RCMP members are responsible for leading all safety planning activities with victims of crime, RVSS may assist, as appropriate only.

Emotional support and debriefing

Criminal Justice Navigation Services

Information about Victims' rights & The Victims of Crime Protocol

Information/Navigation about criminal justice system, court procedures, victims' role in court

Information about victim impact statements, statements on restitution, and community impact statements.

Court updates, explanation of outcomes, Court Preparation, Court Accompaniment

Navigation and coordinating access to justice system personnel

Canvassing for testimonial aids and other accommodation requirements

Emotional support and court debriefing



Reference Guide - Eligibility for RVSS Services – RCMP Referrals

| | Status/Type | Explanation | Examples |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---|--|
| In Scope – Eligible for RVSS Services | Criminal | Criminal Charges Laid: Direct victims of a criminal offence. *Indirect victims <u>may</u> be considered for service based on the unique characteristics or circumstances of the individual, particularly in relation to their participation in the criminal justice system with the availability of RVSS support and services. Individual at Risk of Future Intimate Partner Violence or Family Violence - All situations where no charges are laid, however Police suspect an individual is at risk or is vulnerable to future intimate partner violence or family violence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intimate partner violence• Family violence• Aggravated assault• Sexual assault• Homicide• Robbery• Property theft or damage• Impaired causing death/bodily harm |
| | Undetermined | Ongoing Criminal Investigation: When it cannot be determined whether an incident is criminal or not at the time of the referral, the individual who would be deemed the direct victim would be eligible for services. If at some point the incident is deemed to be non-criminal in nature, the individual is given a warm hand off to an appropriate agency by the RVSS, as criminal justice support is not required. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multi motor vehicle collision under investigation for impairment• Fire under investigation for arson |
| | Tragic Circumstance | Sudden Death: Police involved non-criminal, sudden, unexpected death involving a next-of-kin (NOK) notification. Next of kin would be eligible for services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Death by suicide• Accidental death by motor vehicle collision |



Out-of-Scope – Ineligible for RVSS Services

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Civil or Other Legal Issues | Individuals dealing with legal issues outside of the criminal justice system, such as family court, landlord and tenant, by-law, provincial offences etc. (Victims of crime may be simultaneously dealing with civil and/or other legal issues. The RVSSs only assist the individual with respect to the criminal case). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divorce and separation• Landlord and tenant disputes• Insurance claims |
| Assist General Public | Individuals requesting general support or resources, who are not victims of crime. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homelessness• Substance abuse issues |
| General Disputes | Any type of conflict between individuals that has not resulted in a criminal investigation and/or a criminal charge being laid. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal dispute between neighbors |
| Natural Disasters, Search and Rescue | <i>Note: Support for natural disasters is only permitted as part of business continuity and are not included in general RVSS supports and services.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assisting individuals affected by forest fires, floods, tornados, etc.• Assisting search and rescue teams |
| Matters under the <i>Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act</i> | Prohibited. RISK: Situations are high risk to the safety of staff and volunteers of the RVSS. Involvement in child related matters could result in legal consequences for the RVSS, staff and volunteers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child apprehensions• Child custody• Other child protection matters• Childcare |
| Matters under the <i>Mental Health Act</i> and mental health services | Prohibited. RISK: Mental health apprehensions and mental health calls (i.e., attempted suicides, welfare checks, suicidal individual) are unpredictable and are high risk to the safety of staff and volunteers of the RVSS. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental health apprehensions• Mental health calls |



Out of Scope Services - Continued

- **Trauma support dog program** – a highly beneficial service but internal programs will no longer be available. EARVSS will work with external agencies and organizations to facilitate trauma support animal services upon request.
- **Transportation** of victims and their families/friends. Other organizations such as Crown Prosecutions Office, RCMP, other agencies or services will be engaged. Emergency taxi for crisis response may be available.
- **External group incident de-briefing** – CISM or other similar services will not be provided by EARVSS. Navigators may refer individuals to other agencies or service providers.
- **Educational programs** – this service will not be provided by EARVSS frontline resources. Navigators may refer individuals to other agencies or organizations.



Community Referrals

- EARVSS works with our community partner agencies.
- EARVSS Client Consent Form can be requested via the info@earvss.ca email.
- Agencies can submit the External Referral form with the necessary information to info@earvss.ca and the intake will be processed and sent to a Navigator.



After Hours Crisis Response

The RVSS's after-hours are:

- 1630 to 0830 Monday to Friday
- Weekend coverage is from 1630 Friday to 0830 Monday.
- Stat holidays are also considered “after hours”.

The RVSS has one central number for all After-Hours Calls. 

Where an immediate response is required in core business hours, a referral may be made for regular victim intake and case management processing (intake@earvss.ca), alternatively members can contact their local VSU for immediate dispatch.

The Regional Victim Serving Society will answer all eligible calls after-hours, this will be done through a central tier one on call that supports the entire Region. Where possible a staff member or volunteer advocate may be dispatched to support in person, if this is not possible the tier one on call will support via telephone/virtually.



Tiered After Hours Crisis Response

Tier 1:

- Central on call that supports the entire region virtually (1 phone number to support entire region)
- Schedule will be staffed with Navigators.
- Volunteer Advocates will also have an opportunity to join later in the fall
- Triage all incoming calls to determine immediate need and eligibility
- Acts as a dispatch to tier 2 (when available), if tier 2 is not available virtual support is provided.

Tier 2:

- Staff are welcome to join up to a maximum of 3 shifts per month that do not fall on the same week as their Tier 1.
- Volunteer Advocates are welcome to join based on their availability.
- Tier 2 is dispatched by tier 1 only when eligibility criteria is met
- Tier 2 support in person, alongside the RCMP. No RVSS employee or Volunteer Advocate is permitted to attend a call without the presence of an RCMP member.



- **The RVSS provides immediate after-hours crisis response for the following calls/incidents:**
 - Suspicious death including
 - Homicide (or suspected homicide)
 - Driving fatality (criminal code offence)
 - Sudden Death
 - Next-of-kin death notification
 - Home invasion (victim is moved to the detachment or a safe location)
 - Domestic Violence with a high level of risk to the victim (telephone support only)
 - Sexual assault where police and victim are in hospital.
- The RVSS does NOT provide after-hours crisis response for calls/incidents that are not listed above including
 - Child abuse or child sexual abuse
 - Robbery
 - Organized crime
 - Missing person
 - Expected death



Thank you

Eastern Alberta Regional Victim Serving Society

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