

Section/Unit SIS
completing report
Section IV. 7.b.

County Bergen
Year 2020

DISPOSITIONS OF ORIGINAL INVESTIGATIONS RESULTING IN CRIMINAL CHARGES

DISPOSITION OF ORIGINAL INVESTIGATIONS RESULTING IN CRIMINAL CHARGES	NUMBER OF DEFENDANTS
1. Defendants charged by complaint, TOTAL	35
a. Defendants with complaints administratively dismissed	0
b. Defendants with complaints downgraded to disorderly persons offenses	0
c. Defendants with complaints referred to Family Court	0
d. Defendants with complaints presented to grand jury	2
2. Defendants with original charges presented to grand jury on direct presentment	0
3. Defendants charged through accusation	6
4. Defendants completing grand jury process on direct presentment and complaint presentation, TOTAL	2
a. Defendants indicted	2
b. Defendants no billed and remanded to municipal court	0
c. Defendants no billed/no action	0

BERGEN COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S
OFFICE SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT 2020
NARRATIVE

The Special Victims Unit (SVU) investigates and prosecutes sex crimes against minors and adults, as well as physical and emotional abuse and neglect cases of minors. The core mission of the SVU is to thoroughly and justly investigate and, to successfully prosecute cases of sex crimes and child abuse in a manner where victims of said crimes are treated with fairness, compassion and respect.

The SVU is currently staffed by a law enforcement contingent of nine detectives, three sergeants and a lieutenant. For the first half of the year, the legal staff consisted of six assistant prosecutors, which included a section chief and five assistant prosecutors all handling the squad's full case load. The legal staff was reduced by one assistant prosecutor for the second half of the year (as all jury trials were suspended due to COVID-19). Two civilians, a paralegal, clerical personnel, a dedicated victim witness advocate and a SANE nurse coordinator are also on staff. The detectives work day and night shifts on a rotating basis to maximize availability for investigations throughout the county. The lieutenant oversees investigative functions for the unit. The Assistant Prosecutor Section Chief provides legal advice regarding the investigations and oversees the prosecution and administration of the cases handled by the squad. The model we follow for effective investigations is one of complete collaboration between investigative and legal staff.

The SVU works cooperatively with other police agencies throughout the county depending upon the nature of the crime and requirements of the investigation. Our Office protocol requires local police departments to call upon our detectives to handle all cases involving crimes against children and sexual assault cases involving adults. Our SVU detectives investigate every case within the County that falls subject to this protocol. However, given our Unit's reputation for expertise and professionalism, we are often called upon to assist in investigations and/or in a legal advisory capacity and/or prosecute numerous matters that fall outside the scope of the protocol. Additionally, it should be noted that SVU handles Human Trafficking (HT) investigations throughout the county. The section chief and an assistant prosecutor (previously assigned to the unit) serve as liaison and alternate liaison, respectively, along with a detective and sergeant who are assigned as HT task force liaisons to the Attorney General's Office.

Our legal staff follows a vertical model of prosecution with their cases, including handling each of our own SVU case detention hearings. We are a unique "outside" squad within the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office (BCPO) in that we not only litigate cases that our detectives investigate, but we also prosecute cases that come to the SVU from local police departments. The reason for this is that sex crimes and child abuse is a very nuanced area of the law where all assistant prosecutors in the SVU require specialized training and gain highly specialized experience. SVU cases are motion intensive and heavily litigated and, while most cases resolve by way of plea, we have many cases that are resolved by trial.

The SVU has within it a Megan's Law Unit, which has two civilians. The Unit also oversees the Megan's Law sex offender registration and tiering process of all registrants within the County, regardless of whether their offense originally occurred in the jurisdiction. This process also includes community education and notification regarding sex offenders as well as in-service training to municipal police departments regarding the use and operation of a statewide registration system known as "Offender Watch." Further, the Megan's Law sub-unit of the SVU prosecutes violations of the terms of community supervision for life and failures to register under Megan's Law. It should be noted that although one assistant prosecutor is assigned to specifically handle all tiering hearings/reviews, the sub-unit's cases are assigned amongst the five assistant prosecutors.

The SVU takes an integrative approach to the victims' well-being in all aspects of prosecuting their cases. SVU representatives (Chief Assistant Prosecutor or designee and Lieutenant or designated law enforcement representative) participate in the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) that includes victim-witness advocates; the Division of Child Protection & Permanency (DCPP); Bergen Family Guidance Center for counseling; as well as psychologists and medical staff from the Audrey Hepburn's Children House (Children's House) in Hackensack, N.J. The MDT follows cases of child victims who are either being supervised by the DCPP or whose guardians have agreed to participate in the program. The disciplines in MDT work together, ensuring that the victim is only interviewed once and that all of the medical and psychological needs of the victim are addressed, thus limiting trauma to the victim during the investigative and legal process. The MDT meets in the SVU conference room twice a month and reviews cases on a rotating basis.

Victims who are younger than 13 years-old are interviewed in the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office Child Advocacy Center specifically established for this purpose. The interviews are integral to the investigation and the successful prosecution of these cases and are conducted by an SVU detective who has been trained in forensic interviewing. Additionally, it should be noted that the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office Special Victims Unit began application for accreditation of its Child Advocacy Center in May of 2018. The site visit for final accreditation review was conducted via the Zoom platform on October 6 and final accreditation review determination is pending for January 2021.

The SVU also supervises the County's sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) program. Victims over the age of 13 are afforded the opportunity to be examined by a specially trained nurse who is responsible for evidence collection. There are seven SANEs who are on-call on a rotating basis at the six area hospital sites in Bergen County. The SANE coordinator is responsible for all the nurses and their scheduling, has her own office within the SVU and reports directly to the SVU Lieutenant.

Currently, the SVU is staffed by a group of dedicated personnel on both the legal and investigative sides who have a passion for this intense and difficult field of work. We all strive to achieve our core mission on a daily basis. By their very nature, our cases are difficult to investigate and successfully prosecute. Sex crimes are crimes that are committed in secret, with little (if any) tangible evidence. Usually, the evidence consists of statements made by the victim and a witness

who was told of the abuse/assault a significant amount of time after the incident(s) actually occurred. We have endeavored to obtain more corroborative evidence through the use of traditional search warrants and Communications Data Warrants. Additionally, we take a proactive approach via outreach programs and trainings, such as conducting security, faculty and student seminars at local colleges and within the law enforcement community.

In meeting the challenges of the large number of complex cases and serious crimes involved, BCPO detectives and assistant prosecutors work compassionately with crime victims, many of whom are young, disabled or emotionally traumatized. Further challenges ensue with so-called "high profile" cases. These cases involve public officials, clergy, teachers, coaches, celebrities and medical professionals. These cases are especially difficult to navigate given the media attention, public scrutiny and numerous supporters of the accused.

Regardless of degree of the crime, the personal violation to the victim is profound and both victims and their families run a gambit of emotions as they deal with their victimization. Our investigative and legal staff (assisted by our victim-witness advocates) spend significant time to help victims cope as they navigate through the often long and arduous criminal justice process. We are always mindful that swift resolution of these cases are in the victims' best interest. Through professionalism, continued training and the fostering of strong relationships with other law enforcement agencies, social service, medical professionals and the community-at-large, our SVU will continue to succeed in this difficult area of law enforcement and prosecution.

SVU

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INVESTIGATIVE WORKLOAD AND DISPOSITIONS

INVESTIGATIVE WORKLOAD AND DISPOSITIONS	NUMBER OF INVESTIGATIONS BY TYPE - Original and Post-complaint Investigations					
	Original Investigations Conducted Jointly With:				Original Exclusive Investigations	TOTAL Original Investigations
	Local Police	State Agency	Other County Prosecutor	Other Agency		
1. Investigations pending or inactive at the beginning of the year	61	0	0	0	0	61
2. Investigations opened during the year	218	0	0	0	0	218
3. TOTAL Investigative workload for the year (add nos. 1 - 2)	279	0	0	0	0	279
4. TOTAL Investigations completed during this year (add a. - d.)	200	0	11	0	0	211
a. Resulting in criminal charges	50	0	0	0	0	50
b. Referred to other agency for criminal prosecution	0	0	11	3	0	14
c. Referred to other agency for civil or administrative action	0	0	0	10	0	10
d. Closed - No further action	137	0	0	0	0	137
5. Investigations pending or inactive at the end of the year	68	0	0	0	0	68
						0

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SVU

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DISPOSITIONS OF ORIGINAL INVESTIGATIONS RESULTING IN CRIMINAL CHARGES

DISPOSITION OF ORIGINAL INVESTIGATIONS RESULTING IN CRIMINAL CHARGES	NUMBER OF DEFENDANTS
1. Defendants charged by complaint, TOTAL	50
a. Defendants with complaints administratively dismissed	2
b. Defendants with complaints downgraded to disorderly persons offenses	1
c. Defendants with complaints referred to Family Court	5
d. Defendants with complaints presented to grand jury	41
2. Defendants with original charges presented to grand jury on direct presentment	0
3. Defendants charged through accusation	0
4. Defendants completing grand jury process on direct presentment and complaint presentation, TOTAL	41
a. Defendants indicted	41
b. Defendants not billed and remanded to municipal court	0
c. Defendants not billed/no action	0

TRIAL SECTION

2021 Annual Report

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office - Trial Section - is to effectively, efficiently and fairly prosecute all criminal offenders from arraignment through sentencing who are referred to it from the Grand Jury Unit or other areas of the office following indictment.

GOAL

The goal of the Trial Section is to achieve fair and just resolutions in every criminal case after carefully evaluating all relevant factors surrounding the crime and the offender, including, but not limited to, the nature of the crime, the offender's role and involvement in the crime, the harm suffered by any victim of the crime, the weight of the evidence against the accused, as well as considering the character, attitude and background of the offender, and his/her risk of reoffending. After reviewing the criminal case, assistant prosecutors assigned to the Trial Section endeavor to dispose of these matters expeditiously by rendering plea offers with appropriate sentencing recommendations. Cases that are not resolved via plea bargains will be prosecuted at trial before a jury of citizens of Bergen County. Fair and just resolutions of criminal matters may include diversionary treatment in the pre-trial intervention supervision (PTI), probation supervision, drug court supervision, or incarceration in the county jail or state prison.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. To manage the flow of criminal cases coming to the Trial Section and ensure they are distributed appropriately among the trial teams and staff attorneys.
2. To expeditiously review and assess each case prior to arraignment. Trial attorneys assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of the criminal case in order to prepare appropriate plea offers that are fair and just and comply with an escalating plea policy, which is designed to foster early resolution of cases.
3. To identify detention cases early and ensure that due attention is given to them in order to comply with criminal justice reform measures. These matters are subjected to speedy trial rules, resulting on a defendant's release from jail if the State is not ready to proceed to trial.
4. To thoroughly review the discovery in each case and ensure that all discoverable materials are promptly made available to defense counsel, ideally prior to arraignment, which fosters meaningful plea negotiations and contributes to early resolutions of cases. Assistant

prosecutors are required to provide ongoing discovery to defendant throughout the prosecution of the case.

5. To assess the special needs of each criminal case, especially complex prosecutions, and ensure that all necessary expert witnesses are retained as early as possible in the case. For instance, determinations should be made early in each case whether scientific analysis, forensic examinations or medical reviews should be performed and/or utilized at trial.
6. To ensure that assistant prosecutors preparing for trial and those who are on trial are fully supported with all the resources and support staff available in the office. This includes providing the trial attorney with the following: investigative personnel (a case detective) to assist at trial; sufficient clerical support; supervisory support from the trial attorney's Team Leader and from the Trial Chief; designated legal support from the Appellate Unit; designated technical/AV support from a member of the Computer Division to assist with any technological needs in the courtroom; and designates victim/witness advocate to assist all victims and witnesses who are called to testify.
7. To maintain appropriate staffing levels commensurate with the nature and number of cases referred to the Trial Section. Specific attention should be given to maintaining sufficient staffing of trial attorneys (currently 10), experienced and motivated Trial Section Team Leaders (currently 5 correlating with the number trial courts), minimum number of case detectives (currently 2), a paralegal assistant (currently 1), and the minimum number of clerical support (currently 5, including the Clerical Supervisor).
8. To ensure that all Trial Section personnel have necessary office support, including sufficient, accessible, and comfortable work spaces, computers and updated software, and access to printers, including color printers, scanning devices, smart boards, and access to legal research resources. Staff attorneys are encouraged to familiarize themselves with office technology, including, all electronic devices, computers, software, Aquos Smart Boards, and other technological resources procured by the office for use in court for motions and for trials.
9. To insure that all assistant prosecutors in the Trial Section are provided with regular continuing legal education courses and other special training opportunities to improve their legal skills, trial skills, and foster adherence to the highest ethical and professional standards.
10. To periodically review the conduct and performance of the Trial Section's Team Leaders and Staff Attorneys in order to promote and reinforce the highest level of professionalism, identify areas that need improvement, recognize demonstrated examples of superior performance and exceptional conduct, and to set individual goals for each member of the staff.
11. To promote, foster, and maintain the highest level of professionalism in our dealings with the courts, other law enforcement agencies, adversaries, offenders, the media, victims and witnesses, and members of the public.

YEAR IN REVIEW - 2020

The Trial Section continued to push for jury trials and fair case dispositions in 2020. In 2020, the BCPO tried 12 defendants (office-wide) before trials were suspended. Like other squads in the office, the Trial Section assimilated well to the changes brought upon by criminal justice reform. The squad was operating at a high rate of efficiency and complied with all speedy trial rules without exception and no defendants were released nor cases dismissed due to any violation of the new rules.

In 2020, special attention was given to increasing the number of pre-trial motions we were handling in an effort to generate earlier plea dispositions. As efforts to that end were picking up steam, the global pandemic stuck effectively stopping us in our tracks on all fronts, including jury trial, GJ presentment, and suspending all in-person appearances. The backlog of cases continued to grow and all trials were suspending effectively undermining our office's efforts resolve cases expeditiously.

Also, prior to the pandemic, this office was making headway in our office's cooperation with the Public Defender's Office and the courts in a coordinated effort to improve communications as well as joint efforts to resolve cases early on. However, there was an abrupt change in leadership with the OPD followed by the pandemic, which similarly stalled the progress we were making. To date, we are still working through some growing pains and adjusting to the new leadership of the OPD.

The Trial Section attempted to adhere to an escalating plea policy but did face challenges as backlogs began to grow due to court suspensions and other work interruptions. To alleviate the growing backload, the Trial Section identified 164 cases that were appropriate for "modified plea offers," which by year's end resulted in about 70-80 cases dispositions.

The Trial Section continued to benefit from the court's use of the first-ever coordinated "global trial list," which was developed in 2017, and is updated weekly and shared by the entire criminal division and BCPO staff attorneys. This global list enables all stakeholders to collaboratively review, in real time, all the upcoming trials listed in one workable document that is regularly updated. This has enabled the courts to prioritize the aging trials and create plans to try these cases within realistic time periods. The pandemic has now caused us to use the list to prioritize those speedy trial matters that are likely going to be tried first in 2021 when trials resume.

In 2020, the Trial Section continued a plan created in 2017 - the incorporation-by-transfer of more outside squad cases (Homicide, SVU, SIS, Financial Crimes, NTF, Computer Crimes and Arson Squad) to the Trial Section. This enabled Trial APs to expand their experience by working on challenging cases, many of which were investigated by this office's outside squads. It also gave these APs more responsibility and exposure to victims and the victimization that comes with some of the most serious cases in the county. Again, another residual benefit is the increase in office morale as well as unifying our courthouse staff with our Paramus office staff as they continued to work collaboratively.

The Trial Section has to interrupt its "Trial Section Workshops," which started in 2017 due to the pandemic. This is a nine-month long course of instruction provided by more senior assistant prosecutors for the benefit of less experience assistant prosecutors. This targeted and specialized training focuses almost exclusively on the "practical" aspects of trial work from arraignment to closing arguments and verdict and is designed primarily to positively develop the advocacy skills of the young trial prosecutor. Although our curriculum was interrupted by the pandemic in March, we plan to continue the course when APs return to work.

In 2020, our section continued to improve our working relationship between the Trial Chief and the Criminal Division Manager which has yielded positive mutual benefits for both offices. Most notably, due to

our collaborative approach to case management, inroads were made to gain the attention and cooperation from the Assignment Judge in this vicinage, who took interest in some of the proposals our office had to improve the overall handling of criminal cases from arraignment to trial.

Finally, the pandemic presented major challenges to the Trial Section in 2020. I am proud to say the staff stepped up and supported each other during this difficult time. One of the ways, the squad continued to communicate and stay in touch with each other was the institution of weekly Zoom calls among the staff. Early on, these calls provided tremendous emotional support as we pivoted back into a "new normal" work-from-home arrangement. Soon our calls included greater coordination of virtual appearances and coordination of work assignments. The office also provided each AP with surface pro computers, which enabled everyone to continue to respond to the increase work related to the coordinated statewide jail release efforts of the OPD as they worked from their homes.

Looking forward to 2021, Bergen County continues to serve the state as a pilot program in GJ and trial work. We will look to the Trial Section to help this office dig out of the backlog by way of plea or trial and continue to serve victims of crimes, despite the challenges facing the judiciary.

Section/Unit TRIAL
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Year 2020

**DEFENDANTS PENDING DISPOSITION OF CHARGES
BY AGE OF INDICTMENT OR ACCUSATION**

AGES OF POST-INDICTMENT DEFENDANT CASES FROM DATE OF INDICTMENT OF ACCUSATION	NUMBER OF DEFENDANTS	
	ACTIVE	INACTIVE/FUGITIVE
1. 0 to 3 months	149	40
2. 3+ to 6 months	130	32
3. 6+ to 9 months	10	1
4. 9+ to 12 months	102	49
5. 12+ to 24 months	235	133
6. 24+ months	80	957
7. TOTAL post-indictment/accusation defendant cases pending	706	1,212

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DEFENDANTS WITH INDICTMENTS/ACCUSATIONS DISPOSED BY OFFENSE CATEGORY AND MANNER OF DISPOSITION

MANNER OF DISPOSITION	OFFENSE CATEGORIES										
	Homicide	Kidnaping	Sexual Assault	Robbery	Arson	Assault	Burglary	Bribery	Narcotics	Official Misconduct	Perjury/Falsification
1. Guilty plea to most serious offense	7	9	15	14	22	88	77	0	167	0	3
2. Guilty plea to lesser indictable offense	1	3	2	25	1	8	6	0	11	0	0
3. Ind. dism., plea to dis. persons offense	0	3	0	4	0	7	4	0	12	0	0
4. Guilty at trial, most serious offense											
a. Jury	3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
b. Non-jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. Guilty at trial, lesser indictable offense											
a. Jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
b. Non-jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Guilty at trial, dis. persons offense											
a. Jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
b. Non-jury	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Not guilty at trial											
a. Jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
b. Non-jury	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
8. Acceptance into diversion program	0	6	8	1	6	30	10	0	18	0	1
9. Dismissed over objection of pros.	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	7	0	0
10. Dismissed pros. motion or consent	0	0	0	0	4	2	3	0	8	0	0
11. TOTAL dispositions	12	22	25	46	35	139	101	0	226	0	4

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DEFENDANTS WITH INDICTMENTS/ACCUSATIONS DISPOSED BY OFFENSE CATEGORY AND MANNER OF DISPOSITION

MANNER OF DISPOSITION	Theft	Forgery/ raud	Weapons	Child Abuse/ Endanger	Gambling	Wiretap	Obstr, Gov't Oper.	Fail to Register	Other	TOTAL
1. Guilty plea to most serious offense	83	21	30	22	0	0	28	3	23	612
2. Guilty plea to lesser indictable offense	16	2	0	2	0	0	7	0	1	85
3. Ind. dism., plea to dis. persons offense	15	5	1	0	0	0	4	0	3	58
4. Guilty at trial, most serious offense										
a. Jury	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
b. Non-jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. Guilty at trial, lesser indictable offense										
a. Jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
b. Non-jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Guilty at trial, dis. persons offense										
a. Jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
b. Non-jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
7. Not guilty at trial										
a. Jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
b. Non-jury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
8. Acceptance into diversion program	32	17	30	9	0	0	11	0	9	188
9. Dismissed over objection of pros.	2	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
10. Dismissed pros. motion or consent	6	1	0	1	0	0	4	0	2	31
11. TOTAL dispositions	155	50	62	34	0	0	54	3	38	1,006

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**CAREER CRIMINAL
DEFENDANTS PENDING DISPOSITION OF CHARGES
BY AGE OF INDICTMENT OR ACCUSATION**

AGES OF POST-INDICTMENT DEFENDANT CASES FROM DATE OF INDICTMENT OR ACCUSATION	NUMBER
1. 0 to 3 months	0
2. 3+ to 6 months	0
3. 6+ to 9 months	0
4. 9+ to 12 months	0
5. 12+ to 24 months	0
6. 24+ months	0
7. TOTAL post-indictment/accusation defendant cases pending	0

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**CAREER CRIMINAL
DEFENDANTS WITH INDICTMENTS/ACCUSATION DISPOSED
BY MANNER OF DISPOSITION**

MANNER OF DISPOSITION	NUMBER OF DEFENDANTS
1. Guilty plea to most serious offense	0
2. Guilty plea to lesser indictable offense	0
3. Ind. dism., plea to disorderly persons offense	0
4. Guilty at trial, most serious offense	0
a. Jury trial	0
b. Non-jury trial	0
5. Guilty at trial, lesser indictable offense	0
a. Jury trial	0
b. Non-jury trial	0
6. Guilty at trial, disorderly persons offense	0
a. Jury trial	0
b. Non-jury trial	0
7. Not guilty at trial	0
a. Jury trial	0
b. Non-jury trial	0
8. Acceptance into diversion program	0
9. Dismissed over objection of prosecutor	0
10. Dismissed on motion of prosecutor	0
11. TOTAL dispositions	0

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Bergen County Office of Victim Witness Advocacy 2020 Annual Report

The Office of Victim Witness Advocacy strives to achieve the following objectives: provide services that respond to the immediate emotional and physical needs of victims, answer questions addressing concerns regarding criminal justice system procedures and rules, and provide an orientation to the criminal justice system. The crime victims' advocates assigned to cases serve as a liaison for victims and witnesses with law enforcement agencies, courts, and social service providers. Additional responsibilities of the Office of Victim Witness Advocacy include assisting victims in filing claims with the Victims of Crime Compensation Office, providing emotional support and supplying case status information/updates. Crime victims are notified of the defendant's parole eligibility, assisted with Victim Impact Statements, accompanied to court, and meetings with the assistant prosecutors and detectives.

In 2020, the Office of Victim Witness Advocacy consisted of the following staff the Victim Witness Administrator, a secretary and five Victim Witness Advocates. It was mid-summer when [REDACTED] the unit secretary decided to submit her retirement papers, making her last day of employment on December 31, 2020.

In 2020, the world was hit with a global pandemic, the Corona virus. This pandemic changed the way we worked. The Bergen County Prosecutor's Office as directed by the Bergen County Executive Tedesco began a modified in office work schedule for all county employees on March 16. As per the County Executive, all county employees sixty-five and older and individuals with compromised immune systems or other health issues were permitted to work from home. As of March 16 [REDACTED], the unit secretary and [REDACTED] an advocate decided to work from home. The Victim Witness Administrator and the other four advocates were divided into two groups. The two groups worked on a rotating schedule, one week in the office and one week remotely. As of March 30 another directive, come down from the Governor for all non-essential workers to stay at home. Needless to say, no one was prepared for this unprecedented upheaval of having to work

from home. The Victim Witness Administrator knowing not all advocates had work cell phones, immediately contacted the staff to gather personal email addresses and cell phone numbers. Once all staff contact information was obtained the Administrator sent Deputy Chief [REDACTED] and Lieutenant [REDACTED] the information.

The office secretary was instructed to check the main Victim Witness phone line a couple times each day and forward any messages to the appropriate staff. The advocates were responsible for checking the messages on their work phone and responding to victims messages in a timely manner. Since many court proceedings were stopped in March there was little to report to victims. The stay at home order continued for the Victim Witness Unit until August 3 when staff began back to a rotating work schedule.

The Victim Witness Office continues to work closely with other community agencies such as Alternatives to Domestic Violence, The Healing Space; Center for Hope, Safety, and Bergen Family Center. In 2020, all community events such as the Annual Clothline Project, Crime Victims Right Week and Denim Day were cancelled due to the pandemic.

2020 was a unique year, as the statics gathered reflect the changes in "office work" as we knew it. From March through August, the unit was unable to gather statics, as we were completely unprepared to work remotely. All statistics gathered in 2020 are from the period of September through December. Approximately 585 cases were opened in the Victim Witness Unit during the months statistics could be collected. As per the InfoShare report, the unit staff assisted 3528 individuals in 2020.

In compliance with the Crime Victim Bill of Rights, case status notification letters are sent to victims thereby keeping victims informed of court proceedings from arraignment through final disposition. In 2020 a total of 7428 notification letters were generated.

Letters	Victim Witness Notifications	2020	2019	2018	2017
02	Downgraded Dismissed Remanded	35	99	132	349
04	VW Early Disposition	1968	807	949	1457
06	Indictment Returned	494	640	741	758
07	Accepted into PTI Program	158	230	189	216

8A	Completed PTI Program	245	137	163	176
8B	Terminated from PTI Program	33	32	69	39
9B	Sentencing Scheduled (Pled Guilty)	2448	1926	2700	2727
11	Bench Warrant Issued (Fugitive)	615	870	952	631
12	Case Dismissed	35	66	173	103
14A	Sentence Imposed (Victim, Parole Input)	846	1296	1458	1508
14B	Sentence Imposed (Witness)	126	131	201	131
16A	Charges Disposed (Not Guilty By Trial)	0	1	2	11
16B	Sentencing Scheduled (Guilty By Trial)	8	15	33	11
17	Trial Scheduled	370	388	331	571
	Total ...	7,428	6,638	8,093	8,688

As depicted in the Victim Witness Year End Statistics Chart the office staff opened a total of 585 cases that were assigned to the Trial Section. A total of 277 domestic violence cases were opened, and a total of 8 homicide cases were opened. The Office of Victim Witness Advocates made a total of 2499 telephone calls to victims and sent 2547 emails during the year. The Assistant Prosecutors were contacted by telephone a total of 2252 times and received 5025 emails from advocates throughout the period of time statistics were collected.

The Bergen County Office of Victim Witness Advocacy is dedicated to working with crime victims to uphold their rights throughout the criminal justice prosecution process, all while minimizing any additional trauma experienced by these individuals and their family. Last year was a unique year for providing service to crime victims. Yet the office staff pulled together and made it happen. The office of Victim Witness is now prepared with the equipment to work remotely if necessary, we will continue to provide Bergen County crime victims with the service they are entitled to receive despite a global pandemic.

Section/Unit Victim Witness Unit
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County Bergen
 Year 2020

VICTIM/WITNESS NOTIFICATION SERVICES

NOTIFICATION SERVICES	NOTIFICATION PROVIDED TO					
	VICTIMS		Lay WITNESSES		Law Enforcement WITNESSES	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Initial contact	✓		✓			✓
Administrative dismissal	✓			✓		✓
Remand to municipal court	✓			✓		✓
Indictment returned	✓			✓		✓
No bill	✓			✓		✓
Acceptance into pre-trial intervention	✓			✓		✓
Guilty plea	✓			✓		✓
Not guilty at trial	✓			✓		✓
Guilty at trial	✓			✓		✓
Indictment dismissed	✓			✓		✓
Sentence	✓		✓			✓
Parole	✓			✓		✓
Disposition of juvenile cases	✓			✓		✓
Other (specify)	✓					
Death of an inmate	✓					
Early release of inmate	✓					

Section/Unit Victim Witness Unit
 completing report
 Section IV. 11.b.

County Bergen
 Year 2020

VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE SERVICES PROVIDED

VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE SERVICES	SERVICE PROVIDED TO			
	VICTIMS		WITNESSES	
	Juvenile Cases	Adult Cases	Juvenile Cases	Adult Cases
INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES				
Introductory brochure	✓	✓	✓	✓
Criminal Justice system orientation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Case information	✓	✓		
VCCB referral	✓	✓		
Social service information/referral	✓	✓		
Crime prevention information/referral	✓	✓		
Property return information	✓	✓		
Witness fee information				
Public education, community awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓
LOGISTIC SERVICES				
Stand-by subpoena and call				
Witness waiting area	✓	✓	✓	✓
Response to witness intimidation, harassment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Restitution recommendation at sentencing	✓	✓		
VCCB claim assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social service intervention	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employer/student intervention	✓	✓	✓	✓
Travel, lodging assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transportation assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Child care assistance				
Property return assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Witness fee assistance				
Victim impact statement assistance	✓	✓		
Counseling				
Other (specify) food while waiting for court event	✓	✓		
Court accompaniment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parking validation	✓	✓	✓	✓