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## FBI VICTIM SERVICES DIVISION

FAMILY ASSISTANCE IN MASS CASUALTY  
INCIDENTS

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### FBI Victim Services Division (VSD)

- ▶ The Victim Services Division (VSD) was established in 2001 to expand and enhance the FBI's victim assistance efforts
- ▶ Partially funded by federal offender (VOCA) funds – fines, assessments, forfeited bail, etc.
- ▶ Funds provided by the Office for Victims of Crime in the Department of Justice

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### FBI Victim Services Division

- ▶ 150+ Victim Specialists (VSs), a quarter of whom are designated for Indian Country
- ▶ Each Field Office has one or more VS
- ▶ Are the Bureau's victim assistance experts
  - Victims' rights
  - Provision of victim services
  - Liaison to community-based victim assistance professionals and resources

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## Victim Services Response Team (VSRT)

- ▶ Developed in 2004
- ▶ Multi-disciplinary team consisting of Special Agents, victim specialists, and analysts
- ▶ Specially trained in response to mass casualty events
- ▶ Participate in regional and annual exercises to refine skills

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## VSRT Responses

- Boston Marathon Bombing, BS 2013
- Navy Yard Shooting, Washington, DC 2013
- Ft. Hood, TX 2014
- EAME Shooting, Charleston, SC 2015
- Grand 16 Shooting, Lafayette, LA 2015
- Umpqua Community College, Roseburg, OR 2015
- IRC Shooting, San Bernardino, CA 2015
- Pulse Nightclub Shooting, Orlando, FL 2016
- Route 91 Festival Shooting, Las Vegas, NV 2017
- Tribeca Truck Attack, New York, NY 2017
- Sutherland Springs Church Shooting, Sutherland Springs, TX 2017
- Parkland Shooting, Parkland, FL 2018
- Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting, 2018

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## Pulse Nightclub Shooting – June 2016

- ▶ Lone male shooter (deceased)
- ▶ 49 deceased; 250+ injured
- ▶ Victim Population:
  - LGBTQ
  - Latino/Hispanic
  - Some had illegal citizenship status
- ▶ Many family members lived out of the state/country

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## First 24 hours

- ▶ Reported to the trauma center emergency room
- ▶ Family members converging on the scene
- ▶ Re-directed to hotel nearby
- ▶ VSRT Team members arrived by Sunday evening

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## Monday

- ▶ Temporary Family Reception Center
  - Death Notifications continued
  - Crime Victim Compensation
  - Red Cross Volunteers
  - Law enforcement

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## What is Family Assistance?

A method of providing services and information to meet the primary concerns of victims and families

Basic needs: information, emergency transportation, child care, privacy from the media, connecting with resources, comfort, someone to listen.

Immediate aftermath of the incident – not long-term

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## FAC Infrastructure and Services

- Secure and away from media
- Large rooms for briefings
- Smaller rooms for private meetings or interviews
- Intake area for initial contact and needs assessments
- Area for Personal Effects storage and return
- Child care
- Access to emergency medical care
- Food and water

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## Family Assistance Center – First 2 Weeks

- Crime Victim's Compensation
- Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- Transportation – Airlines, bus, rental car, etc.
- Hotels
- Medical Examiner
- Law enforcement
- Chaplains and faith based services
- Language services
- EAP
- Pet Alliance
- Resources taken to hospitalized victims
- Crisis Response Canines

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## First Year

- ▶ Hospitalized victims
- ▶ Long-term Resiliency Center
- ▶ Financial compensation through various sources
- ▶ Property return (still happening)
- ▶ Victims' received immigration relief by working with Immigration Legal Services
- ▶ Anniversary memorial event
- ▶ Victim meetings regarding status of case investigation

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## VSD Resources

- ▶ Emergency Assistance Funds
  - Accessed through VSD Headquarters
  - Emergency transportation for victims and family members
  - Lodging
  - Transportation for victim remains
  - Medical evacuation

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## Long-Term Impact of Victim Assistance

- ▶ Victims with long-term hospitalization
- ▶ Property return after several months
- ▶ Impact on the responders – taking care of yourself and each other
- ▶ Impact on the community

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# QUESTIONS ??

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# Contact Information

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