



Office of the District Attorney

Gordon P. McLaughlin, District Attorney

8th Judicial District

Serving Larimer and Jackson Counties

VISION: To protect and serve Larimer and Jackson counties, while creating a stronger community where the application of criminal justice is more equitable and no longer at odds with social justice.

If you've only learned about criminal justice from TV and movies, you'd understandably assume that a District Attorney's Office is just a group of attorneys spending their days making arguments in court. And, certainly, there is a lot of that. But while those prosecutors are the ones publicly advocating on behalf of our community, behind the scenes there is a team of equally passionate and dedicated members of DA offices quietly supporting those public successes. Among their many essential functions is the tireless work they do to support victims of crime.

Our Victim Advocate team at the District Attorney's Office for the 8th Judicial District consists of trained victim support staff engaged in the daily work of providing direct services to victims who are often experiencing some of the worst days of their lives when they enter the courthouse. In 2023, our office served 5,466 victims in 2023, including child victims, victims of sexual assault, and victims of domestic violence, all of whom may be experiencing significant trauma. Our advocates provide guidance and support through the complex legal system. They are the nexus between attorneys and victims for input about the resolution of a case and what the case status is. They, along with our Courtroom Facility Dog, Zion, work to make a trial and other case events – an inherently difficult and sometimes traumatic process – as comfortable as possible. They work with victims to secure restitution (over 2 million dollars in restitution for crime victims in the 8th Judicial District was collected in 2023) and Crime Victims' Compensation.

Quite simply, prosecutors could not do their jobs in the courtroom holding the perpetrators of violent crimes accountable if not for the bravery of victims who come forward and the support from our victim advocates. Without these services, fewer victims would come forward to report crimes and fewer would recover successfully. While Law and Order may not depict many victim advocates, they are the unsung heroes of criminal justice.

April 21st – 27th is National Crime Victims' Rights Week. As part of our efforts, we are working to highlight the incredible stories of survival, courage, and perseverance of victims as well as extend well-deserved recognition to the advocates – at the DA office, at law enforcement agencies, at many indispensable non-profit partners, and all those in our strong Larimer community - who stand up to support victims of crime.

On April 21st, the DA Office is hosting a Community Resource Event at Oak Street Plaza in Fort Collins from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM highlighting community resources and honoring victims through art. On April 25th, we're hosting a Victims' Rights Week Awareness event at the Lincoln Center in Fort Collins from 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM featuring crime survivors sharing their stories, advocacy group tabling, and a candlelight vigil. Also on April 25th, I will be hosting the second in a series of Coffee Chats on important criminal justice topics at Muse Coffee in Loveland at 9:00 AM. The chat will highlight our victim advocates' role in supporting our community and ensuring prosecution is successful, as well as solicit feedback from those in attendance. All three events are free to the public.

The theme of the 2024 National Crime Victims' Rights Week is "How Would You Help?" If you'd like to learn more about what you can do locally, I'd encourage you to attend an event this week, reach out to a non-profit engaged in victim advocacy, and support victims of crimes in our community.

Sincerely,

Gordon P. McLaughlin, District Attorney
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CONTACT US:
201 Laporte Ave, Suite 200
Fort Collins, CO 80521

(970) 498-7200
8thdist-da@co.larimer.co.us