



**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS

**KWAME RAOUL**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

December 28, 2023

RE: Annual Report of the Violent Crimes Advisory Commission

Dear Honorable Members of the Illinois General Assembly:

In consultation with the chairperson of the Violent Crimes Advisory Commission, Dr. Kathryn Bocanegra, I am pleased to provide this annual report in accordance with the Violent Crimes Victims Assistance Act (VCVA Act). [725 ILCS 240/5(8)].

**Membership Overview**

Pursuant to 725 ILCS 240/4, the Violent Crimes Advisory Commission (VCAC) shall consist of 18 members. These members shall include the Attorney General, or his or her designee who shall serve as Chairperson; the Illinois Secretary of State or his or her designee; the Chief Justice of the Court of Claims or his or her designee; the Director of Children and Family Services; two members of the House of Representatives, one to be appointed by the Speaker of the House and one to be appointed by the Minority Leader of the House; two members of the Senate, one to be appointed by the President of the Senate and one to be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate; and the following to be appointed by the Attorney General: one police officer; one State's Attorney from a county in Illinois; one health services professional possessing experience and expertise in dealing with the victims of violent crime; one person who is employed as an administrator at a public or private institution of higher education; one person who is enrolled as a student at a public or private institution of higher education; and five members of the public, one of whom shall be a senior citizen age 60 or over, possessing experience and expertise in dealing with victims of violent crime, including experience with victims of domestic and sexual violence.

As of December 2023, 16 members filled the 18 spots available for VCAC. The two vacancies that exist include the President of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House. The Illinois Attorney General has actively worked to fill those vacancies.

## **Legislative Goals**

Pursuant to 725 ILCS 240/5, the VCAC has the following duties: (1) To study the operation of all Illinois laws, practices, agencies and organizations which affect victims of crime including but not limited to the Crime Victims Compensation Act; (2) To promote and conduct studies, research, analysis and investigation of matters affecting the interests of crime victims; (3) To recommend legislation to develop and improve policies which promote the recognition of the legitimate rights, needs and interests of crime victims; (4) To serve as a clearinghouse for public information relating to crime victims' problems and programs; (5) To coordinate, monitor and evaluate the activities of programs operating under this Act; (6) To make any necessary outreach efforts to encourage the development and maintenance of services throughout the State, with special attention to the regions and neighborhoods with the greatest need for victim assistance services; and (7) To perform other activities, in cooperation with the Attorney General, which the Advisory Commission considers useful to the furtherance of the stated legislative intent.

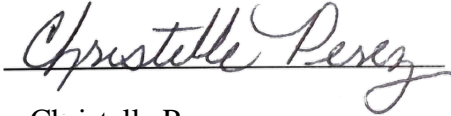
## **Quarterly Meetings**

In 2023 the VCAC convened four meetings. Quorum was achieved in each meeting (9 members constituted quorum). Each quarterly meeting shared a similar format. After attendance was taken and quorum met, the Chair provided an “office spotlight” that would highlight a Program, Bureau or Division within the Illinois Attorney General’s Office. These presentations included the Public Integrity Bureau, the Criminal Division, and the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program. Subsequently, the Division Chief of Crime Victim and Violence Prevention Services would share relevant highlights with VCAC members. Some of these updates included legislative updates to Crime Victims Compensation and sharing details about the Violent Crime Victim Assistance Grant program. This provided information to members, facilitated discussion, allowed collaboration, and equipped members with information for outreach within community settings. The Chair facilitated additional member discussions on core topics related to supporting crime victims in Illinois. These topics included challenges related to the medical recovery of crime victims, how to better support crime victims living with a disability, priorities in supporting survivors of domestic violence, and the therapeutic care of crime survivors. Member discussions were data-driven and involved engaging both the expertise of Commission members as well as inviting external experts where appropriate. Additional opportunities were provided for members to provide input for legislative changes related to crime victim’s services.

## **2024 Priorities**

VCAC will host its first quarterly meeting in March 2024. In anticipation of this meeting, the Chair will meet individually with all VCAC Members to ensure continued participation and work to fill any existing/ anticipated vacancies. Topics that VCAC members plan to prioritize in the quarterly

meetings include; supporting survivors of human trafficking, arts-based programing for crime survivors, and best practices of working with crime survivors in prosecutor's offices.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christelle Perez". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Christelle Perez  
Chief, Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services Division