



2010 Victim Services Agency Needs Survey Results

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1. Introduction & Methods

A. About CJCC

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is the state planning and grants agency for criminal justice and victims' assistance programs that the Governor has designated the State Administrating Agency for numerous federal grants. Created by the General Assembly (O.C.G.A. § 35-6A-2), our Council members represent all components of the criminal justice system.

The victim services grants that CJCC administers are:

- Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) State Victim's Assistance
- Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) State Victim's Compensation
- Services*Training*Officers*Prosecution (STOP) Violence Against Women Act
- Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) Violence Against Women Act
- Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation Program

B. About the 2010 Victim Service Agency Needs Survey

In June 2010, a 100-question survey was deployed to every victim services agency seeking to obtain Local Victim Assistance Program (5%) Certification from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). Under Georgia statute (O.C.G.A. § 15-21-132), CJCC is required to certify whether agencies in each county are eligible to receive local victim assistance funds that are collected through fines imposed in court.

Completion of the needs survey was required to obtain certification. In total, 217 agencies responded to the survey which asked about the agency's size, the kinds of training agency staff and volunteer receive, the kinds of technology agencies use to track service provision, the kinds of information agencies provide to victims, and agency priorities for funding, their perceptions in crime rates in their service area, and the ways they are responding to increases in service demand.

Data were collected using CJCC's survey software – SPSS Dimensions and analyzed in SPSS statistical package and TextAnalysis. Where respondents did not answer questions, the data are denoted as missing or blanks. Effective sample sizes are provided for each question.

What follows is a summary of the various data collected through this survey effort. While these data help us obtain a better picture of the current landscape for service provision among 5% certified agencies, a noticeably missing element is data about the kinds of crime victims that are underserved by crime type, how those victims are underserved and what kinds of services are necessary to ensure victims' needs are met. At the end of this document there is some general data about the kinds of needs agencies have to meet perceived increases in demand for services. These can be summed up in two words – **funding and staff**.

Missing from this survey sample are victim service agencies or programs that *are not* 5% certified. HODAC, the agency that houses the Governor's Help Line, has over 400 victim service agencies in their assistance database. If only 217 of those agencies are 5% certified, this survey does not capture the needs of the victims served by or service provision landscape of the remaining 200+ agencies.

C. Next Steps

In an effort to capture data specific to *victim* needs, CJCC will release a second survey that will ask victim advocates to respond to a series of questions based on a file for a victim with whom they recently worked and who has recently completed services. CJCC is hopeful that the victim-level data derived from this second survey coupled with the agency-level data gathered in this first-wave will help the organization set targeted funding priorities for Victims of Crime Act, Violence Against Women Act, and Sexual Assault Service Program funding.

Additionally, the data derived from this second survey may help CJCC target training announcements to help programs develop their strengths and improve upon their weaknesses.

That federal monies are becoming scarcer is no secret. CJCC wants to ensure that victim service agencies remain on the cutting edge of service provision and that victims across the state receive a core level of necessary services to make the transition from victim to survivor.

1. Data Summary & Analysis

A. Agency Size & Resources

This section describes agency answers to various questions regarding their capacity to serve victims, to track this service provision, and to meet the needs of victims who are limited English proficient – a hot topic in victim services in Georgia, given the state’s changing demographic landscape.

Table 1. Staff and Volunteers Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Number	Missing	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Victim Services Paid Staff	171	46	6.85	4	6.94	0	55
Victim Services Volunteers	171	46	16.64	4	31.49	0	255
Administrative and Support Volunteers	171	46	21.29	2	91.75	0	1012
Other Paid Staff	171	46	6.34	2	22.96	0	262
Compensation Assistance Staff and Volunteers	171	46	7.02	3	16.44	0	160

A total of 217 victim service agencies responded to the 2010 Needs Assessment – Victim Assistance Survey. Table 1 displays the mean, median, standard deviation, and range of participant responses to question regarding the number of staff and volunteers currently working for the agency directly in victim services and in support position. Agencies varied greatly in size – from one to over 1,000 staff members and/or volunteers. This size discrepancy was reflected in the mean, standard deviation, and range of the data. The median number of paid staff working directly with victim services was 4. The median number of other paid staff was 2. Similarly, the median number of volunteers working directly with victim services was also 4 with the median number of administrative and support volunteers reported as 2. The median number of staff and volunteers working in compensation assistance was 3.

The wide range in the number of personnel working at victim services agencies is likely affected by the fact that many victim service programs are housed in larger organizations – such as the district attorney’s or sheriff’s office. Generally, victim

service providers tend to be small agencies with staff serving in multiple capacities – both as direct service providers, as well as administrative staff.

Table 2. Agency Use of Client Information Management System (CIMS)

Does your Agency use a CIMS?			
Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	154	71%	74%
No	52	24%	25%
Don't know	2	1%	1%
Total	208	96%	100%
Missing =9	9	4%	

Over three quarters of the 208 agencies that responded to this question stated the agency does in fact use a client management information system – which can be instrumental to tracking service provision statistics and agency effort. This number may even be slightly higher if the question were asked again today. Recently, the Governor’s Office for Children and Families provided ALICE – a software database designed specifically for domestic violence agencies – to all state-funded and certified domestic violence shelters. Many programs that may not have had a method for tracking statistics about the clients they serve and the services provided may be able to do so now.

Moreover, as table 3 below shows, agencies are eager to use a CIMS if it was available for a low cost. The majority of participants (77.4%) responded “yes” when asked if their agency would use a CIMS if one was provided to the agency at low or no cost to the agency.

Table 3. Would Agency Use Low/No Cost CIMS

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	161	77.4%
No	13	6.3%
Don't Know	34	16.3%
N=208, Missing=9	208	100.0%

One of the major functions of any victim service agency is to make themselves known in community so that victims can access their services. The tables that follow summarize the various methods that agencies use to make themselves known to the community, the ways victims contact agencies, and the kinds of information agencies provide to victims. As seen later, educating victims about the criminal justice system is among the unmet needs participant's identified. Ensuring agencies have adequate materials to provide for victims and that they are reaching as many victims as possible would go a long way toward meeting this need.

Table 4. Type of Media Used by Agency to Distribute Information

Type of Media	Frequency	Valid Percent
Billboards	27	13.0%
Radio Ads	73	35.1%
Television Ads	45	21.6%
Newspaper Ads	96	46.2%
Website	116	55.8%
Twitter	11	5.3%
Facebook	66	31.7%
Story or Column in Newspaper	151	72.6%
Newsletter	86	41.3%
Bulletin Boards	47	22.6%
Other	54	26.0%
Do Not Use Media	12	5.8%

N = 208, Missing = 9

Participants were asked to identify all of the types of media their agencies use to distribute information about crime, victim's rights, agency services, or related topics. As Table 4 demonstrates, participants most often indicated that the agency was the topic of a story or column in a newspaper (72.6%); maintains a website (55.8%); publishes a newsletter (41.3%); or advertises in a newspaper (46.2%), on the radio (35.1%), or on television (21.6%). Social media, specifically Facebook (31.7%) and Twitter (5.3%), was often included in participants' responses. Other methods agencies employed to distribute information included bulletin boards (22.6%), billboards (13.0%), and/or another method(s) not identified (26.0%). Only

5.8% of participants who responded to this question reported that their agency does not use media to distribute information. No data was collected in regards to agency frequency of use of any of the identified methods to distribute information.

Table 5. Topics of Agency Brochures and Written Materials

Topic	Frequency	Valid Percent
Georgia Crime Victims' Bill of Rights	147	70.7%
Georgia Crime Victims' Compensation Program	150	72.1%
Agency Information and Services Offered	193	92.8%
Domestic Violence	159	76.4%
Sexual Assault	113	54.3%
Dating Violence	113	54.3%
Child Abuse	123	59.1%
Elder Abuse	69	33.2%
Human Trafficking	33	15.9%
Other Violent Crime	33	15.9%
Theft and Property Crime	31	14.9%
Identity Theft and Other Fraud	38	18.3%
Homicide Survivors	32	15.4%
DUI/DWI Victims and Survivors	31	14.9%
Georgia Criminal Justice System	74	35.6%
Other	38	18.3%
Do Not Distribute Brochures	1	0.5%

N = 208, Missing = 9

As Table 5 demonstrates, almost all respondents (92.8%) indicated that their agency offered a brochure or other written material providing agency and service information. Approximately three-quarters of the participants also indicated that their agency provided written material on the Georgia Crime Victims' Bill of Rights (70.7%) and the Georgia Crime Victims' Compensation Program (72.1%) – both of which are key to ensuring victims are aware of the criminal justice process and their rights to participate in it. As a large portion of participating agencies provide services primarily for women and children, a

majority of participants indicated that their agencies provided brochures or written materials on domestic violence (76.4%), sexual assault (54.3%), dating violence (54.3%), and child abuse (59.1%). Other topic of materials included elder abuse (33.2%), human trafficking (15.9%), other violent crime (15.9%), theft and property crime (14.9%), identity theft and other fraud (18.3%), information for survivors of homicide (15.4%), information for DUI/DWI victims and survivors (14.9%), and information on the Georgia criminal justice system (35.6%). Only 1 participant reported that his/her agency does not distribute brochures or written materials. Because the question asked participants to identify all of the topics of all written materials the agency makes available, it is likely that each agency provides material on a variety of topics.

Table 6. Source of Agency Brochures and Written Materials

Source	Frequency	Valid Percent
Created by Agency	196	94.2%
Adapted from Another Agency's Information	107	51.4%
Commercial Provider	72	34.6%
National Non-Profit or Government Agency	120	57.7%
State Non-Profit Coalition	102	49.0%
Prosecuting Attorneys' Council	28	13.5%
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council	109	52.4%
Department of Human Services Office of Family Violence	50	24.0%
Other	17	8.2%

N = 208, Missing = 9

Table 6 identifies the sources for brochures and written materials made available to victims and clients by their agencies. Almost all participants (94.2%) reported that their agencies create these materials – which are likely the case for the materials distributed about the agency’s services and mission. Other common sources for materials included the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (52.4%), national non-profit coalitions (57.7%), state non-profit coalitions (49.0%), the Department of Human Services Office of Family Violence (24.0%), commercial providers (34.6%), and the Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council (13.5%). A little over half of the participants (51.4%) that responded to this question indicated that their agencies adapt brochures and written materials from another agency’s information. Because the question asked participants to indicate all of the sources for all agency materials, it is likely that agencies use a combination of many of the listed sources.

Table 7. Agency Reported Method of Victim First Contact with Agency

Type of Contact	Frequency	Valid Percent
Agency was First Responder to Crime	34	16.3%
24-Hour Hotline	70	33.7%
Other Telephone Contact	125	60.1%
Walk-In Agency	126	60.6%
Transported by Another Agency	68	32.7%
Referred by Another Agency (Victim Initiates)	163	78.4%
Referred by Another Agency (Agency Initiates)	145	69.7%
Website	85	40.9%
Community Outreach Event or Activity	112	53.8%
Email	66	31.7%
Other	43	20.7%

N = 208, Missing = 9

Participants were asked to identify all of the ways victims first make contact with their agency. As Table 7 demonstrates, the data strongly suggested that victims often need to have some awareness of the agency prior to first contact. Agencies indicated that victims are frequently referred by another agency (victim initiated - 78.4%), physically come to the agency as a walk-in (60.6%), make telephone contact with the agency (60.1%); make contact through an agency website (40.9%) or agency email (31.7%), or call the agency via 24-hour hotline (33.7%). Methods of first contact that did not require prior knowledge of the agency included referral by another agency (agency initiated - 69.7%), transported to agency by another agency (32.7), or the agency was the first responder to the crime (16.3%). A little over half (53.8%) of the agencies reported that they had initial contact with victims through a community outreach event or activity.

Being known in the community and available to clients is as important as being able to serve client in their primary language. Georgia’s population is becoming increasingly diverse. The 2010 Census figures showed that the Hispanic or Latino population, in particular, increased by 96.1% from the 2000 census. Every other racial category captured in the census also

increased since 2000 including – African American (+25.6%), American Indian/Alaska Native (+47.9%), Asian (+81.6%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (+60.1).

Table 8. Agencies reporting Staff who Speak Language Other Than English

Language Spoken	# Agencies
Spanish	120
No other language listed	86
Western European Languages	22
Other	9
South Asian (Indian) Languages	8
East Asian Languages	7
Eastern European Language	5
Southeast Asian Languages	4
African Languages	4
Semitic Languages	3

N=131, Missing = 86

When asked to identify the languages in addition to English that are spoken by at least one staff member or volunteer, 91.6% (120) of the agencies responded that a staff member or volunteer speaks Spanish. Close to 40% of agencies, however, have no bilingual staff or volunteers available to assist victims.

Bilingual ability appears to be fairly evenly distributed throughout the state. Table 9 below indicates the counties in which agencies that report staff or volunteers speak a second language are located.

Table 9. Type of Second Language Spoken by Agency Staff by County in which the Main Office is Located

Office Location	Semitic Languages	Southeast Asian Languages	African Languages	Eastern European Languages	East Asian Languages	South Asian (Indian) Languages	Western European Languages	Spanish	None
Appling	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	5	0
Baldwin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Barrow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Bartow	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	0
Berrien	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Bibb	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	2
Brooks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Bullock	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
Burke	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Butts	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Carroll	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Chatham	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	4
Cherokee	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	1
Clarke	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0
Clayton	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	1
Cobb	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	1
Crisp	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Decatur	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
DeKalb	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	7	6
Dougherty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
Douglas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Effingham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

Office Location	Semitic Languages	Southeast Asian Languages	African Languages	Eastern European Languages	East Asian Languages	South Asian (Indian) Languages	Western European Languages	Spanish	None
Elbert	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Emanuel	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Fannin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Fayette	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Floyd	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	3
Forsyth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Fulton	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	3
Glynn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Greene	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Gwinnett	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Habersham	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Hall	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	3
Henry	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Houston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Jackson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Lamar	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Laurens	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
Liberty	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Lowndes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Lumpkin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
McDuffie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Monroe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Montgomery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Muscogee	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	6	0
Peach	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

Office Location	Semitic Languages	Southeast Asian Languages	African Languages	Eastern European Languages	East Asian Languages	South Asian (Indian) Languages	Western European Languages	Spanish	None
Pierce	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Randolph	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Rockdale	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
Schley	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
Stephens	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Sumter	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Towns	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	1
Twiggs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Union	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Walker	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Warren	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
Washington	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Wayne	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1
White	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Wilkinson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

There are only four counties – indicated with a gray highlight – in which agency staff speaks a second language, which is not Spanish. Moreover there are only 14 counties in the state in which a victim assistance agency responded that staff did not speak any second languages. These counties, and the number of agencies located within them, are listed in table 10 below.

Table 10. Counties in which Victim Service Agencies reported no staff or volunteers are bilingual

Office Location	# Agencies Reporting
Pickens	1
Pike	1
Pulaski	3
Quitman	1
Richmond	2
Taliaferro	2
Newton	2
Hart	1
Gilmer	1
Franklin	1
Dodge	1
Colquitt	1
Coweta	1
Camden	2

At first glance, this data appears promising. However, as Table 11 below indicates, when asked all of the ways in which their agency responds to victims with limited English proficiency, only 28% of the agencies included the use of bilingual staff in their list of responses. This suggests that agency capacity to respond to victims with limited English proficiency is restricted by the number of staff members or volunteers speak an additional language. For agencies that listed the use of interpreters (42%), whether the agency provided an interpreter or the victim was accompanied by an interpreter is unknown. Other methods used to assist victims with limited English proficiency included the use of translated materials (10.1%) and/or the use of a telephone language line (1.4%). Only 7 agencies indicated that they did not have a way to respond to (1.4%) or do not have clients (1.9%) with limited English proficiency.

Table 12. Agency Response to Victims with Limited English Proficiency

Agency Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Use Bilingual Staff	58	28.0%
Use Interpreters	87	42.0%
Use Materials Translated into Other Languages	25	12.1%
Use Telephone Language Line	21	10.1%
Do Not Have a Way to Respond to LEP Clients	3	1.4%
Do Not Have LEP Clients	4	1.9%
Other	9	4.3%

N = 207, Missing = 10

B. Changes in Agency Service Demand & Service Area Crime Rate

Participants were asked to respond to questions about the degree to which they perceive that crime has increased or decreased, and whether that has resulted in an increase in demand for agency services. As expected, there is a significant, and strong, positive relationship between a participant’s perception of increased crime and an increase in service demand ($\Gamma=0.763, p=0.001$). Table 13 below indicates participants’ perception of crime rates between 2008 and 2009.

Table 13. Agency Perception of Two-Year (2008, 2009) Change in Crime Rate

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Increased by a Large Amount	31	18.7%
Increased Slightly	81	48.8%
Remained About the Same	47	28.3%
Decreased Slightly	6	3.6%
Decreased by a Large Amount	1	0.6%

N = 166, Missing = 51

As Table 13 indicates, 67.5% of participants indicated that they felt the crime rate was increasing. Approximately half (48.8%) of these participants felt that the crime had only increased slightly, while 18.7% felt the crime rate had increased by a large amount. Only 4.2% of participants reported that they felt the crime rate had decreased with the majority (3.6%) indicating that the crime rate had decreased slightly. A little over a quarter (48.8%) of participants felt that the crime rate had stayed the same. This perception jibes with the data collected from narrative questions in the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) statistical reports. In the 2010 report, 95 of the 233 subgrantees responded that they felt crime was on the rise. Indeed, for family violence crimes this is most definitely the case. The table below compares UCR data from 2007-2009 for family violence reported cases and total index violent crimes (Georgia Crime Information Center 2010):

Table 14. Comparison of UCR Violent Crime with Family Violence Incidents

Year	Reported Family Violence Cases	% Change	Total Violent Crime Incidents	% Change
2007	62,156	N/A	44,823	N/A
2008	58,420	-6.01%	45,816	2.22%
2009	61,464	5.21%	40,362	-11.90%
TOTALS:	182,040		131,001	

This perception does not vary very much by whether agencies are located in either rural or urban/suburban counties as Table 15 below indicates. Roughly 69% of the agencies located in counties designated “Not Rural” reported crime has increased either slightly or by a large amount. Similarly, 63% of rural counties reported crime had increased slightly or by a large amount.

Table 15. Agency Perception of Increase in Crime Rate In Rural vs. Non-Rural Communities

Rural Designation?	Increased by a large amount	Increased slightly	Remained about the same	Decreased slightly	Decreased by a large amount	Row Totals
Not Rural	25	61	33	5	1	125
Rural	6	20	14	1	0	41
Column Totals	31	81	47	6	1	166

Participants pointed to a number of factors for the increase in crime. Table 16 below summarizes the various reasons participants gave for the crime increase in an open-ended question. Reasons are organized in order of ascending frequency.

Table 16. Factors Agencies Reported Contribute to Increase in Crime

Factors Contributing to Crime Increase	# Agencies
Economic Downturn	96
Increased Family and Intimate Partner Violence	18
Increased Substance Abuse & Drug Crimes	17
Increased Gang Activity and Property Crime	15
Population Increase	11
Poverty	9
Housing Crisis	8
Lack of CJS Response or Victim Services Resources	6
Deployment-Related Stress	5
Increased Reporting/Awareness	4
Blanks/No Answer	116

N=101, Missing=101

Not surprisingly, and consistent with the types of services for which there is increasing demand, 95% of the 101 participants who provided answers to this question stated the economic downturn was partially responsible for the increase in crime rates. Also consistent with the UCR statistics for family violence cited above, at least 18% (roughly one-fifth) of participants see an increase in family and intimate partner violence as contributing to increasing crime rates. Closely related to the economic downturn, 9% and 8% of participants cite poverty and the housing crisis, respectively, as contributing to increasing crime rates.

Not only do participants overwhelmingly feel that crime has increased in their area, they also report that such an increase has resulted in an increase in demand for victim services.

Table 17. Agency Perception of Two-Year (2008, 2009) Change in Demand for Services

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Increased by a Large Amount	60	31.1%
Increased Slightly	93	48.2%
Remained About the Same	35	18.1%
Decreased Slightly	5	2.6%
Decreased by a Large Amount	0	0.0%

N = 193, Missing = 24

As Table 17 demonstrates, almost half of these respondents indicated that demand for services had only slightly increased while 31.1% felt that demand for services had increased by a large amount. In total, just over 79% of participants perceiving that demand for services had increased over the two year period. Only 2.6% of participants indicated that demand had decreased slightly while 18.1% reported that demand had remained about the same. Table 17 displays the frequency and valid percent for agency observed increase in demand by type of service.

Table 18. Agency Observed Increase in Demand for Service by Type of Service

Type of Service	Frequency	Valid Percent
Telephone Information and Referral (Non-Crisis)	122	58.9%
In-Person Information and Referral (Non-Crisis)	110	53.1%
Follow-Up Services	107	51.7%
Criminal Justice System Support/Advocacy	107	51.7%
Emergency Financial Assistance	100	48.3%
In-Person Crisis Counseling	94	45.4%
Outreach/After Law Enforcement Contact	82	39.6%
Telephone Crisis Counseling	77	37.2%
Emergency Legal Advocacy	74	35.7%
Personal Advocacy (Including Medial Accompaniment)	73	35.3%

Type of Service	Frequency	Valid Percent
Safe Shelter	68	32.9%
Therapy	67	32.4%
Non-Emergency Legal Advocacy	59	28.5%
Assistance in Filing Victims' Compensation Claims	52	25.1%
Assistance in Filing Application for TANF, Medicaid, etc.	48	23.2%
Other Emergency Assistance	47	22.7%
Group Treatment	46	22.2%
Other	27	13.0%

N = 207, Missing = 10

Consistent with what agencies report as their response to increases in demand for services (discussed in table 19 below), the most demanded service is telephone information and referral (58.9% of agencies report this has increased), followed closely by in-person information and referral (53.1%). Interestingly, while agencies report that therapy and mental health services are a significant victim need, as demonstrated later in this discussion, only 32.4% of participants mentioned demand for this service was increasing. As expected, given the dire economic climate in 2008-2009, 48.3% of participants noted that demand for emergency financial assistance was increasing.

In the face of this increasing demand, agencies have drawn on their community resources and partnerships. As shown in Table 19 below, close to one-third of the 197 agencies that responded to this open-end question cited increased referral, partnerships and outreach as their response to increased demand. Agencies have also increased their organizational capacity or extended service hours (27%). Perhaps with Recovery Act funds, agencies were able to hire additional staff (22%). But a substantial number of participants – indeed the plurality when taken together – have either increased their workload on existing staff, become increasingly reliant on volunteer labor, or cross-trained existing staff to handle multiple issues (43%). Consistent with the responses reported in Table 17, approximately 13% (26) of participants reported no change in demand for services.

Table 19. Agencies' Response to Increase in Demand for Services

Mechanisms for Responding to Demand Increase	# Agencies
Increased Referral, Partnerships, and Outreach	60
Increased Organizational Capacity, Services or Extended Hours	52
Increased number of staff	44
Increased workload on fewer staff	37
Increased Volunteer Recruitment	36
Increased fundraising	31
No change in service volume, demand, or provision	26
Cross-training Staff	12
Slowed the pace and quantity of service delivery or prioritized cases	6
Blanks/No Answer	20

N=197, Missing=20

C. Agency Challenges, Funding Priorities, and Underserved Victims

Participants were asked a series of open-ended questions about their greatest challenges, their greatest concerns, and their top priorities for funding. Tables 20-23 below summarize agency concerns and priorities. Responses are ordered in descending order by the frequency with which participants mentioned these issues.

Table 20. Agencies' Greatest Challenges, other than funding, from 2008-2009

Greatest Challenges Other Than Funding	# Agencies
Staff Shortages/Turnover	77
Insufficient community resources for referrals	63
Funding, Recession, Economy	30
Administrative burdens and paperwork	15
Staff Shortages/Funding Cuts to Partner Agencies	14
Need training in specific areas	11

Greatest Challenges Other Than Funding	# Agencies
Difficulties establishing or maintaining collaborations/partnerships	11
Challenge serving LEP victims	10
Increasing community awareness or response to various crimes	9
Maintaining Contact with Victims	8
Issues with court response or court processes	7
Victim participation in case prosecution	6
Law enforcement response to violent crimes against women	6
Implementing new programs or expansions	5
Providing prevention programs	1
Blanks/No Answer	27

N=190, Missing=27

Closely related to issues with funding, 41% of the 190 participants who answered this question cited staff shortages or turnover as their greatest challenge in the previous two years. Particularly problematic – given participants’ strategies for coping with increased service demand – is the fact that one-third reported insufficient community resources for referrals as their second greatest challenge. This means that while agencies are referring out for services they cannot provide, there are not sufficient resources in the community to which to refer victims; thus indicating that at least some victims may not be receiving services. Closely related to this issue is the fact that, as 14 participants reported, partner agencies may also suffer from staff shortages or funding cuts.

In addition to agencies about their greatest challenges, CJCC also asked about issues of greatest concern. Table 21 lists the issues most that participants most frequently cited. These are listed in descending order by the most frequently mentioned issue.

Table 21. Issue of Greatest Concern (2010), other than funding

Issue of Greatest Concern at Present	# Agencies
Funding	122
Finding quality staff/staff shortages	55
Keeping Up With Service Quality and/or Increased Demand for Services	29
Building Capacity/Program Expansion to meet Demand	13

Issue of Greatest Concern at Present	# Agencies
Breaking the cycle of victimization within families	12
Lack of necessary services in area	10
Ensuring victims treated well in criminal justice system	9
Keeping up with/contacting victims	5
Finding training opportunities for staff	4
Administrative Paperwork	3
Serving LEP Victims	1
Blanks/No Answer	27

N=190, Missing=27

The answers to both questions were fairly similar. Overwhelmingly, and despite the question wording, 64% of the participants reported that funding was their greatest concerns. A distant second was staff shortages or issues finding quality staff (29% of participants). Thirteen percent of respondents were concerned with meeting increased demand – either through program expansion or maintaining service quality. Closely related to these issues, and to the challenges cited previously, 5% were concerned that there were insufficient services in the area to meet needs. Interestingly, while 10 participants cited “serving LEP victims” as a great challenge, only 1 participant cited this as an issue of great concern. Similarly, 15 participants cited Administrative Paperwork as a challenge, but only 3 as an issue of great concern. Thus, while agencies face many challenges, their greatest concerns have been funding and staffing.

Agencies were then asked to list three priorities for increased funding. These priorities are included in Table 22 in descending order.

Table 22. Top Three Priorities for Increased Agency Funding

Top Three Priorities for Increased Funding	#Agencies
More staff/maintaining current staff	84
Increased capacity for community awareness, public education and prevention	41
Shelter, facility, and operational costs - including technology and equipment	37
Counseling, Therapy, & Mental Health Services	29
More staff training	27
Legal Assistance/Advocacy Services	22
Expanded housing options - emergency and transitional	21

Top Three Priorities for Increased Funding	#Agencies
Emergency Financial & Transportation Assistance for Victims	18
Capacity to sustain/recruit more volunteers	15
Better provision of CVBR services - including restitution enforcement	12
Hire bilingual staff/increase capacity to meet LEP victim needs	10
Increased capacity to Fundraise	9
Training for and specialized CJS partners about victimization	8
More space	8
More trained medical providers to identify and meet victim needs (child and adult)	7
Blanks/No Answer	54

N=163, Missing=54

Consistent with the cited challenges, agencies responded 52% of the 163 participants answering this question cited hiring or maintaining staff as a top-three priority. One quarter would increase their organizational capacity for community awareness and public education – activities crucial to making their presence known to victims in the community. The same number (10) who cited that serving LEP victims was a great challenge also stated that they would hire bilingual staff or otherwise increase capacity to serve these victims’ needs. Approximately 18% stated they would pay for counseling or therapy services, which as shown below, is cited as an area of great need. A substantial number – 35 (22%) – would fund additional training for staff and partners in the criminal justice system.

Participants were asked to further specify their *single most important priority* for funding if additional monies were to become available. Responses are catalogued in Table 23 below in descending order.

Table 23. Single Most Important Use for Funding if Funding Increased

Single Most Important Use for Increased Funding	# Agencies
Staff/general program expansion	105
Specialized Staff positions (incl. counseling and mental health)	32
More Training	17
Legal Assistance	15
Client and Stakeholder Education	13
Expanding Service Area/Better service in outlying areas	12
Increased Outreach & Staff to do it	12

Single Most Important Use for Increased Funding	# Agencies
Bilingual Staff	8
Facilities expansion	7
Need Support Staff	6
Data Collection System	3
Increased funding for transportation assistance	3
Increased funding for mileage/staff transportation	3
Blanks	24

N=193, Missing=24

The single greatest priority for agencies is staff or program expansion (for which staff is necessary). The majority (55%) would increase staff or expand their program. If staff-related priorities are taken into account, 85% of agencies have some sort of staffing concern – whether for general victim services staff, bilingual staff, or specialized/professional staff such as therapists or attorneys, or outreach staff. Consistent with the fact that over 70% of agencies reported having a CIMS in Table 2 only 6 agencies cited a data collection system as a top priority for increased funding.

Finally, agencies were asked to report on the kinds of victims they perceive as underserved in their communities and the greatest victim needs. Table 24 is a summary of these responses presented in descending order of frequency in responses.

Table 24. Types of Victims Agencies Report Being Underserved

Types of Underserved Victims	# Agencies
Hispanic Victims	49
CPA, CSEC, CSA and Neglect Victims	34
DV - Demand Overwhelms Services Available	17
Limited English Proficient (LEP) Victims	15
Other Crime Types	14
Refugee, Immigrant, or Undocumented Victims	14
Elder or Disabled Victims	13
Rural or Poor Victims	9
Victims with Mental Health or Substance Abuse Needs	7
Adult SA Victims	4
LBGTQQI	4

Types of Underserved Victims	# Agencies
Male or Single Women DV Victims	3
African Americans	1
Blanks/No Answer	84

N=133, Missing=84

Hispanic persons represent the largest growing population in Georgia – as cited previously – and thus, the greatest challenge for service providers. Thirty-seven percent of the participants responding to this question cited Hispanics as an underserved population. Thus, even though reported having bilingual staff – and indeed at least one agency has a Spanish-speaking staff person or volunteer in 141 of Georgia’s counties, this victim population remains underserved. Related to this population, are limited English proficient victims (11% report these as underserved) and refugee, immigrant or undocumented victims (11% report underserved.) In total, immigrant, LEP or refugee victims represent 59% of the kinds of victims participants reported as underserved.

The second most-cited underserved population is child abuse victims of all kinds – including those victimized through commercial sexual exploitation. In addition, 13% of participants reported the number of domestic violence victims overwhelms the available services. This is consistent with the UCR data cited above. While violent crime has generally decreased since 2007, family violence – which includes child abuse and intimate partner violence – has increased by 11%. Finally, elderly and disabled victims are reported as underserved by 10% of those responding to this question – another category of victims that may fall under the family violence umbrella.

Lastly participants commented on what they perceived the areas of greatest victim need to be. The area of greatest need (26%) was mental health services. However, this area of greatest need does not necessarily match up with the top priority for funding that participants cited. Only 17% of participants cited they would hire specialized staff – including counselors or therapists – even though over a quarter cite this as an area of great need. Similarly, 21% of participants report housing needs as a gap in services; however, this does not make the list of top priorities for additional funds in Table 23. Staffing needs for participants persist as a focus area even here – where the question requires consideration of areas of victim needs. Roughly the same number of participants report civil legal advocacy as a need as funding priority – 19 and 15 participants, respectively. Similarly, while financial assistance and transportation needs are listed in Table 25 and as a top three funding priority in Table 22, these do not make it onto Table 24 where agencies discuss their top priorities for funding. Only 3 participants who responded to this question stated victims in their service area had no outstanding need.

Table 25. Agency Reports of Greatest Unmet Victim Needs

Greatest Unmet Victim Needs	# Agencies
Mental Health Needs/therapy	37
Emergency, Transitional and Permanent Housing Needs	29
Language/culturally specific services and literature	27
Staffing Needs	19
Other needs	19
Civil Legal Advocacy Needs	19
Financial Assistance for Victims	17
Transportation Needs	15
Special Victim populations - e.g. elder abuse, male victims, homicide etc.	13
Employment Opportunities	10
Medical/SANE Services	8
Better Help Understanding the Criminal Justice System	5
No outstanding need	3
Low-income/poverty barriers	2
Custody/Visitation - DV Related	2
Blanks/No Answer	76

N=141, Missing=76

2. Conclusion

Relatively small (an average of about 7 paid staff) agencies are faced with meeting the needs of persons, who are in crisis and distress, in their communities. The economic downturn has affected agency staffing and may be related to increased crime in certain communities. Georgia’s changing demographics also present a challenge for agencies trying to meeting victim needs. Generally, agencies are relying on each other and partners within the community to continue serving victims. However, agencies need more staff – in particular specialized or professional staff – to completely serve victims.