

Victim Advocate

Background –

Advocates work to support the victims of various crimes. Generally, victim advocates work in a specialized area of crime, such as domestic abuse or child abuse. Duties for an advocate would include working directly with victims to ensure safety of the victim, helping victims connect to community resources, providing information on victimization, legal rights and protections, and providing emotional support for victims. Advocates could work for non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, or court systems.

What is the average salary of an advocate? ~\$35,000*

What classes could I take at GVSU that may prepare me to work as a victim advocate?

Discuss with your advisor which courses among those on this list, along with other courses not listed here, would best serve your career goals.

1. **CJ 325** – Human Rights
2. **CJ 320** – Crimes Against Women
3. **CJ 482** – Culture, Crime & Justice
4. **SOC 389** – Child Maltreatment
5. **PSY 367** – Health Psychology
6. **PSY 360** – Social Psychology
7. **PSY 303** – Psychopathology



What outside experiences could I explore? Volunteering within the community at organizations such as homeless shelters, Children's Assessment Center, or the Grand Rapids YMCA. Specifically, the Grand Rapids YMCA offers domestic violence services for victims that you can become involved with.

What skills are important for a victim advocate to have? The ability to work well with others, empathy, strong listening skills, verbal and written communication skills, and knowledge of community resources are skills that advocates would strive to have.

Employer Possibilities – Victim advocates work for a variety of community organizations such as county/state governments, non-profit groups, hospitals, etc.

*Salary from 2017 Payscale report