



## **Victim Services Unit**

### **Advocate Job Description**

Victim Services Unit (VSU) advocates are volunteers who assist law enforcement following death notifications. They work with families and survivors to deal with the initial impact of grief, and offer information to help the families get through the first of many changes in their lives.

Advocates receive 40 hours of classroom training. This training covers a broad range of topics from grief counseling, to court procedures, to visiting a funeral home to a tour of a jail. All of this information will be used at various times.

Law enforcement officers contact Central Dispatch to call VSU. Advocates go to family homes, hospitals, or the scene of an incident. They are directed by the officer, deputy or trooper on scene. Calls include motor vehicle accidents with fatalities or serious injuries, homicides, suicides, sudden unexpected natural deaths, fires or for any reason an officer feels the family needs support, direction through the judicial process, or information and help with what they need to do next.

Advocates are asked to donate on-call time each week but at least once monthly. Time and mileage are donated, there is no reimbursement. A uniform shirt, ID badge and call-out materials are all provided. Monthly meetings are held to report all calls and provide additional training.