Chapter 4

Efforts to Improve the Systems to Support Crime Victims, etc.

### 1 Consultation and Provision of Information, etc. (related to Article 11 of the Basic Act)

 Promoting of Comprehensive and Planned Support for Crime Victims, etc. in Local Governments

### [Policy No. 166]

The police provide information on the situation of the enactment of prefectural/municipal ordinances and establishment of plans or guidelines which incorporate effective matters for support for crime victims, etc. such as an ordinance aimed at support for crime victims, etc. in order to contribute to providing comprehensive and planned support for crime victims, etc. in local governments from the perspective of crime victims, etc. (National Police Agency website, "Policies for Crime Victims, etc."; https://www.npa.go.jp/hanzaihigai/local/jorei/jorei. html)

In addition, the Agency endeavors to provide information to local governments by not only referring to the situation of the enactment of ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc. and major support policies based on the ordinances in the "Newsletter on Policies for Crime Victims, etc.," but also regularly summarizing materials "Information on Ordinances" related to ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc. in prefectures and ordinance-designated cities and publishing them on its website (https://www.npa.go.jp/hanzaihigai/local/jorei/kom ado/r2/komado r2.pdf).

Furthermore, in March, 2021, the Agency instructed the prefectural police to cooperate with local governments to contribute to the consideration for ordinance establishment (attachment to circular notice by the Deputy Commissioner-General of the National Police Agency dated March 31, 2021).

As of April 2022, 39 prefectures, 11 ordinancedesignated cities, and 453 municipalities have established ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc. (See p. 25, TOPICS "Situation of the enactment of ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc.").

The police are to promote efforts such as providing information on the enactment of ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc. to prevent disparities among local governments.

### Mini banner for comprehensive support services in local governments



### Promotion of Public Awareness of the Comprehensive Support Services in Local Governments

### [Policy No. 167]

The National Police Agency regularly checks the status of the departments in charge of policies for crime victims, etc. in local governments (hereafter referred to as "departments in charge") and comprehensive support services in local governments. This status check has been completed in all local governments since FY2016 for the departments in charge, and since April 2019 for comprehensive support services.

Ballpoint pens and wet wipes for publicity and awareness of comprehensive support services in local governments



The Agency also informs the public about comprehensive support services in local governments and measures for crime victims, etc. in prefectures and ordinance-designated cities by posting them on the National Police Agency's website

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(https://www.npa.go.jp/hanzaihigai/local/madoguch i\_list.html).

In addition, the Agency strives to promote the comprehensive support services in local governments through publicity using information in the government's PR TV program, "Kiite-Nattoku (Listen and Get it)!" (November 26, 2021 broadcast, "Think About It! To support crime victims in society as а whole"; https://www.govonline.go.jp/pr/media/tv/kasumigaseki/movie/2021 1126.html) and social media such as the National Police Agency's official Twitter account, as well as the distribution of publicity and educational materials.

### • Utilization of Specialists and Further Enhancement and Strengthening of Cooperation and Collaboration in Local Governments

### [Policy No. 169]

In order to effectively support the lives of crime victims, etc., the National Police Agency does not only encourage local governments to utilize specialists such as certificated social workers, mental health social workers, certified clinical psychologists, certified public psychologists, etc. in the field of support for crime victims, etc. through meetings of the directors of the departments in charge of policies for crime victims, etc. and training for local government staff. The Agency also requests local governments to further enhance and strengthen cooperation and collaboration between the comprehensive services support in local governments and related organizations and groups.

As of April 2022, 20 prefectures and ordinancedesignated cities as well as 95 municipalities have assigned such specialists at comprehensive support services in local governments.

# TOPICS

## Situation of the enactment of ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc.

The National Police Agency implements measures to promote comprehensive and planned support for crime victims, etc. in local governments from the perspective of the victims, etc., and, there is a growing movement among local governments nationwide to establish ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc.

As of April 1, 2022, ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc. have been established in a total of 39 prefectures, 11 ordinance-designated cities and 453 municipalities (out of 47 prefectures, 20 ordinance-designated cities, and 1,721 municipalities).

## Situation of the enactment of ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc. in municipalities (as of April 1, 2022)



\* Ordinances aimed at support for crime victims, etc. refer to ordinances which stipulate the matters exclusively related to crime victim support for crime victims, etc. (specific ordinances) and do not include any ordinances in which policies for crime victims, etc. are partially included such as the ordinance for the promotion of creating a safe and secure community.

<u>Notes</u>

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### To Connect the Sentiments of Crime Victims

Oyama City Office Citizen Affairs and City Safety Division CHIBA Daiki, Chief



I was employed by Oyama City Office in FY2020 and assigned to the Citizen Affairs and City Safety Division.

At the City Office, I work as a Citizen Safety Consultation Officer, providing support for victims and consultation to citizens.

### ○ Efforts by Oyama City

In collaboration with the neighboring town of Nogi, Oyama Police Station and "Himawari," a student volunteer group at Hakuho University that supports victims, Oyama City holds an event called "Citizens' Gathering to Support Crime Victims" every year. The aim of this gathering is to inform residents about the actual situation of crime victims and the need for and importance of support, to expand the network of support for crime victims, and to promote more substantial support activities. This event includes lectures by bereaved family members of crime victims, police, and media representatives with experience in reporting on victims, as well as an exhibition of panels on support for crime victims.

This "gathering" started in FY2011 at the suggestion of a young employee of Oyama City. He heard a lecture by Ms. WAKI Michiko of the Victim Support Center Tochigi, who herself is a bereaved family member of a crime victim. When he heard the lecture, he decided to take initiative and make his own support for crime victims available to the general public.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to hold this event in FY2020 and FY2021. However, in my school days, I was involved in the "gathering" as a member of "Himawari," a student volunteer group. Every year, many people came to the event.

### ○ Establishment of Oyama City Ordinance on Support for Crime Victims

Since FY2020, it has been difficult to hold the same events as in previous years due to the impact of COVID-19. However, Oyama City has decided to enact an ordinance to support crime victims, etc., having taken this period of inactivity as an opportunity to study measures for crime victims, etc.

The city launched a Study Committee for the enactment of the ordinance, with members from victim support groups, police, public prosecutors, attorneys, medical associations, Hakuho University, citizen representatives, and city council members all serving on the Committee. All Committee members agreed that the ordinance should incorporate the voices of victims first and foremost, then decided to introduce specific support programs such as a consolation payment system and easing of requirements for occupancy of municipal housing.

Some Committee members also suggested that victims should not be burdened with the cost of required documents, such as certificates of residence, medical examinations of dead bodies, and medical certificates for applying for a consolation payment. Therefore, with consent from applicants, it was decided that the city could omit attachments of certificates of residence to the application documents through verification of the certificates. The Tochigi Prefectural Police covers the fees for medical examinations of the bodies of those who have died as a result of crimes and also medical certificates for those who have sustained injuries at public expense. Thus, these programs eliminated the cost burden of the documents required when applying for a consolation payment.

Following these studies, the Oyama City Ordinance on Support for Crime Victims came into effect on April 1, 2021.

### Reception of Victims at the Comprehensive Support Services in Local Governments

After the enactment of the ordinance, we experienced an incident of injury that was eligible for a consolation payment. Before the crime victim came to our office, we carefully coordinated with the Oyama Police Station, which had jurisdiction over the case, regarding the transfer of the victim's requests and the date and time of the visit. We also arranged for the victim to give a previously agreed upon number to the counter staff when coming to the office, so that the victim could be taken to a private room without being overheard by general visitors.

Before I began working with the victim, I was advised by my boss to "introduce myself," "listen attentively when the victim is talking," and "always explain the reason why you are asking this question." I met with the victim with these suggestions in mind, but it had not been long since the incident, and the face was swollen and the scars from the medical treatments were still painfully visible. Thinking of the fear that the victim suffered at the time of the damage, I did not know what to say to the person and ended up explaining the procedures for a consolation payment in businesslike manner.

Nevertheless, the victim expressed gratitude, saying that the person was "able to come to the city office and the police for the application without any worries" because of the arrangements we had made. "I didn't know anything, so it was very helpful that I was taught so many things in detail." I was able to learn how important it is to listen and explain things to victims with sincerity and consideration for their feelings, which is not limited to support for victims.

### ○ What I think as a Local Government Officer Supporting Victims

It is difficult to reduce the number of crime victims to zero no matter how careful the individual is, and it is not easy to recover from the damage.

Enactment of the ordinance will not necessarily eliminate the mental, physical, economic, and other burdens on crime victims and their bereaved families. However, I believe that it is important for a municipality to have a system in place to provide victim support.

I was impressed that I was able to gain such valuable experience with the enactment of an ordinance in my first year of employment. However, the enactment is only one opportunity for me to provide support to victims. While responding to the demands of the times, I will continue to provide necessary support to those who have been victimized by crimes.



Oyama City Office

Officer of Citizen Affairs and City Safety Division



### · Promotion of collaboration among the Liaison Conference for Victim Support and the Local Network for Victim Support [Policy No. 183]

To provide comprehensive support for crime victims, etc. in response to their diverse needs, including support for their daily lives, medical care, and court proceedings, the police have established the Liaison Conference for Victim Support, consisting of the police, departments in charge and consultation organizations in local governments, public prosecutors, the Japan Legal Support Center, medical associations, organizations related to certified public psychologists and certificated clinical psychologists associations, Bar Associations, and private organizations that support crime victims, etc., in all prefectures to ensure cooperation.

In addition, the Local Network for Victim Support has been established with police stations as units to understand the specific needs of crime victims, etc. and provide detailed and comprehensive support according to each case.

Furthermore, the Liaison Conference for Victim Support and the Local Network for Victim Support work to enhance and strengthen cooperation and

collaboration among their members, and improve their ability to respond to specific cases through training sessions promoting understanding of the situations of crime victims and practical simulation exercises based on specific cases, such as those involving multiple casualties.

As of April 2022, the Liaison Conference for Victim Support and a total of 1,089 Local Networks for Victim Support have been established in all prefectures, covering all regions nationwide.

### Simulation training





### Network between the Police and Related Agencies and Organizations

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### **Efforts to Address Online Harassment**

The problem of online harassment, especially on social media and other platform services, has become an increasingly serious issue. Thus, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has been working to improve information morality and ICT literacy among users, and to improve the coordination and system for consultation to respond to online harassment.

To raise awareness of information morality and ICT literacy among users, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, the Social Media Association of Japan, and the Safer Internet Association, has launched the online harassment campaign with the slogan "#NoHeartNoSNS." As specific efforts, a special website has been established to provide useful information to those who are troubled by social media interactions, such as information on consultation services, and to raise awareness of online harassment through various media, including government PR, using such information. In addition, a video and pamphlets featuring a tie-up between the popular character "Eagle Talon" and the original character "Heart Kyun" have been created and are available on the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications website, and information is also disseminated through the Ministry's social media accounts.

To contribute to the utilization of guardians and teachers in child-rearing and education, the Ministry has been updating and publishing the "Case Study of the Internet Trouble" every year since FY2009, which compiles cases of online harassment and their prevention methods, and disseminating the information to schools nationwide through the Regional Bureau of Telecommunications or Board of Education.

Furthermore, for the purpose of disseminating information to and enlightening young people on the safe use of the Internet, including content related to online harassment, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Foundation for MultiMedia Communications, and telecommunications carriers, the Ministry has been holding the "e-Net Caravan," a series of free on-site lectures for students, guardians, and teachers at schools nationwide since FY2006. Since FY2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, remote lectures have been provided in addition to the traditional in person courses.





#NoHeartNoSNS logo

To improve cooperation and systems to enhance consultation services, in FY2021 the Ministry strengthened the system by increasing the number of counselors at the "Illegal Harmful Hotline" operated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. The Ministry has also established a liaison system with consultation offices of administrative agencies, local governments, and private organizations, thereby promoting cooperation with various entities. The Ministry has also published the following guide to consultation services for those who have been victimized by online harassment.



### Examination of Financial Assistance for Crime Victim Support by Attorneys [Policy No. 209]

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In July 2020, the Ministry of Justice held the "Study Group for Crime Victim Support by Attorneys" and based on the Fourth Basic Plan, broadly discussed and summarized the issues regarding financial assistance for crime victim support by attorneys, including eligible crime victims, the scope of attorneys' activities, and the nature of the assistance. Considering the results of the discussion, the Ministry, in cooperation with the Japan Federation of Bar Associations and the Japan Legal Support Center, continues to study the issue from a practical point of view.

### • Improvement of Consultation Systems and Promotion of Understanding of Crime Victims, etc. Whose Damages Tend to be Hidden

### [Policy No. 227]

The police have made efforts to improve the consultation system by establishing the nationwide exclusive police consultation telephone number "#9110" and the unified number "#8103," which connects the consultation hotline of the prefectural police.

The Human Rights Bodies of the Ministry of Justice provide human rights counseling from crime victims, etc. at the Human Rights Counseling Services of the Legal Affairs Bureau, as well as at ad-hoc human rights counseling centers at social welfare facilities, provided by Legal Affairs Bureau staff and Human Rights Volunteers. In addition, the Ministry has established the "Children's Rights Hotline," a dedicated consultation line for human rights counseling for children who are crime victims, providing an environment where children who have suffered human rights violations can receive consultations without anxiety. Furthermore, the Ministry has designated the week of August 27 to September 2, 2021, as the "Nationwide Children's Rights Hotline Promotion Week," and is working to improve the system for children's rights issues by extending the consultation hours.

To accurately grasp the problems of children who are unable to confide in their teachers, guardians, or other close persons, and to respond to various human rights issues in cooperation with schools and related organizations, the Ministry is working to enhance and strengthen the consultation system by distributing "Children's Rights SOS Mini-Letters" to elementary and junior high school students throughout the country from late May to early July of the same year. A "Human Rights Counseling Service on the Internet (SOS-e-mail)" (https://www.jinken.go.jp/kodomo) has also been established on the website of the Ministry of Justice to improve the system of providing consultation anytime from PCs, cell phones and smart phones through the Internet.

Also, the Ministry has been developing a human rights counseling system using social media to make it easier for young people to gain access to services.

To provide human rights counseling to female crime victims, the Ministry set up a dedicated telephone "Women's Rights Hotline" and designated the week of November 12 to 18 of the same year as "Nationwide Women's Rights Hotline Promotion Week" in an effort to enhance and strengthen the consultation system.

Furthermore, to provide human rights counseling to foreigners who have difficulty speaking Japanese, the Ministry has established "Human Rights Counseling Centers for Foreigners" (available in 10 languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Nepali, Spanish, Indonesian, and Thai) and "Foreign-language Human Rights Hotline" (available in the above 10 languages) at all 50 Legal Affairs Bureaus nationwide. In addition, the Ministry has established a "Human Rights Counseling Services in Foreign Languages on the Internet" (available in the above 10 languages) on the website of the Ministry of Justice, and has established a system to respond to foreign crime victims, etc.

In the same year, the number of human rights counseling from crime victims was 44.

In addition, to ensure consideration and protection of the human rights of crime victims, the Ministry has set "Consider the human rights of crime victims and their families" as one of priority targets of human rights awareness-raising activities, and has been carrying out human rights awareness-raising activities such as distributing awareness-raising booklets.

The Japan Legal Support Center has established a system to provide anonymous consultations through the Crime Victim Support Line. To meet the needs of crime victims who wish support from female attorneys, the Japan Legal Support Center, in cooperation with Bar Associations, has secured several attorneys who are well-versed in supporting female crime victims in all prefectures (*seitsu* attorneys). As of April 2022, the total number of the attorneys is 971.

To make it easier for young people, who have a high affinity for the Internet and social media, to seek advice on sexual violence victimization, the Cabinet Office has been implementing the "Cure time" consultation service using social media on a trial basis since October 2020. (For more information about "Cure time," please refer to TOPICS "Enhancement of Consultation System for Victims of Sexual Crimes and Sexual Violence" on p. 17, and about efforts by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, please refer to p. 11 [Policy No. 53], respectively).

## 2 Aid for Private Entities (related to Article 22 of the Basic Act)

### Strengthening of Cooperation and Collaboration with Police and Private Entities

### [Policy No. 248]

The police cooperate with the management and activities of the National Network for Victim Support, and also provide necessary guidance and advice on the operation of private victim-support organizations that are members of the network, in cooperation with related organizations, and actively exchange opinions on how to support crime victims, etc.

In particular, the police work closely with private victim-support organizations, that are designated by the Prefectural Public Safety Commission as early support groups for crime victims, etc. by providing them with information such as the names of crime victims and outlines of the damage caused by crimes, after obtaining the consent of crime victims. TOPICS

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## Support for Crime Victims, etc. by Private-victim Support Organizations

In providing support for crime victims, etc., it is essential to have private victim-support organizations, which provide detailed support for the mid- to long-term in cooperation with the police and other related organizations and groups, in response to the various circumstances of individual crime victims.

This section introduces the distinctive efforts of these private victim-support organizations and the notes of their supporters.

### Stop Drunk Driving New product: "Don't Ride If You Drink"

A Japanese sake brewery located in Nakano-machi, Kasai City, Hyogo Prefecture, has released a new product, "Don't Ride If You Drink" (limited to 100 bottles), in response to a request from the Kasai Police Station.

"Don't Ride If You Drink" is a *junmai* (genuine rice) *ginjo-shu* (high-quality sake) made with *Yamada-nishiki* rice produced in Kasai City. This product was sold at the brewery's direct sales outlets and online store. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this product was donated to the Hyogo Victim Support Center.

### Hyogo Victim Support Center



### ■Online Remote Counseling

The Tokyo Center for Victim Support provides remote counseling via Zoom. With the behavioral restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the advantage of remote counseling is that even when the client cannot meet counselor in person, they can see each other in virtual face to face.

We have adopted online counseling, which enables us to provide psychological support to those who are unable to leave their homes or live in remote areas away from Tokyo for some reason. For these people, we previously had no support options and could only offer telephone assistance. Tokyo Center for Victim Support



### ■ Protecting Children from Early Childhood Sexual Violence "Tell me! *Kumo-kun*," an original video

Niigata Victim Support Center

In the hope of "informing all children about how to protect their precious minds and bodies and to acquire the necessary knowledge," Niigata Victim Support Center, with the author's and publisher's permission, has made a video of a picture book entitled "Tell me! *Kumo-kun.*" Sexual violence and sexual abuse threaten the minds and bodies of children and their long lives afterwards. Ten percent of those who have been sexually victimized are elementary school children, and boys are often victimized as well. In some cases, children themselves are offenders without even knowing it. The video features "victims," "offenders," and "witnesses." Children are less aware of being sexually victimized/given and less capable of sending out an SOS to those around them. Please use this video in various settings as an opportunity to talk with them about the sexual parts of their bodies (the video is available in school and home versions).



### ■Note from a Supporter: "Supporting the Victims"

Ibaraki Victim Support Center YOKOSUKA Miwako

*«Kairakuen* Garden» A garden to enjoy with people.

As the name suggests, this is a place where you can enjoy the flowers that bloom in the spring, feel their fragrance, and look up into greenery. The later fruits were secured as food for the military. This is a story about the plum tree in *Kairakuen* Garden. It is said that TOKUGAWA Nariaki, a.k.a. Lord *Retsu*, planted the tree, which is currently a popular topic of conversation among people.

Ibaraki Victims Support Center, to which I belong, is located in Mito City, the prefectural capital, about 10 km inland from the center of the coastline, which stretches about 190 km from north to south facing the Pacific Ocean.

It was established in 1995 as the "Mito Victim Support Center." For the past 25 years, it was incorporated and designated as an Early Support Group for Crime Victims, etc. Today, the Center is certified as a public interest incorporated association, and also operates a consultation phone line for the "Victim Support Network of Sexual Violence, Ibaraki," specializing in sexual violence.

In the meantime, the Center has continued to operate to the best of its ability despite several disasters, including the Great East Japan Earthquake, flood damage from the Kinugawa River bursting its banks, and the torrential rains of the East Japan Typhoon in 2019.

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Since the year before last, the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic has destroyed normal days not only in Japan but around the world. Confronting an unknown virus only generated anxiety, suspicion, and speculation, and prevented people from making normal judgments.

In fact, during that time, our center was also inconvenienced in all aspects of support, such as the severance of transportation due to earthquake and typhoon damage, and the inability to deal with clients in person to avoid infection. Besides this, we faced a major turning point when the center moved to a new location. Despite chronic problems of understaffing and lack of financial resources, the center's support staff, while being attentive to each other's life circumstances, constantly ask ourselves "What would be the best way support the client?" "What do they need?" We feel that we continued on with whatever we could do at the time.

However, no matter how many times we provide support, we ask ourselves after each time, "Did we really provide the best support to the victims?" "Were my words at that time rude?" "Was my concern for the victims what they needed?"

In fact, even a single word of advice can change the way a victim feels or receives it, depending on the subtleties of his or her mind at any given time. Therefore, I have always kept in mind that unexpected things can happen.

Unexpectedly, I have had the opportunity to be involved in support for a long time. With this experience, I have become aware that real support is always to keep in mind the fact that the victim's words and actions are based on his/her feelings, to respond to them responsibly, and to continue to think about the support needed from the other person's point of view. Some questions have yet to be answered, but I think it is important to continue to ask ourselves them.