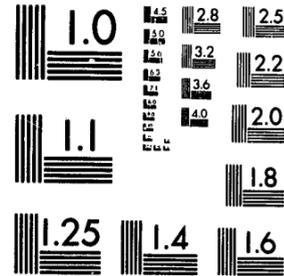


National Criminal Justice Reference Service



This microfiche was produced from documents received for inclusion in the NCJRS data base. Since NCJRS cannot exercise control over the physical condition of the documents submitted, the individual frame quality will vary. The resolution chart on this frame may be used to evaluate the document quality.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

Microfilming procedures used to create this fiche comply with the standards set forth in 41CFR 101-11.504.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not represent the official position or policies of the U. S. Department of Justice.

National Institute of Justice  
United States Department of Justice  
Washington, D. C. 20531

Date Filmed

2/20/81

EVALUATION OF THE  
PALM BEACH COUNTY  
VICTIM/WITNESS AID PROGRAM

63485

NCJRS  
SEP 5 1979  
ACQUISITIONS

EVALUATION OF THE  
PALM BEACH COUNTY  
VICTIM/WITNESS AID PROGRAM

Submitted By:  
Palm Beach County  
Metropolitan Criminal Justice  
Planning Unit  
December, 1978

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2 - 4
INTRODUCTION	6 - 11
HISTORY OF VICTIM/WITNESS AID PROGRAM	13- 16
DESCRIPTION OF JUVENILE SERVICE COMPONENT OF THE VICTIM/WITNESS AID PROGRAM	18- 26
OBJECTIVE ONE	28- 48
OBJECTIVE TWO	50- 51
OBJECTIVE THREE	53- 55
OBJECTIVE FOUR	57- 60
OBJECTIVE FIVE	62- 70
RECOMMENDATIONS	71 - 79
APPENDICES	

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Victim/Witness Aid Project began in September, 1975 as an LEAA discretionary grant. The project is staffed by a coordinator, six criminal justice specialists (paralegals), and two secretaries. For the past three years the purpose of the Victim/Witness Aid Project has been to provide services to victims and witnesses of felonies, misdemeanors, and juvenile crimes in order to improve their opinion of the criminal justice system and to increase the willingness of the general public to participate in the legal procedures.

The projects main source of referral has been the State Attorney's Office. Once the case is filed, the Victim/Witness Aid Project reviews the file and decides whether to accept the case. Once a case is accepted, a letter and survey are mailed to the victims and witnesses to determine their needs. If the surveys are returned, the staff may provide services by: keeping victims informed of the progress and disposition of their case; transporting victims and witnesses; assisting in the return of property held as evidence; and assisting in obtaining restitution.

Initially the focus of the program was to provide services to victims and witnesses of adult felonies. Therefore, a major portion of the staff (four criminal justice specialists) and the coordinator's time was expended to meet this objective. Staffing changes reflect a major change in the direction of the program. The juvenile staff has been increased to three staff members; the felony division decreased to two; and one staff member remains in misdemeanor court. The juvenile staff provides the same services as the felony division as well as coordinating the alternative sentencing work program; providing victim information to the juvenile court on restitution; a victim/witness notification system; a "no file" system; social services and minimal working hour crisis intervention. The criminal justice specialist in county court has now assumed the responsibility of assisting victims in filing for compensation under the Florida Crime Compensation Bill.

The purpose of the evaluation is two-fold. First, to determine whether the program is meeting its measurable objectives and goals. Second, to provide the county with accurate information concerning the effectiveness of the program in terms of cost assumption. The evaluation team, in cooperation with the project coordinator, established five objectives.

1. To determine the comprehensiveness of the program in addressing the needs of the victims/witnesses of crime in Palm Beach County.
2. To determine the extent to which victims and witnesses who were served by the Victim/Witness Aid Program felt it benefited them.
3. To determine the extent to which the victims/witnesses served by the project felt it had impacted their attitudes toward the criminal justice system.
4. To determine the degree to which restitution is being ordered as part of the sentencing process in Palm Beach County

5. To correlate the type of crime, the services provided the victim, and the disposition of the case. This will show if services to victims have more impact on successful prosecution than those services provided to victims of other crimes.

The evaluation team and the project coordinator decided that the last complete year of data, 1977, would provide the basis for analysis. Since its inception, the project has utilized the Unisort Data Analysis System (ninety one categories of information) in closing each case. It was assumed that normal supervision, administrative direction and review of closed cases would have deleted flaws within the existing system. This proved to be incorrect for two basic reasons. First, the categories of data were not mutually exclusive and did not identify all the services provided by the project staff. Second, minimal supervision and administrative direction were provided for the staff which has resulted in sporadic service delivery and a lack of uniformity in completing the data cards when closing cases. Thus, the problem with the data system was not identified until the evaluation team began reviewing the data cards. The focus of the evaluation has been directed toward recommendations in administrative, supervisory, and policy issues as well as service delivery.

The major problems which surfaced from the evaluation efforts are: the single source of referral; the data collection system; and inadequate administrative, supervisory, and policy direction. The recommendations attempt to address these problems and are divided into three general areas. First, services to victims are generally limited to those cases which are filed by the State Attorney's Office. The program should expand its source of referrals to law enforcement departments. This would eliminate the systematic exclusion of victims who need services but whose cases are never solved and would also render necessary and timely support to victims during the critical and the often traumatic reporting stage. In line with expanding its sources of referrals is a need to publicize the program so that potential victims and other referral sources are aware of its existence and services. The report details the planning and execution stages necessary to implement such services.

The second section of recommendations concerns improving the data system. At present, the system does not provide mutually exclusive categories of data; does not make efficient use of the space available; does not reflect approximately half of the services provided by the staff; and is not completed uniformly by all staff. The recommendations suggest that the purpose of the data system should be not only to provide profile information but also to demonstrate the types of services provided by the staff. The data system should also be revised to show the expanded services and provide a basis for meaningful evaluation.

Lastly, the program's lack of direction and policy require clarity, supervision, and aggressiveness on the part of the director. Recommendations include: the drafting of a project policy, service, and procedure manual; an office manual and procedures including time sheets, daily log book; in-service training for the director in planning, administration, supervision, employee relations, decision making and victimology.

The final draft of the evaluation will be reviewed by the Metropolitan

Criminal Justice Planning Unit, the coordinator and staff of Victim/Witness Aid Project, the State Attorney and interested county officials. Implementation of the recommendations will require a coordinated planning effort between the project coordinator and the Metropolitan Criminal Justice Planning Unit. Timetables for implementation will be established and wherever necessary, interagency input will be requested and utilized.

On October 1, 1978, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners assumed the operational costs of the Victim/Witness Aid Project. It is now located within the Department of Criminal Justice and is directly responsible to its director. This should facilitate the implementation of the evaluation recommendations.

On December 2, 1978, the Director of the Victim/Witness Aid Program resigned. An acting Director has been appointed and is beginning to initiate implementation of the recommendations contained within this report.

## INTRODUCTION

The Victim Witness Aid Program began in September, 1975 as an LEAA discretionary grant to the Palm Beach County Board of County Commission. An evaluation of the project is expected to serve several purposes:

1. As the project is the largest LEAA grant in terms of staff and funds in the County, an evaluation of its impact upon the criminal justice system would provide significant information for future planning by criminal justice professionals, the MPU and the Tri-County Supervisory Board.
2. As the project is operating in its third and last year of federal funding, the Palm Beach County Board of Commissioners is facing the issue of cost assumption. The evaluation should provide information upon which the Board may base their decision.

The evaluation team, in cooperation with the director of the Victim Witness Aid Program, established five objectives for the evaluation.

1. To determine the comprehensiveness of the program in addressing the needs of the victims/witnesses of crime in Palm Beach County.
2. To determine the extent to which victims and witnesses who were served by the Victim/Witness Aid Program felt it benefited them.
3. To determine the extent to which the victims-witnesses served by the project felt it had impacted

their attitudes toward the criminal justice system.

4. To determine the degree to which restitution is being ordered as part of the sentencing process in Palm Beach County.

5. To correlate the type of crime, the services provided the victim, and the disposition of the case. This will show if services to victims have more impact on successful prosecution than those services provided to victims of other crimes.

It was assumed that the information needed to complete the evaluation would be readily available through the Unisort Data Collection System designed by the Project Coordinator and utilized by the project since its inception. This assumption was based upon conferences with the project director and a review of the types of information intended to be collected on the unisort data cards. This did not prove to be a valid assumption. The evaluation team found the following problems in utilizing the system:

1. The categories of data were not mutually exclusive.
2. Staff members completed the data cards based upon their own interpretation of the categories of data.
3. There was no supervision of staff in closing of cases and completion of the data cards and thus the problems in utilizing the data did not become apparent until the evaluation.

In addition to the above problems, it was determined that the data cards generally were applicable to the services provided by

the felony division. The project is organized into three divisions: felony, juvenile and misdemeanor. As the history section indicates, the initial consensus of opinion was that the program's services to victims of felonies would be the focus of the program. The reorganization of program staff which began with the 1977 grant, reflect the change in focus. The data system, however, was not amended. Thus, 1977 and 1978 data does not provide an accurate picture of the program's services nor its impact upon the criminal justice system. This is a managerial or administrative problem which must be rectified immediately.

As a result of the ineffectiveness of the data system, the evaluation team began to interview individual staff members to determine the different types of services which are being provided. The juvenile divisions which is now staffed by three paralegals appears to be the most comprehensive of the three divisions. The interviews with staff and subsequent submission of information on services shows that less than half of their services are documented through the present data collection system. Although the juvenile staff have apparently been providing most of these services since 1977, no administrative effort was made to establish a data system which would document these services. Thus, there is no valid documentation available and no means of retrieving this data or evaluating the impact of their services upon the juvenile justice system. The evaluation team decided to include a separate section in the evaluation which deals with the juvenile division of the program. The information contained herein is merely descriptive and is speculative in terms of statistical information and cost effectiveness.

The misdemeanor division, which consist of one paralegal, is generally limited to locating victims and witnesses for county court prosecutors, and assisting victims who file for compensation under the Florida Crime Compensation Act. Cases files were not maintained on the paralegals efforts to locate victims and witnesses. These duties usually involve one contact with the victims which may not warrant the opening of case files. However, some system needs to be established to document these contacts. There is some reason to question the use of a paralegal to augment the investigatory function of the State Attorney's Office which has its own investigators assigned to assist county court prosecutors. Case files are maintained by the county court paralegal on victims who are assisted in filing for compensation. The responsibility for victim's compensation is a function of the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services.

No data system, however, has been established by the program to document either of the duties of the paralegal assigned to county court. The evaluation team requested that the paralegal submit a report of her activities. A random sampling of the case files which were maintained on victim compensation cases do not reflect the services listed in the summary submitted by the same staff member. The reasons for such discrepancies are clearly an administrative and supervisory issue for which the evaluation team is not responsible. However, because of the lack of documentation and the aforementioned discrepancies, the evaluation team has not included a section on the services provided by the county court division. Recommendations resulting from the evaluation team's efforts will deal specifically with the issues raised in this introduction.

The amount of time and effort utilized to obtain documentation from existing materials on the program's services clearly reduced the time the evaluation team would have had to conduct surveys of victims and of other criminal justice system personnel. The survey results of victims have been explained in objectives two and three. The selection bias used in mailing surveys clearly reduces the significance of those findings. Recommendations as to future use of surveys are included in objectives two and three. Surveying of criminal justice personnel would appear to be unjustified at this time in terms of time, expense and actual benefit to the evaluation. It is felt that a survey of criminal justice personnel might be more useful after the proposed recommendations have been implemented.

Lastly, the evaluation team efforts to obtain documentation of the program's services were frustrating. Subjectively, the evaluation team felt that some victims actually benefited from the services of the program. However, the present data system and existing case management techniques resulting from inadequate administrative and supervisory direction have made an objective analysis of the program all but impossible.

In completing this evaluation, the team could have expanded its focus to such areas as cost effectiveness and fiscal accountability. In reviewing victim services which are documented through the data system, the evaluation team found that 33 victims were provided with transportation and 240 home visits were attempted in 1977. In 1977, the Victim Witness Aid Program expended \$7,737 in travel. Based upon the data system, the transportation cost per contact is more than \$28.00. The data system and random sampling of case files does not indicate whether these contacts, which required

staff to travel, were successful or not. Some files do not even indicate that a home visit was attempted.

This type of review of files should logically have been a facet of federal monitoring reviews which were conducted periodically by the federal and regional staff of LEAA. That this was not done raises serious questions concerning the effectiveness of federal and regional monitoring programs. Because this issue is not deal with in this evaluation should not in any way imply that the problems concerning monitoring techniques are are not important. They should be addressed at the earliest possible time.

HISTORY

The need for victim/witness services in Palm Beach County was first emphasized by the State Attorney, David Bludworth, in the Spring of 1975. While attending the National District Attorney's Association meeting he became aware that funds were available for victim services and also familiarized himself with other programs delivering service to victims in the nation.

In the summer of 1975, an application was made for \$154,000 of LEAA discretionary funds to establish a Victim/Witness Aid Program in Palm Beach County. The grant was approved in August, 1975. Mr. Bludworth then approached the State of Florida to try to obtain matching funds for the grant. Due to state regulations concerning matching funds, the State Attorney was unable to use monies in his budget for the purpose of providing match funds. Thus, he approached the Palm Beach County Board of Commissioners for the matching monies and this was approved by the Board. In September, 1975, the Victim/Witness Aid Program started to provide services. The program is, therefore, a county agency but because the State Attorney's Office was responsible for the original planning of the grant, there continues to be close cooperation between the State Attorney's Office and the Victim/Witness Aid Program. This relationship has allowed the program access to the State Attorney's files and the necessary cooperation of his staff.

On September 15, 1975, the director, seven (7) paralegals and three (3) secretaries were employed. One paralegal was assigned to each of the four felony divisions and county (misdemeanor) division. Two paralegals were assigned to juvenile court. It was

the feeling of the State Attorney's Office and the Victim/Witness Aid Program that the felony division would form the core of the Victim/Witness Aid Program. Services provided to victims in felony and misdemeanor courts include: keeping clients informed of the progress and disposition of the court case; transportation to and from court when needed; arranging child care when requested; assistance in the return of property held as evidence; and assistance in receiving restitution. Direct assistance was also offered to the attorneys of the felony and misdemeanor divisions. This assistance included: acting as liaison between the State Attorney's Office and the victim or witness; witness notification of hearings; and locating witnesses for the State Attorney's Office.

The present (1978) staffing structure of the Victim/Witness Aid Program reflects the changes that have taken place in the three-year period the grant has been in operation. Services continue to be offered to County Court, Felony Court and to Juvenile Court. At this time, however, there are only two paralegals assigned to felony court; each handling two divisions. It became obvious that the paralegals assigned to felony divisions were limited in the scope of their duties, usually by the attorney involved or by the system itself. One individual is assigned to court court and additionally assists victims in filing for compensation under the State of Florida Crimes Compensation Bill. Three individuals are assigned to juvenile court.

In the juvenile court, the paralegals assigned to that division quickly became assimilated into the system. At the present time, cases involving loss to a victim through the actions of a juvenile offender, come through the juvenile section of the Victim/Witness

Aid Program before a hearing is held or a case is adjudicated. The paralegal makes contact with the juvenile's victim and makes a determination of loss which is passed on to the judge before adjudication. At the present time, there are three individuals working in the juvenile court which reflects the high number of cases that are being handled in that area. Through the efforts of the people assigned to the juvenile section in scheduling witnesses, it is estimated that the program saved \$35,000 in subpoena fees for Palm Beach County in 1977-78. The programs services to the police are generally limited to juvenile cases. The juvenile division paralegals schedule and cancel appearances of police officers; inform police departments of the outcome of juvenile cases; assist the police departments in returning property held in evidence in juvenile cases; and, with the assistance of various police departments in the county, the juvenile division helps to administer the Alternative Sentencing Work Program through them.

The program also works with the Department of Corrections, Probation and Parole Division. The program provides the Parole and Probation Division with information regarding loss as the victims have presented it. The Victim/Witness Aid Program has started to establish a working relationship with law enforcement departments throughout Palm Beach County.

The basic goals of the Victim/Witness Aid Program have been and continue to be: to improve the public attitude toward the criminal justice system by offering specific services to victims and witnesses. By making the time less of an ordeal for victims

and witnesses, it was felt that victims would be more willing to take a case to its judicial conclusion. A goal of the program which is also a goal for most victim service programs is to make an attempt to humanize the court system in the eyes of the public.

The Victim/Witness Aid Program needs to be expanded to provide notification services and cancellation of appearances for witnesses and police officers. This type of notification program has been in operation in Broward County and has been responsible for saving the county approximately \$150,000 a year in subpoena fees.

NOTE FROM THE EVALUATION TEAM: The History section of this report was prepared by the Project Coordinator of the Victim/Witness Aid Program.

JUVENILE SECTION

In the Spring of 1975, the Florida Legislature amended Florida Statute, Chapter 37. The new law permitted juvenile judges to order juveniles to make restitution as part of their treatment program. Restitution could be ordered for loss or damages incurred by the victim as a result of a delinquent act. This law became effective October 1, 1975, and coincided with the beginning of the Victim/Witness Aid Program. As restitution is a major objective of the Victim/Witness Aid Program, the juvenile section utilized this law as the basis for establishing an effective means of assisting victims of juvenile crimes.

In 1975 one of the two juvenile judges presiding in Palm Beach County ruled that the ordering of restitution on the part of a juvenile defendant was not constitutional. This judge's refusal to order restitution became the impetus for the paralegals in the juvenile division to seek other means to compensate the victims for losses. Three alternatives were considered.

First, civil recourse against the parents of a juvenile for the intentional torts of their minor child was possible. Florida Statute, Chapter 39, allows for such litigation. The major limitation to this alternative was that only \$1,000.00 or less could be recovered by the plaintiff. After reviewing common law and the Florida Supreme Court's decisions, it appeared that parents could be held financially responsible for more than the Statute's liability limitation if certain conditions were present. Propensity for a specific act by a child and failure of the parents to supervise said child must be established in order to hold the parents responsible

for any damages resulting from this act.

The second avenue available to the juvenile section of the Victim/Witness Aid Program required the cooperation of the State Attorney's Office. As the State Attorney's Office was the program's major source of referral at that time, this alternative was easily facilitated. In this alternative, the State Attorney's Office would enter into a plea negotiation which provided for restitution. The paralegal from the juvenile section would obtain the necessary information from the victim and present it to the State Attorney's Office. This information would be presented in the plea to the judge. In many cases before the juvenile court, the judge would order the juvenile to pay restitution for victims whose cases were not filed. Thus, the paralegals made an attempt to determine the victim's losses for juvenile cases which were not filed because the possibility existed that the judge might also order restitution for those victims. After restitution is ordered by the judge, the paralegals meet with the youth to determine the mode and amount of payment. Instruction forms are completed and given to the child. These forms explain how payment is made. The paralegal then completes the court sheet on how the youth intends to make restitution.

The third alternative involved working out a restitution plan with the juvenile offender and his parents without involvement of the juvenile court. During the intake process of the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, the social worker recommends whether charges on a particular youth should be filed. If the decision is made not to file delinquent charges, the Department notifies the victim(s) in writing of their decision and allows them ten (10) days to contact the State Attorney's Office if they desire

further action. Calls from victims who are not satisfied with HRS's decision are regularly referred by the State Attorney's Office to the Victim/Witness Aid Program's juvenile section. Most of these cases, according to the juvenile staff of the Victim/Witness Aid Program, involve some form of loss to the victim. The crime, however, was generally not a serious one. In these cases, the Victim/Witness Aid Program became involved in attempting to collect restitution from the juvenile or his parents in exchange for the State Attorney's Office not filing a delinquency petition. These cases are commonly referred to as "no files". After speaking with the victim or police officer about the case, the paralegal would locate the recommendation packet, attach a note stating the reasons for desired prosecution and bring it to the attention of the appropriate Assistant State Attorney. A follow-up phone call is made to victim or officer relating the attorney's decision and reasons for filing charges or not filing. If this were the case, the paralegal would attempt to intervene on behalf of the victim in collection of restitution. Sometimes the potential of a civil suit would be enough encouragement to the juvenile's parents to pay the victim for his losses.

In arranging restitution agreements between the victims and the juvenile offenders or his parents it became apparent that the victims could be compensated through a specific number of hours of work performed. This form of restitution became the Work Program for Juvenile Offenders. The concept of a work program was readily accepted because it allowed the younger children who were not old enough to obtain a part-time job an opportunity to fulfill their restitution requirements.

An insurance policy was obtained in March, 1976 to cover the youths if a medical injury should result while in the performance of their working in exchange for financial compensation to the victim. Later, the work program was expanded to include non-profit private organizations and community based public agencies. This allowed a youth an opportunity to complete his restitution in the work program when the victim did not wish to be involved with the youth, but indicated a desire for this type of disposition.

During 1977, the juvenile section conservatively estimates that they worked two to five "no file" cases per week or eight to twenty cases per month. However, most cases involved more than one juvenile offender according to the paralegals in the juvenile section of the Victim/Witness Aid Program. Thus, they estimate that if an average of two youths were involved in each case than an average of 16-40 youths per month were contacted by the juvenile section's staff. Consequently, it is estimated that 192-480 victims were assisted in 1977. The time deadline for filing under Statute, Chapter 39, necessitated home visits, personal contact and phone calls to arrange restitution between the parties. Case files were not opened unless restitution could not be arranged and the State Attorney's Office filed a delinquency petition. Thus, there is no means to retrieve statistical information which would aid in showing the impact of these services upon the juvenile justice system or assist in evaluating the comprehensiveness of this aspect of the program.

This service, however, appears to be extremely worthwhile to victims. It also assist juvenile court personnel and provides the juvenile court judge with viable alternatives in the sentencing

process. It is strongly recommended that his service be continued and that a system be implemented to document this service and provide a basis for evaluation. Survey letters to victims of no file cases would provide valuable input. Based upon 1977 quarterly reports, 79 youths participated in the work program. The information for quarterly reports was obtained from lists that the paralegals in the juvenile section maintained on the wall of their office. The lead paralegal states that probably more youths participated in the work program as the list was not always maintained.

In 1977, the juvenile section also began a notification service for victims, witnesses and police officers to keep them informed of the status of their case which is set for trial. Although a tremendous volume of victims, witnesses and police officers are uprooted from their jobs and other endeavors by a subpoena compelling their attendance in court, very few of them are ultimately called upon to testify. Interestingly, the national average on cases going to trial suggests that a jury trial in a criminal cases is the exception rather than the rule. Whenever possible victims and witnesses are kept on phone alert so that they do not needlessly waste time from their jobs and other activities. The juvenile division of the State Attorney's Office sends a copy of each witness list to the Victim Witness Aid Program. Each witness is contacted by a phone call whenever possible. In many instances where witnesses could not be reached by phone and there was not sufficient time for mailing a letter, a home visit was made to ensure the cancellation. Home visits are also conducted if the witnesses are children or elderly or if the State Attorney's Office request it. The victim may also be contacted through a home visit if the crime was of a serious nature. Pertinent information regarding place of

employment, and telephone numbers are obtained to assist the Victim Witness Aid Program in reaching them. The juvenile justice system is explained fully by the paralegal and any questions the witness may have are answered

The following is an approximation of the number of victims and witnesses who were notified of cancellations in 1977. This information was obtained by collecting all the witnesses list located in the paralegal's desk. It is most likely a conservative estimate and no other documentation exists.

JAN.	74	JULY	48
FEB.	82	AUG.	43
MARCH	93	SEPT.	77
APRIL	79	OCT.	172
MAY	69	NOV.	181
JUNE	83	DEC.	37

A record of the number of contacts made with victims and witnesses of trials was not kept by this office until May, 1978. The following is a breakdown of the number of trials scheduled, the number of trials which actually took place and the number of witness contacts by the office.

	<u>Trials Scheduled</u>	<u>Trials Took Place</u>	<u>Witness Contacts</u>
MAY	34	5	96
JUNE	43	6	115
JULY	36	9	135

The juvenile section also provides a service to victims and to the juvenile court by releasing property admitted into evidence during a trial. After the thirty days appeal date has passed, an evidence release form is sent to the Victim/Witness Aid Program. The paralegal contacts the appropriate person to make arrangements

to pick up the property. If they do not have transportation or their work schedule does not permit them time to obtain their property, then the paralegal signs for the property and delivers it to them obtaining a signed property receipt from the owner. No records of this service has been maintained.

Another service provided to some victims of crime is a type of crisis intervention. Many times there has been no offender arrested for a crime but the victim is in need of social services. A home visit or hospital visit is made to ascertain the needs of the victim and family. Transportation is provided to the appropriate agency or arrangements are made to have a worker from the agency make a home or hospital visit if necessary. No accurate statistics have been kept, but a conservative approximation would be between two to four each month.

In 1978 some changes have occurred in the juvenile section. Since June, 1978, the Victim/Witness Aid Program obtains all filed cases from the juvenile division of the State Attorney's Office. The paralegals review all the cases and select those cases in which services should be provided. This improved the old system whereby the Assistant State Attorneys filing cases merely attached a note to those ones which they thought the Victim/Witness Aid Program could be of assistance. The new system should also help the paralegals by getting the cases with sufficient time to complete the necessary restitution information. Now that there are three paralegals in the juvenile division, specialization has occurred. One paralegal does witness notification, transporting victims and witnesses to court, all "no file cases", and the work program. The remaining two paralegals complete restitution reports for the judges, home visits to victims where there is serious injury or heavy property damage, all

property release on evidence obtained by law enforcement departments, all property releases on evidence admitted at trial, assist victims in civil suits and some crisis intervention.

Because most police departments have participated in the work program, they are aware of how the program operates. If a juvenile is a first offender and the law violation is not serious but minimal losses to the victim occurred, the police department might request the assistance of the Victim/Witness Aid Program in working out a restitution agreement prior to sending the referral to the Division of Youth Services. The police officers have the option in sending referrals for information only and not for court action. However, the State Attorney's Office may file charges on these referrals but rarely does that happen.

The new Statute, Chapter 39, to be effective October 1, 1978, requires the court to notify all victims of final disposition. This will alleviate some of the burden for the juvenile section of the Victim/Witness Aid Program. The letter from the court will include an introduction to the Victim/Witness Aid Program and its phone number. This means that the Victim/Witness Aid Program will no longer have to notify the victim of the disposition of cases they select and will allow the paralegals increased time to devote to other services.

Since the new procedure of reviewing all cases began in June, 1978, the juvenile section is running six weeks behind the court schedule. This delay has required the staff to selectively screen cases. However, the new law should allow the juvenile staff to provide a more comprehensive spectrum of services. The juvenile staff would like to see the following activities implemented:

1. Training for law enforcement departments on appropriate treatment of victims and witnesses.
2. 24 hour crisis intervention for victims of serious juvenile crimes.

The evaluation team concurs with the proposed increased services as long as appropriate documentation is part of the planning and implementation.

The senior paralegal and others within the juvenile section should be commended for establishing the variety of services and programs within the juvenile section, as well as providing services to victims and witnesses. It is with regret that the appropriate documentation was not maintained by the Director. One of the main priorities of the Director should be establishing a data base which will efficiently and effectively document the above services. Objective Five provides recommendations along these lines.

It is also recommended that the responsibility of the notification system, property and evidence release procedures which require phone or written contact with victims, witnesses and police officers be assumed by one secretary. This would allow the professional staff to devote more time to services for victims and particularly crisis intervention.

OBJECTIVE ONE

TO DETERMINE THE COMPREHENSIVENESS  
OF THE PROGRAM IN ADDRESSING THE  
NEEDS OF THE VICTIMS/WITNESSES OF  
CRIME IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

In order to determine the comprehensiveness of the Victim/Witness Aid Center, an examination of the statistical data available within Palm Beach County was conducted. Utilizing the 1977 Annual Report, Crime In Florida, produced by the Department of Criminal Law Enforcement, an attempt was made to trace the number of crimes reported to law enforcement, the number of arrests, the number of cases filed by the State Attorney's Office, the number of cases selected by the Victim/Witness Aid Program and the actual number of cases (victims and witnesses) who actually received services from the Program.

The 1977 Annual Report, Crime In Florida, only list the reporting of index crimes. The enormous task which would be involved in listing the reporting of all crimes makes this prohibitive not only for the Department of Criminal Law Enforcement but also for the limited number of staff and the amount of time available to conduct this evaluation. Thus, for the purpose of determining the extent to which the Victim Witness Aid Program provides services to victims of crimes, this evaluation limited the tracking of cases to index crimes alone. A review of the Victim Witness Aid Program data shows that the majority of the cases they select from the State Attorney's Office are also index crimes.

According to the Department of Criminal Law Enforcement, the following index crimes were reported in 1977:

Murder	39
Rape	119
Robbery	854
Aggravated Assault	2,837
Burglary	10,200
Larceny	20,829
Motor Vehicle Theft	<u>1,539</u>
TOTAL	36,417

Even with the limitations explained above, this data demonstrates that there are at least 36,417+ victims or witnesses of serious crimes to whom some type of services could possibly be provided. In the same time period (1977), the following arrests for index crimes were made:

Murder	48
Rape	43
Robbery	296
Aggravated Assault	969
Burglary	1,628
Larceny	3,635
Motor Vehicle Theft	<u>283</u>
TOTAL	6,902

While crimes reported and arrests cannot be compared on a one-to-one basis, (an arrested person may be responsible for numerous crimes) for the purpose of this study, the assumption is made that because of multiple victims and witnesses, the reported figures are an

accurate representation of the comprehensiveness of the project. In addition to arrest data on index crimes, the 1977 Annual Report, Crime in Florida does include the total number of arrests for all crimes. The total number of arrests, including index crimes, is 21,097. Even excluding the number of cases where no arrest was made, there still are at least 21,097 victims or witnesses who have reported a crime and who could potentially be assisted by the Victim/Witness Aid Program during the reporting stage or in the follow-up investigative procedures conducted by law enforcement.

In determining how many cases were filed for prosecution in 1977, it was discovered that the State Attorney's Office has only maintained records on the types of crimes filed by the Office since March, 1977. The Palm Beach County Clerk's Office states that the State Attorney's Office filed a total of 7,919 cases in 1977.

The breakdown is as follows:

Felonies	2,591
Misdemeanors	3,200
Juvenile	2,129

Thus, there are at least 7,919 victims or witnesses of crimes who have had at least one or more contacts with the criminal justice system prior to their case being filed. The possibility exists for the 7,919 victims or witnesses that they will have additional contact through the prosecution of their cases. From March, 1977 through December, 1977, the following data is available on the filing of index crimes:

Murder	28
Rape (sexual battery)	34
Robbery	86
Aggravated Assault	86
Burglary	347
Grand Larceny/Theft (including motor vehicle theft)	200
	<hr/>
	781

The above data also included attempts to commit index crimes. A review of all cases filed by the State Attorney's Office during the ten month period indicate that a large percentage of the cases filed (41%) are index crimes. The remaining cases are generally victimless crimes or drug related offenses. Theft of a motor vehicle which is listed separately in the Uniform Crime Report, is legally included in the Florida Statute of Grand Larceny/Theft.

In estimating the number of index crimes filed during the remaining two months, the evaluation team computed 41% of the 666 felonies filed during January and February and estimated that 273 index crimes were filed. Thus, the approximate total for 1977 is 1,054.

In determining what criteria the Victim/Witness Aid Center utilized in selecting cases, the following information was obtained through interviewing the Project Director. In 1977, the Victim-Witness Aid Center has one source of referrals for selecting its felony cases: the State Attorney's Office. In other words, only victims and witnesses who report a crime in which a suspect is

arrested and the case is filed by the State Attorney's Office are generally eligible for services provided by the Program. From those felonies which are filed by the State Attorney's Office, the Victim Witness Aid Program selects only certain cases based upon the following criteria: All sexual assaults or sexual abuse cases are handled by the Sexual Assault Assistance Project. All 'victimless' crimes (such as possession of drugs, sale of narcotics, perjury, etc.) are eliminated. Cases involving only witnesses are generally excluded. Worthless check cases are eliminated. In general, the cases selected are those cases in which there is a potential for recovering property for the victim. Witnesses to crimes are virtually excluded, unless the victim is actively participating with the program.

In tracking the index crimes through the selection process of the Victim/Witness Aid Center, it was found that the Center's record keeping system does not note the type of crime when it opens a case file. The only way to determine what type of crimes the Victim/Witness Aid Program selects from the State Attorney's Office is to examine the closed cases. However, a comparison between the County Clerk's Office data and the Victim/Witness Aid Center's statistics on opened cases show the following:

	<u>Filed by State Attorney</u>	<u>Selected By Victim Witness Aid</u>
Felonies	2,591	745
Juvenile	<u>2,128</u>	<u>282</u>
TOTAL	4,719	1,077

Thus, of those cases closed from March, 1977 through December, 1977, the following data on index crimes is available.

Murder	0
Robbery	64
Aggravated Assault	95
Burglary	182
Grand Larceny/Theft	<u>246</u>
TOTAL	587

Assuming that the type of cases closed by Victim/Witness Aid Program during this period are approximately the same percentage of cases that are opened during this same period, the following chart shows the comprehensiveness of the Victim/Witness Aid Program.

<u>Crime:</u>	<u>Rept'd</u>	<u>Arrest</u>	<u>Filed</u>	<u>V.W.A.P.</u>
Murder	39	48	28	0
Robbery	854	296	86	64
Agg. Assault	2,837	969	86	95
Burglary	10,200	1,628	347	182
Grand Larceny/Theft	<u>22,368</u>	<u>3,918</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>246</u>
TOTAL	36,298	6,859	747	587

Further analysis of the limited data was initiated to determine whether the victims or witnesses of the cases which were selected by the Victim/Witness Aid Program actually received services. In an interview with the program's director, the following information about the Program's procedures was obtained. Once a case is selected from the felony division of the State Attorney's Office, a file is opened and a letter, accompanied by a survey which assesses the needs and/or problems of the victim, is mailed to the address listed on the information sheet filed by the State Attorney's Office. If the victim or witness responds to the letter and returns the survey,

the Victim/Witness Aid Program provides services. If the victim/witness does not respond to the survey, the case is closed (at no set time) and the reason is listed as "victim or witness not cooperative." In fact, however, comparison between closed files of the program which were listed as 'victim/witness not cooperative' and cases within the State Attorney's Office show that although the victim or witness may not have responded to the survey letter, they did, in fact cooperate with the State Attorney's office by attending depositions, testifying in trial, and giving their opinion of a plea during negotiations between the State Attorney and the defense attorney. Thus, the closing of a case as "victim/witness not cooperative" is not necessarily reflective of the victims' need for help or their willingness to participate in the system. It may not even be reflective of the victim or witnesses interest in working with the Victim/Witness Aid Program.

It may be that further contact with the victim or witness by phone or in person may show that the person was not interested in responding to the survey but that they are willing to pursue prosecution. It was also noted that the Victim/Witness Aid Program had also closed cases before the State Attorney had successfully disposed of a case.

Random sampling of case files which were closed as 'victim-witness not cooperative' revealed that in a majority of cases, no effort was made to follow up the survey letter with a phone call, another letter, a contact with the assistant state attorney or personal contact with the victim to determine whether the victim or witness could be assisted. In other words, the victim or witness's lack of response to a survey may not be a valid indicator

of their willingness to participate in the prosecution of an offender. However, of those index crime cases which were closed in 1977, the following data is available on the actual number of victims and witnesses served:

<u>CRIME:</u>	<u>Cases Closed</u>	<u>Closed As Not Cooperative</u>	<u>Cases Not Closed As Uncooperative</u>
Aggravated Assault	104	45 (43%)	59 (57%)
Grand Larceny/Theft	304	126 (41%)	178 (59%)
Burglary	223	107 (48%)	116 (52%)
Robbery	80	38 (48%)	42 (52%)
TOTAL	711	316 (44%)	395 (56%)

Of the 36,298 reported index crimes (excluding rape) which the Victim Witness Aid Program could potentially have provided services to, approximately one percent or 395 victims or witnesses actually received services. Of the 6,859 index crime cases where a suspect was arrested, less than 6% were provided with services. Of the 747 index crimes filed by the State Attorney's Office, 53% were provided services by the Victim/Witness Aid Program.

The data, therefore, shows that the comprehensiveness of the Victim/Witness Aid Program in meeting the needs of victims of crimes is limited not only to those cases which are filed by the State Attorney's Office but also to those cases where the victim or witness responded to a survey letter sent by the Victim Witness Aid Program. Analysis of data shows that 70% of all cases selected by the Victim Witness Aid Program received service. In total, the Victim Witness Aid Center closed 1,295 cases in 1977 and opened 1,077. The total budget for Victim Witness Aid Program during this

year was approximately \$170,000. Based upon 1,295 closed cases which are documented by the program, the approximate cost per case is \$131.00 whether services were provided or not. Of the total number of cases closed by the program, 387 cases were closed 'victim/witness not cooperative'. Excluding these cases, the cost per case rises to \$187.00 based upon the present data system.

According to the Victim Witness Aid Program's director, the criteria for selecting cases from the State Attorney's Office is substantially based upon the program's ability to recover monetary or property loss. Objective Four deals with the success of the program in obtaining restitution. It is important, therefore, that the program recognize that a lack of response on the part of a victim or witness does not necessarily mean that the victim or witness was uncooperative.

Further, every report which indicates that the program provided services to a certain number of victims or witnesses should be qualified by saying that they only provided services to those victims who responded to the survey. At present, cases which are closed because of the victim or witness's lack of response to a survey are included in reports as cases in which "services were provided".

Based upon the above data analysis a conference was held with the Director of the Victim Witness Aid Program. The Director stated that three paralegals of the program were terminated in 1977. In his opinion, the large number of cases closed, "victim/witness not cooperative", was due to the three terminated employees. A conference with the director and the two paralegals who remain in the felony division of the center revealed the following: (1) the paralegals are presently working directly with local law enforcement

agencies when requested. However, no files or data cards have been maintained. Even if they were used, the present data categories would not reflect services provided. One of the paralegals maintains a file where she places messages from police officers requesting assistance. This is the only available documentation of cases referred to the program by police officers.

(2) The director states that he believes the program is working on more cases with the State Attorney's Office. The basis for this statement is the increase in inter-office mail from the State Attorney's Office requesting assistance from the Center.

In an effort to determine whether the number of cases closed "victim/witness not cooperative" have decreased, cases closed in the first six months of 1978 (January - June, 1978) and data cards were reviewed. It is impossible to conduct the same analysis as was conducted for 1977. Thus, the following analysis is completed. The Palm Beach County Clerk's Office states that 1,452 felonies (and 4,658 misdemeanor cases) were filed in the first six months of 1978. The County paralegal who is supposed to provide services to victims of misdemeanor crimes does not keep files nor complete data cards on cases. Thus, efforts to determine the comprehensiveness of the program based upon the present data system is limited to felony cases. In the first six months of 1978 the Victim/Witness Aid Program selected 369 cases for services. In the same six month period in 1977, 415 felony cases were selected. The number of felony cases selected by the Victim/Witness Aid Program Center is declining.

Thus, the issue which is raised is whether the Program's criteria for selecting felony cases has been further defined so that the selected cases are actually provided with services.

The data cards for closed felony cases for the first six months of 1977 and 1978 were compared. The following data is available:

	Total No. Of Cases Closed	Victim/Witness Not Cooperative		Victim/Witness Not Available		Services Provided	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Jan, 1977	117	39	33	0	0	78	67
Jan, 1978	82	29	35	0	0	53	65
February, 1977	116	21	18	0	0	95	82
February, 1978	92	18	20	7	8	67	72
March, 1977	90	31	34	1	1	58	65
March, 1978	100	22	22	7	7	71	71
April, 1977	57	13	23	0	0	44	77
April, 1978	72	25	35	7	10	40	55
May, 1977	113	26	23	2	2	85	75
May, 1978	99	21	21	4	4	74	74
June, 1977	146	64	44	0	0	82	56
June, 1978	68	14	21	2	3	52	76
Total 1977	639	194	30%	3	0+%	442	69%
Total 1978	513	129	25%	27	5%	357	69%

The comparison between 1977 and 1978 data indicates that although the Center selected fewer cases, approximately the same percentage of cases are being closed as "victim/witness uncooperative or unavailable."

The Center's felony division staff did provide the evaluation team with a list of 49 cases in which exemplary services were provided. Of this number, 33 cases or 67% were referred to the program by the State Attorney's Office. The remainder, 16 cases, were referred by police officers or victims themselves. As explained previously, there is no documentation for these 49 cases. Case files are not opened and data cards are not punched when the services are completed. There is no way in which to evaluate these services or their effectiveness. Objective Five will deal with the need to revise data collection techniques, case management, administration of the Center and training and supervision of staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is obvious that the Victim/Witness Aid Program is not able to meet the needs of every victim or witness of a crime in Palm Beach County. The data, however, indicates that the Center is not meeting the needs of an average of 46% of those index crimes or 30% of all cases they select from their one source of referral; the State Attorney's Office. The center needs to change its orientation by:

- (1) Informing the community of the Victim/Witness Aid Program's services.
- (2) Increase the number of cases by amending its present selection criteria and including new sources of referral.
- (3) Increasing the number and types of services available to victims and witnesses.

(1) Informing the community of the Victim/Witness Aid Program's services:

Speaking engagements which help to visualize the program's services have been conducted on a request basis by the program's staff in the past. In an effort to inform the public, and thus potential victims of the program's services, the following recommendations are made. The program formalize a county-wide community awareness program. Speaking engagements before civic groups, students and any other interested groups should be actively sought. Letters indicating the program's interest in informing the public of the program's services should be distributed to all organizations. Many of the organizations have committees which plan the agenda for monthly meetings. Public service announcements

on radio and television are easily obtained and would be an efficient means of informing Palm Beach County residents of the program's services. Additionally, the program should join forces with local crime prevention programs to make sure that the program's services are known to them. Almost every major law enforcement department has an officer assigned to community education/crime prevention/community relations function. Contact should be made with each of the officers and printed material available to them. The Florida Help Stop Crime! Program which has helped to organize crime prevention programs throughout the State should also be informed of the program's services and provided with literature. The Sexual Assault Assistance Project conducts numerous speaking engagements within the public schools in the County. The program should consider working with S.A.A.P. to determine an effective way to reach students.

(2) Increase the number of cases by amending its present selection criteria and developing new sources of referral.

At present, the only attempt to notify law enforcement departments of the existence of the Victim/Witness Aid Program and its services has been the distribution of cards which lists the services of the program and its telephone numbers. The juvenile division does provide services to law enforcement under limited circumstances and has been well received by individual detectives who investigate crimes perpetrated by juveniles. Lastly, a brochure is available in the reception area of the State Attorney's Office. This has been the extent of the program efforts to work with law enforcement departments.

The present method of selecting cases from the State Attorney's Office and the program's use of letters and surveys to victims to inform them of the program's services has not been successful. It is recommended that the following steps be taken to increase the number of referrals from the State Attorney's Office.

(a) A description of the program's services and telephone number should be included in every subpoena or follow-up letter which the State Attorney's Office sends to victims and witnesses of crimes. In this way, every victim or witness of a filed felony will have the information available and the option to call the program if services are needed. The present cost per case in the program's felony division would certainly be reduced if one letter or subpoena from the State Attorney's Office listed the information about the program. It seems a duplication of time, effort, and money for both the State Attorney's Office and the Victim/Witness Aid Program to send out letters when one letter or subpoena could serve the same purpose.

(b) Every effort should be made to work with the State Attorney's Office to develop a witness notification system so that the program can at least save witnesses loss of time and money by keeping them informed of the status of their case. This notification system is used in the juvenile division and has been successful.

(c) The Center needs to expand its criteria by accepting cases from the State Attorney's Office where victims and witnesses of crime need emotional support as well as restitution and property recovery. Further recommendations about changes in services will be provided in Objective Five.

(d) The program needs to expand its sources of referral beyond the State Attorney's Office and include law enforcement departments. In an effort to reach victims and witnesses who do report crimes to law enforcement departments, the program should begin to work with police departments on a regular basis. Initially, it was assumed that the volume of cases which the State Attorney's Office filed would require the full time services of the four paralegals assigned to the felony division. This has not been the case. The felony division, as the history section indicates, has been reduced to two paralegals and the others reassigned to county court (misdemeanors) and juvenile. The juvenile court program appears to be successful and increasing the number of paralegals in this division appears to be justified. The decision to utilize one source for referrals, the State Attorney's Office, is unjustified purely in terms of the number of cases and the cost per case.

The program needs to expand its services based upon the needs of the victims. It is recommended that the program staff begin to work with law enforcement departments on a regular basis. This will not only help to expand the program's services but will also provide a link between police and prosecutors resulting in better communication, an accurate means of tracking cases, as well as improved services to victims and witnesses. This approach has been utilized by the Sexual Assault Assistance Project with considerable success.

Obviously police departments cannot request the program's services on every case. However, it is recommended that the program establish guidelines for police officers as to what type

of services the program can provide and what needs of victims the program can meet. In the past, the program has focused its services on cases when there is a potential of obtaining tangible results. This limitation should not be a part of the new guidelines for police departments. Crisis intervention, emotional support services as well as housing, transportation and other tangible services should be included in the new guidelines. The guidelines should include:

- (1) 24 hour crisis intervention support services to victims and witnesses who are in a traumatic state requiring immediate attention. Witnesses to violent crimes, particularly murder, are prime examples of the people who are most affected by crime and to whom the program does not provide any support at the present time.
- (2) Every victim who has sustained a personal injury or a property loss which may potentially be recovered or for which compensation is possible, should be informed of the program's services and the Florida Victim's Compensation Act.
- (3) Cases whose successful prosecution hinges upon the continued cooperation of victims and witnesses should be referred to the program.
- (4) Index crimes, should be given priority although other cases which meet the program's criteria should not be excluded merely because they are not index crimes.

The program must then formalize a program which will insure that all law enforcement departments and officers who may utilize

the program's services in the future are aware of the program's new orientation. It is recommended that:

- (1) The program work closely with the law enforcement department of the Palm Beach Junior College to insure that a Victim/Witness Aid Program presentation is included in every cadet class as well as the continuing education classes for officers.
- (2) The program work with the director of the Criminal Justice Training and Information Project, which produces a monthly newsletter, Legal Eagle, that is distributed to every law enforcement agency in Palm Beach County. An article describing the new services as well as monthly reminders would be helpful and an efficient way to advertise.
- (3) In-Service training sessions for detectives should be conducted in each law enforcement department which investigates index crimes. These sessions should concentrate on the program's services, concepts of victimology and sensitizing officers to the problems and needs of victims and witnesses.
- (4) A staff member should be assigned as a liaison person with police departments to insure cooperative efforts between law enforcement, the Victim/Witness Aid Program and the State Attorney's Office.
- (5) For the first year, a survey letter should be sent to each law enforcement officer who refers a client to the program or requests the program's service. This would provide a quality control mechanism to determine whether the program's services were helpful to the police officer as well as to the victim or witness.

In order to provide the increased services to victims, the job responsibilities and perhaps the qualifications of the staff may have to be amended. The following recommendations reflect basic changes which must be implemented in order to provide the program with staffing capabilities.

- (1) To provide 24 hour capability for the program, the staff must rotate evening and weekend on-call responsibilities. With a professional staff of eight, off hour calls would be limited to one night a week and one weekend every eight weeks. It is recommended that they be compensated in accordance with Palm Beach County's Personnel Rules and Regulations regarding on-call duty.
- (2) Requests from law enforcement will be limited to crisis situations. It is, therefore, recommended that all professional staff receive in-service training in crisis intervention before the new system is implemented. Several agencies provide training in crisis intervention and should be contacted. It may also be helpful to have the program's staff accompany S.A.A.P. staff on several crisis calls to assist in training them.
- (3) It is recommended that a training manual be developed for program staff which details the above services, office procedures, legal issues and investigative procedures.

In summary, it should be noted that the Victim/Witness Aid Program will only be able to revise its services if the program's director is willing to aggressively pursue and implement the above recommendations. The quality of leadership within the program is crucial in directing staff to expedite the recommended changes.

There are several administrative changes which should be considered:

(1) Records should be maintained which make a distinction between cases which are actually provided services and those that do not receive services. This would make a significant impact upon cost analysis and provide a more accurate picture of the program and its activities. It is difficult, at best, to evaluate a program when the data is not collected in a manner which accurately portrays the services.

(2) There is a crucial need for the program's director to completely revamp the present data system and case management system utilized by the program. Discussion with paralegals from the felony division of the program indicate that they are working with law enforcement agencies when requested and that law enforcement agencies are becoming confident that the program will respond. There is however, no documentation available. This is unfair to the staff which is evidently trying to bring about meaningful change within the program.

(3) The data available for the juvenile division of the program is completely inadequate. A new data system needs to be developed which accurately reflects the juvenile services. At best, the present data system reflects less than half of the services which the juvenile staff provides.

If the program is to implement the recommendations of this evaluation, a considerable amount of time needs to be devoted to planning and preparation. The data system, in particular, should be finalized before the staff begins to provide services. It is strongly recommended that the director work closely with the MPU to insure that all the necessary information is available through the data system.

There are several questions raised by this evaluation which should

be considered by those agencies charged with monitoring and evaluating the program's services. As a discretionary grant, the Victim/Witness Aid Program was monitored periodically by the staff of the Regional Offices of LEAA. That problems were not recognized and changes recommended by the evaluation team points to the need for re-evaluation of present monitoring techniques.

Although the local MPU was not responsible for monitoring the project, it is recommended that close monitoring control be initiated by the MPU once the project begins to plan and initiate the changes recommended in this report. If the program becomes a county agency, it should be located within the Department of Criminal Justice. This placement would facilitate implementing the recommendations concerning monitoring.

OBJECTIVE TWO

TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT WHICH VICTIMS AND WITNESSES WHO WERE SERVED BY THE VICTIM/WITNESS AID PROGRAM FELT IT BENEFITED THEM.

Information regarding this objective was obtained from the Victim/Witness surveys which are routinely sent to each case as it is closed. The surveys for calendar year 1977 were examined and from the question, "How would you describe the help offered by the Victim/Witness Aid Program in assisting you in your court case?"

Of the 148 individuals who returned the survey, the responses were as follows:

Of Assistance	-	112
Some Assistance	-	19
No Assistance	-	14
Missing Values	-	<u>3</u>
TOTAL		148

Thus, 89% of the victim/witnesses who returned the survey felt that the program was at least of some service to them. Care should be taken however to identify the perimeters of the surveys and to state its limitations. As specified in Objective One, the available data is subject to an unknown selection bias. As cases are screened into the program, a questionnaire is sent to each victim and witness. Only some of the questionnaires are returned to the program. Thus, only the individuals who return the questionnaires are eligible to receive services from the staff. At the conclusion of the case, a survey letter is sent to each client who was actually provided services. In 1977, 293 survey letters were sent and 148 returned which represents a response rate of 51%. Thus, only half the

individuals who were served by the program bothered to return the survey and these were presumably the ones who liked the project and were motivated to cooperate. Data is not available on why the other 49% did not return the survey letter and hence, never participated in the program whatsoever.

When the returned survey forms were examined, the comments made by victims and witnesses cast further doubt on just how much confidence should be placed on this instrument. Consistently individual's comments were concerned with the disposition of their case rather than the services provided by the program. If the case was decided in the favor of the victim and court imposed jail time on the defendant, then the survey reflected a positive attitude toward the program. If on the other hand, the defendant was not sufficiently punished by the court, very negative comments were received or presumably the survey was not returned.

Consequently, the data that is available should not be generalized beyond a category of victims who, (1) met the criteria for the program as specified in Objective One; (2) returned the initial questionnaire; and were selected to receive the final survey.

OBJECTIVE THREE

TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE  
VICTIMS/WITNESSES SERVED BY THE PROGRAM  
FELT IT HAD IMPACTED THEIR ATTITUDES  
TOWARD THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.

Contained in the survey that is sent to 'cooperating victims' upon their conclusion is the question:

"Do you have more confidence in the criminal justice system as a result of the assistance you may have received from the Victim/Witness Aid Program?"

In the calendar year 1977, there were 293 surveys sent to victims and witnesses upon the closing of their cases. Returned surveys numbered 148 and represented a response rate of 51%. Fifteen individuals did not answer this question and of the 133 who did 20% or 27 individuals did not feel that the services provided by the project had improved their confidence in the criminal justice system. Because of the selection bias inherent in this survey, this statistic of one out of every five individuals who responded to the survey answering in the negative is cause for concern. These individuals responded at a greater rate that the program had been of assistance and that it had improved their attitude toward the criminal justice system. What this apparently means is the system is still unresponsive to the needs of the victim in a sizeable percentage of the cases with which it has targeted special resources. Again, there is a relationship between the victims attitude toward the criminal justice system and disposition of that victims case.

The Victim Witness Aid Program has made a commendable effort

in attempting to assess the satisfaction of individuals who were provided services by the project. A few modifications in the instrument used to assess this satisfaction would make this effort more accurate.

There is some confusion on the part of the victims who responded to the survey as to what the instrument is designed to address. A lot of the surveys which are returned by victims include comments which complain about the disposition of the case and the sentence the offender received as opposed to the services which were provided by the project. While this survey attempts to capture information relative to attitudes toward the project, it is in fact, capturing something entirely different. Therefore, the recommendation is made that a new survey be designed which is more specific. One possible way of assessing the scope of service would be to simply ask the victim to list what services were provided and their opinion of the worth of these services. The feedback provided by these open ended questions should provide the program with valuable information regarding the quality of the services which are being provided as well as a good indicator as to how each criminal justice specialist is being received by the victims who are being provided services.

SURVEY RESULTS  
1977

Sent - 293

Returned - 148

Response Rate - 51%

1. Of Assistance 112	Some Assistance 19	No Assistance 14
2. Adequately Informed Yes 124		No 11
3. Worthwhile Program 12		Unnecessary Program 5
More confidence in system as result of V/W program 5. Yes - 106		No - 27

OBJECTIVE FOUR

TO DETERMINE THE DEGREE TO WHICH  
RESTITUTION IS BEING ORDERED AS  
PART OF THE SENTENCING PROCESS IN  
PALM BEACH COUNTY.

The data which was routinely collected by the project concerning restitution has some serious flaws in the manner in which it was collected. The selection bias which is present in the way cases are screened into the program makes the data base questionable. The problem is twofold. First, there are many cases where restitution may have been ordered and the project was not aware of it. Because the project is selective and because the selectivity is not applied on a consistent basis, there is no way of knowing just how comprehensive the project's knowledge about restitution is. Secondly, a random check of the files shows that some of the cases in which restitution has been a factor managed to elude the services of the project but still somehow were recorded. For example, a case where the victim may not have cooperated or where only minimal services were provided may result in a disposition which includes restitution and this will show up in the project data. The problem is the project may have had absolutely no effect upon this case whatsoever but because of the data system used by the project, the case is credited the same as one where extensive services were provided. Incomplete information on both the cards and in the case files sheds serious doubt upon the level of confidence which should be afforded to the data collected by the project.

An attempt was made to compare restitution by each criminal division but this information proved to be very confusing. Two judges rotated in two of the four criminal divisions. The rotation of judges

did not present a major problem. The basic problem was the inconsistent manner in which the project personnel collected the information. The only statement that can be made with any degree of confidence is that the project records reflect to some degree the incidence of ordering restitution in Palm Beach County. Any analysis which is based on this data can only suggest what the rate of restitution as a sentencing alternative is. With these qualifications in mind, the restitution picture is cautiously painted.

Based upon the program's data system, restitution is not an important and often utilized disposition in the felony courts of Palm Beach County. For the calendar year 1977, program data indicates that the four felony divisions averaged \$7,327. This was from a total of 58 cases which represents less than 1% of the cases in the system. Therefore, according to the records kept by the Victim-Witness Aid Program, restitution is not a significant factor in dispositions at the circuit court level. This may be a reflection of the poor record keeping system of the project or it may reflect the attitudes toward dispositions of restitution by the judges involved. In any event, the data which was collected does not suggest that the project has had any impact upon the judges propensity to impose restitution as part of a sentence.

During 1977 the Juvenile and Family Division of the Circuit Court utilized the restitution disposition to a much greater extent than did the felony divisions. Of the 302 cases handled by the program in which restitution was a factor, 244 or 81% were from the juvenile division. Additionally, the juvenile court imposed 407 hours of community service on the youth. This community service aspect is important in assuring that the economic status of the youth and his family is not a significant factor applied in a

discriminatory manner in the case. Stated more simply, community services allows the judge to use restitution for people of very limited economic means. The restitution, instead of money, is the clients time and labor. This greater utilization of restitution for juveniles may be the result of the inability of the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services to provide adequate probation services. Restitution is a form of social control which gives the judge an alternative to the normal processing of the case.

There is again, no evidence in the data collected that the Victim/Witness Aid Program had any impact on the ordering of restitution. After discussions with the staff and the juvenile court judge, it is suspected that the project does in fact encourage the greater utilization of restitution. Because the project solicits the victims input and verifies the victim's losses, the judge feels more comfortable in ordering restitution.

In summary, the issue of restitution in Palm Beach County cannot be adequately explained at this time. The Victim/Witness Aid Program's impact upon the ordering of restitution by judges is not available because of the inadequate data base provided by the program. Recommendations concerning the data system and evaluating the issue of restitution are limited to the program ability to reconstruct the data system to provide meaningful information.

The new data system should include categories which show whether or not the program assisted in obtaining information for the judge, prosecuting and defense attorneys, and probation officers which helped them work out a plea negotiation involving restitution to the victim. Such categories could be:

1. Provided judge with notarized statement of victim's losses.

2. Contact with Assistant State Attorney indicating victim's losses.
3. Attend plea negotiation and provided information on victim's losses.
4. Other services which assisted victim is obtaining restitution.
5. No services provided but restitution ordered.
6. Services provided but no restitution ordered.

The above data categories are merely examples of the type of data which the Victim/Witness Aid Program should be collecting. The inclusion of category 5 and 6 would serve as a basis for comparison.

OBJECTIVE FIVE

TO CORRELATE THE TYPE OF CRIME, THE SERVICES PROVIDED THE VICTIM, AND THE DISPOSITION OF THE CASE. THIS WILL SHOW IF SERVICES TO VICTIMS HAVE MORE IMPACT ON SUCCESSFUL PROSECUTION THAN THOSE SERVICES PROVIDED TO VICTIMS OF OTHER CRIMES.

It was not possible with the existing data base to adequately examine this objective. A discussion of why this was not possible and recommendation on how to design a data base; how to develop a new case management system; and discussion of more suitable supervisory and administrative techniques have been substituted.

Recommendations on Documentation:

The data which is routinely collected on each case is not sufficient to allow an examination of the services which have been provided and their impact upon the criminal justice system. While the data base can provide a profile of the victims who received services, the already documented selection bias existing in the program does not make this profile of value. Other than the previously discussed selection bias, the primary deficiency with the way the data is collected is that the categories are not mutually exclusive and exhaustive. This is to say that the items of information can fit into more than one of the categories or they do not fit into any of the categories provided. This is especially true in the area of services provided to victims. There are no categories for items such as "accompanied victim to court appearance."

There are other services which are provided by the project which are not being documented and consequently an accurate assessment of the project impact is not possible. Consideration should be

given to a modification in the amount and type of information which is routinely being collected by the project. This information should reflect the full range of services of the project, the full range of crimes which the project addresses, and the disposition of the victims cases which include but are not limited to, years of prison time, county jail time, probation, probation with special conditions. Within the record keeping system, information should provide for one of three activities. First, each paralegal should have the information necessary to effectively allocate resources. Second, the project coordinator should have adequate information upon which to supervise the staff and provide policy direction. Third, necessary information should be available to measure the impact of the program on the criminal justice system.

The following is an attempt to provide specific steps for the director to follow in redirecting the program.

1. THE PRESENT DATA SYSTEM SHOULD BE REVISED TO REFLECT CURRENT SERVICES AS WELL AS THE RECOMMENDED INCREASE IN SERVICES ADDRESSED IN OBJECTIVE ONE.

The data categories should begin with the referral source and continue to track the progress of the case. In each stage of the investigation or prosecution, specific categories should be set aside to show the services provided by the paralegal at the stage.

At present, 69 of the 91 categories on the data cards are completed merely by transposing information from police and court records onto the data cards. It would appear that this information could be collected by a clerk in a more simplified manner. For instance, the type of crime could be written on the card rather than using 66 categories to list all the different types of crimes.

These categories could be more affectively used to show the different types of services provided by the program and track the progress of the case. It is misleading to assume that the paralegal obtained this information from personal contract. In general, they did not.

Consideration should be given to developing different data categories for different divisions of the program. The data cards would then paint an accurate portrait of the services provided to the victims and witnesses of certain types of crimes. The idea of two data systems: one for crimes involving property loss and one for crimes involving personal injury, merits attention. The Sexual Assault Assistance Project and the Domestic Assault Assistance Project have different data systems not only because they assist victims of two special crimes, but also because their services are entirely different. The differences between felony, misdemeanor and juvenile divisions certainly warrants consideration of this recommendation. If all three divisions begin to develop uniformity in the type of services, the program needs to consider developing new data systems which will show the difference in the way property loss crimes and personal injury crimes are handled

2. THE DATA SYSTEM NEEDS TO BE EXPANDED TO SHOW THAT THE PROGRAMS SERVICES ARE ACTUALLY MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE WAY CASES ARE BEING HANDLED BY THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.

At present, there is no way to determine what happened to those cases where the Program has not provided services. There is no basis for comparison and thus no way to determine whether the Program's services had any impact or, for example, affected the amount of restitution awarded by various judges. In the felony division, there is some indication that the basis for awarding

restitution may center around the judges philosophy concerning restitution rather than services provided by the program. In the juvenile division it appears that the efforts of the paralegals have had a definite impact upon the ordering of restitution. It would behoove the program's director to develop an objective base to demonstrate the impact the program has upon the issue of restitution. It is not possible to discern from existing data, the reason the judge is ordering restitution.

3. A NEW CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM NEEDS TO BE DEVELOPED TO PROVIDE INSTANT STATUS REPORTS ON CASES AS WELL AS DOCUMENTATION FOR SERVICES PROVIDED.

An examination fo the case files for this project reveals that there is not an established procedure for case management. Each paralegal handles his/her caseload in an individual manner and the documenation which exists is not sufficient for either project administration purposes or for evaluation purposes. For example, it is difficult on most cases and impossible on others to determine the status of the case by simply opening the case file. While the latest notes, official documents, form letters, etc. are usually at the beginning of the file, this is not always the case. Also glaring ommissions in required information are often present. A case file may reflect a trial date and then after a three month period, where there is no hint of what happened in the case, it is closed. While the case may have been handled in an exemplary manner, it is not documented as good case management techniques would dictate. In an effort to document what happens in each case, a Case Tracking Sheet has been developed by the evaluation team. It is recommended that this sheet be utilized for every case.

This sheet has several features which will provide for both better management of the individual case and management of the project. These features are as follows:

- a. Cases are often inter-related. For example, there is often more than one victim or witness in one unlawful act. This sheet recognizes that fact and includes a checklist format so each case will reflect the coordination of all concerned.
- b. Type of contact code. Each entry into the case sheet will contain a code which will reflect the type of contact. The case tracking sheet and the code system are included in Appendix One.
- c. The case tracking sheets should be affixed to the inside cover of the case file and will allow for an instant status report on each case.
- d. The case tracking sheet should focus on services provided and not on related criminal justice activities. In other words, case files should not only note when a trial date has been postponed, but more important that the victim was notified of this delay.

4. OFFICE MANUAL SHOULD BE DEVELOPED TO PROVIDE STAFF WITH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF PURPOSE AND TO INSURE UNIFORMITY IN SERVICES.

At present the program's director has not developed a procedural or training manual for staff. Thus, staff members have developed their own techniques and ways of handling cases. A manual should provide staff with the following: a basic understanding of the

of the program's goals; the basic responsibilities of the job; standard operating procedures; Palm Beach County personnel rules and regulations as they affect Victim Witness Aid Program staff; information on victimology and the problems victims and witnesses encounter; an explanation of how to open, maintain and close a case; specific information on the data system and its categories and the importance of correctly completing data cards. The manual should also be continually updated to keep staff informed of changes within the program and the criminal justice system as it affects the program.

5. TIME SHEETS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED BY EACH STAFF MEMBER AND REVIEWED BY THE DIRECTOR ON A WEEKLY BASIS.

Each member of the staff, including the director, should complete a daily time sheet. Appendix Two provides an example of one which would be easily adaptable to Victim Witness Aid Program. The purpose of the time sheets would be three fold. One, it would provide documentation on 'one-contact cases' which do not merit opening a file. Secondly, it would provide the director with insight about the daily activities of the program and the staff. Lastly, it would provide documentation for compensatory time or flex time if the program implemented a 24 hour crisis intervention program.

6. A DAILY LOG BOOK SHOULD BE MAINTAINED

A log book should be maintained so that the director and staff know the location of staff members at any time during working hours. When staff members make several morning visits to victims prior to coming to the office or are not able to return in the afternoon, they should call the program, advise them of their location and obtain all messages.

All of the above recommendations concerning the data system, office procedures, and case management techniques would provide the program with the necessary documentation in addition to standardizing procedures.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

The basic problem within the Victim Witness Aid Program appears to be the lack of administrative direction and supervision. The initial intent of the program was to provide services to victims. But the focus appears to have become confused as the staff is also providing services for the State Attorney Office, law enforcement departments and the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, which are not necessarily services to victims. In fact, the sole purpose of the County division of the Victim Witness Aid program is to augment the function of the two state agencies; the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and the State Attorney's Office. There may be a need to do so, but this does not mean that victims of crimes are receiving services. The locating of a victim and transporting that person to court to testify is primarily an investigative service for the State Attorney and secondarily may ease the victim's participation, if in fact that victim or witness wanted to testify and wanted assistance. A clearer distinction by the program's director is needed so that the staff understands the basic purpose of the program. If the program was to operate as originally intended, the victims would receive services and as a secondary outcome, police, prosecutors and social service agencies would probably also benefit. The final results of the S.A.A.P. evaluation clearly demonstrates that by providing services to victims, other related agencies were also assisted. It is important to clarify for the staff the program's

intent and purpose. In an effort to accomplish this, the following recommendations are made:

1. The program's director should attend conferences on management, programming, planning and victimology. On site visits to the other victim services projects would also be helpful. Additionally, information on how other programs operate should be found and perhaps the Victim Witness Aid Program could model some of its programs after them. The Pima County Victim Witness Advocate Program, Tucson, Arizona, has developed written material which this program may find helpful.

2. The Victim Witness Aid Program has been approved as a Palm Beach County agency and will be located within the Department of Criminal Justice. The Victim Witness Aid director should work closely with the MPU in implementing new directions for the program.

3. Closer supervision of staff by the director is mandatory. A close working relationship between the Victim Witness Aid Program director and the MPU is necessary.

In conclusion, the program is not directing its full efforts to its target population, victims and witnesses of crimes. Although the project director states that the data system was devised to document the services stated in the initial grant. This is questionable. The original grant application clearly states that the program would work with victims and witnesses during the reporting stage and continue throughout the victim's participation in the system. There are specific paragraphs within the initial grant application which describe the type of services the project would provide. The measurable objectives established by the program, and LEAA do not address the types of services the initial grant

application stated the project would provide. The establishment of the measurable objectives, however, should not have been nor should it continue to be utilized as a justification for limiting the program's focus of services to the State Attorney's Office. As the history section of this evaluation states, the initial grant application was written by the State Attorney. Based upon the initial grant it was certainly not the State Attorney's intention to limit the grant to cases which were filed by his office.

Throughout the three years the program has been in existence, there have been numerous references to starting a crisis intervention service. In one newspaper article (Palm Beach Post, 1977) the Victim Witness Aid Program Director is quoted as saying that a crisis intervention service had been established two weeks prior to the publication of the article. There are no records to reflect such a service. Nor were any attempts made to purchase the necessary equipment (beepers, 24 hour phone service, etc.) for such a service. Nor were there any attempts to train staff, set up on-call schedules, or develop a workable system with police departments.

If the proposed services had been implemented, the validity of the data would have significantly improved and would have provided an effective base for evaluating not only the Victim/Witness Aid program but also other agencies within the criminal justice system whose responsibilities bring them into continuous contact with victims and witnesses. The only way valid and reliable data will become available from Victim Witness Aid Program's statistics would be if the paralegal is present during the actual stages of the criminal justice system in which the victim must participate. Objective One provided specific steps on how to develop such services.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations contained within this evaluation provide a foundation upon which changes may be made in the Victim Witness Aid Program. They are only a starting point and should not be considered exhaustive. This section is divided into two parts.

1. Recommendations on Services.
2. Recommendations on Public Relations, Supervision/Staffing, Documentation and Administration.

SECTION ONE  
RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING SERVICES

JUVENILE SERVICES

1. It is recommended that the work program for "no file" cases be continued and that a system be implemented to document the number of juvenile offenders who participate in the program.
2. It is recommended that the responsibility of the notification system, property and evidence release procedures which require phone or written contact with victims, witnesses and police officers be assumed by one secretary. This would allow the professional staff to devote more time to services for victims and particularly crisis intervention. A simple data system to document the number of persons provided this service should be implemented.
3. It is recommended that the limited crisis intervention services provided by the juvenile staff be expanded by establishing criteria and notifying all police departments of the availability of this service on a 24 hour basis.

FELONY SERVICES

It is recommended that the Victim Witness Aid Program increase the number of cases by amending its present selection criteria and developing new sources of referral. The following recommendations are suggested as a means of accomplishing this end:

1. A description of the program's services and telephone number should be included in every subpoena or follow-up letter which the State Attorney's Office sends to victims and witnesses of crimes.
2. The Victim Witness Aid Program should work with the State Attorney's Office to develop a witness notification system for felony cases.
3. The Victim Witness Aid Program should expand its criteria by accepting cases from the State Attorney's Office where victims and witnesses of crime need emotional support as well as restitution and property recovery.
4. In an effort to reach victims and witnesses whose cases do not continue beyond reporting crimes to law enforcement departments, the Victim Witness Aid Program should expand its sources of referral beyond the State Attorney's Office and include law enforcement departments. This would provide a link between police and prosecutors resulting in better communication, an accurate means of tracking cases, as well as improved services to victims and witnesses.

Criteria for police departments should be established so that there is an understanding by law enforcement offices of the types of services which Victim Witness Aid Program can provide. The guidelines should include:

1. A 24 hour crisis intervention support service to victims and witnesses who are in a traumatic state requiring immediate attention. Witnesses to violent crimes, particularly murder, are prime examples of the people who are most affected by crime and to whom the program does not provide any support at the present time.

Felony Services - continued

2. Every victim who has sustained a personal injury or a property loss which may potentially be recovered or for which compensation is possible, should be informed of the program's services and the Florida Victim's Compensation Act.
3. Cases whose successful prosecution hinges upon the continued cooperation of victims and witnesses should be referred to the program.
4. Index crimes, should be given priority although other cases which meet the program's criteria should not be excluded merely because they are not index crimes.

SECTION TWO

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING:

1. PUBLIC RELATIONS
2. SUPERVISION/STAFFING
3. DOCUMENTATION
4. ADMINISTRATION

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

It is recommended that the Victim Witness Aid program formalize a county-wide community awareness program. Speaking engagements before civic groups, students and any other interested groups should be actively sought. Letters indicating the program's interest in informing the public of the program's services should be distributed to all organizations. Public service announcements are an efficient means of informing Palm Beach County residents of the program's services. The program should join forces with local crime prevention programs to make sure that the program's services are known to them. The Florida Help Stop Crime! Program which has helped to organize crime prevention programs throughout the State should also be informed of the program's services and provided with literature. The program should work with S.A.A.P. to determine an effective way to reach students in the local school system.

The program should formalize a program which will insure that all law enforcement departments and officers who may utilize the program's services in the future are aware of the program's new orientation. It is recommended that:

1. The program work closely with the law enforcement department of the Palm Beach Junior College to insure that a Victim/Witness Aid Program presentation is included in every cadet class as well as the continuing education classes for officers.
2. The program should work with the Criminal Justice Training and Information Project, which produces a monthly newsletter, Legal Eagle, that is distributed to every law enforcement agency in Palm Beach County. An article describing the new services as well as monthly reminders would be a helpful and an efficient way to advertise.
3. In-Service training sessions for detectives should be conducted in each law enforcement department which investigates index crimes. These sessions should concentrate on the program's services, concepts of victimology and sensitizing officers to the problems and needs of victims and witnesses.
4. A staff member should be assigned as a liaison person with police departments to insure cooperative efforts between law enforcement, the Victim/Witness Aid Program and the State Attorney's Office.
5. For the first year, a survey letter should be sent to each law enforcement officer who refers a client to the program or requests the program's service. This would provide quality control mechanism to determine whether the program's services were helpful to the police officer as well as to the victim or witness.

## SUPERVISION/STAFFING

1. It is recommended that the staff rotate evening and weekend on-call responsibilities. With a professional staff of eight, off hour calls would be limited to one night a week and one weekend every eight weeks. The staff should be compensated in accordance with Palm Beach County's Personnel Rules and Regulations regarding on-call duty.

## Supervision/Staffing

2. It is recommended that all professional staff receive in-service training in crisis intervention before the new system is implemented.
3. It is recommended that a training manual be developed for program staff which details the above services, office procedures, legal issues and investigative procedures.
4. Closer supervision of staff by the director is mandatory.
5. Office manual should be developed to provide staff with a better understanding of purpose and to insure uniformity in services.
6. Time sheets should be maintained by each staff member and reviewed by the director on a weekly basis.
7. A daily log book should be maintained.

## DOCUMENTATION

### Data System

1. The data system should attain two important goals. First, necessary information should be available to measure the impact of the program on the criminal justice system. Second, the project coordinator should have adequate information upon which to supervise the staff and provide policy direction.
2. Consideration should be given to a modification in the amount and type of information which is routinely collected by the project. For instance, the type of crime should be written on the card rather than utilizing valuable space on the data card itself.
3. The data system should have mutually exclusive categories.
4. Records should be maintained which make a distinction between cases which are actually provided services and those that do not receive services.
5. The data categories should begin with the referral source and continue to track the progress of the case. In each stage of the investigation or prosecution, specific categories should be set aside to show the services provided by the paralegal at that particular stage.
6. The present data system should be revised to reflect current services as well as the recommended increase in services addressed in Objective One.
7. Consideration should be given to developing different data categories for different divisions of the program.

Documentation - continued

8. A new data system should be developed which accurately reflects the juvenile services.
9. If all three divisions begin to develop uniformity in the type of services, the program needs to consider developing new data systems which will show the difference in the way property loss crimes and personal injury crimes are handled.
10. The data system needs to be expanded to show whether the programs services make a difference in the way cases are being handled to demonstrate the impact the program has upon the issue of restitution. The new data system should include categories which show whether or not the program assisted in obtaining information for the judge, prosecuting and defense attorneys, and probation officers which helped them work out a plea negotiation involving restitution to the victim.

Case Management

A new case management system needs to be developed to provide instant status reports on cases as well as documentation for services provided.

The Case Tracking Sheet which has been developed by the evaluation team, should be utilized for every case.

Quality Control

It is recommended that the Director design a new victim survey form which would include open ended questions asking the victim to list what services were provided and their opinion of the worth of these services.

ADMINISTRATION

The program's director should attend conferences on management, programming, planning, and victimology. On site visits to the other victim services projects would also be helpful. Additionally, information on how other programs operate should be collected and reviewed.

The Victim Witness Aid director should work closely with the Metropolitan Planning Unit in implementing new directions for the program.

APPENDIX I





CASE TRACKING SHEET

Case # \_\_\_\_\_

<u>DATE</u>	<u>CODE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>VICTIM #1</u>	<u>VICTIM #2</u>	<u>WITNESS #1</u>	<u>WITNESS #2</u>

APPENDIX II



**END**