

July 23, 2021

Join the Campaign to Protect Victim Services

Recent changes made to victims services funding may impact the sustainability of victim service organizations in rural Alberta

RMA is collaborating with the AUMA and [Victim Services Alberta](#) on an advocacy and awareness-raising campaign about the impacts that recent provincial decisions related to victim services funding and program delivery may have on the sustainability of rural victim services organizations.

Victim services programs in Alberta support approximately 80,000 victims of crime and trauma annually, but are challenged by a lack of sustainable, ongoing funding. The Victims of Crime Fund receives \$60 million annually through a 20% surcharge on provincial and federal fines. However, victim services programs depend on annual grant applications and community fundraising to exist.

Last year, the Government of Alberta [amended](#) the *Victims of Crime Act* to expand how funds collected through the Victims of Crime Fund could be used beyond supporting victims services, to also allow funding to be used for general public safety initiatives. Alberta is now the only province that does not restrict the use of its Victims of Crime fund to services that support victims. The Government of Alberta is also reviewing the current victim services delivery model. Although the outcomes of this review are not known, this is another area that could potentially change the availability and quality of rural victim services.

RMA, along with AUMA and Victim Services Alberta, are advocating directly to the Government of Alberta to ensure that victim services organizations receive adequate and consistent funding. RMA is also encouraging members to share concerns with this change with their MLAs using a [customizable letter template](#) [Word]. For local advocacy to be most effective, members are encouraged to build on the template to include information or stories relating to the importance of victim services in their community. Any members submitting letters locally are encouraged to share their submission with RMA.

RMA's efforts in this area are partially driven by [resolution 12-18S: Victim Services Units Funding](#), which calls for the Government of Alberta to use the Victims of Crime Fund to adequately support victims services units.

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