



# CITY OF NEW BRITAIN

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
THE HONORABLE ERIN E. STEWART

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## **City of New Britain Partnering with HRA of New Britain to Promote National Crime Victims' Rights Week**

*Walk set for April 13 in downtown New Britain*

**NEW BRITAIN**—The City of New Britain is partnering with the Human Resources Agency of New Britain to bring awareness to National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which takes place April 7 through April 13.

On Monday, April 8 at 3 p.m., a press conference will be held at the New Britain Police Department's Community Room. During the event, Mayor Erin E. Stewart will present a proclamation, leaders of victim service organizations as well as survivors/victims of crime will speak, and staff from HRA will be available to distribute educational materials and answer any questions from the media regarding the resources that they offer at their offices in New Britain.

On Saturday, April 13, HRA will host a National Crime Victims' Rights awareness walk in downtown New Britain. The walk begins at 10 a.m. at Central Park. Free t-shirts will be given out to the first 250 attendees. Registration will open at 9:30 a.m. with walks continuing until 12 p.m. Light refreshments and snacks will also be available for registered walkers. The 1.5 mile loop will follow parts of the downtown Historic Walking tour trail. Contact Marlo Greponne at [mgreponne@hranbct.org](mailto:mgreponne@hranbct.org) with any questions about this event.

In 1982, the President's Task Force on Victims of Crimes began the National Crime Victims' Rights Weeks as a way to bring a national commitment to a more equitable and supportive response to victims.

"New Britain is proud to be an inclusive, trauma-informed community that seeks to uplift one another," said Mayor Stewart. "Together, with our many service providers right here in New Britain, we reaffirm our commitment to empowering individuals from all walks of life. When survivors of crimes or bullying are given the strength and resources they need to heal, we build a stronger community."

The mission of the Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc. (HRA) is to improve the quality of life by helping people achieve their economic and social potential; responding to the causes and conditions of poverty; and building stronger individuals, families and the communities we serve. To fulfill its mission, HRA currently offers thirty community-based programs annually to serve over 29,000 individuals and families.

"People may not know there's help available if they or someone close to them have been a victim of a crime," said Marlo Greponne, Director of Planning and Programs at HRA. "This week's activities can

help raise awareness about victims' services available so that more people can access resources, obtain support, and build hope.”

Connecticut Judicial Branch statistics for Family/Domestic Violence cases show 2,535 total cases for New Britain between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. These offenses included assault; disorderly conduct; breach of peace; criminal mischief; sexual assault; risk of injury; kidnapping and court order violations.

HRA's Polish Victim Advocacy Program, established in 1998, is part of its Division of Community and Neighborhood Services. Its purpose is to provide advocacy and support to Polish victims of crime. The Polish Victim Advocate began as a part-time position and grew into a full-time position by April 2000. The Polish Victim Advocacy Program has served over 2,900 victims between November 1998 and June 2018. To contact the advocacy program, call: Helen Supsinckas, Polish Victim Advocate at (860) 612-1781.

Crime statistics are not reported by race or ethnicity but New Britain's high percentage of Polish residents point to a strong need for victim advocacy. The New Britain Police Department employs bilingual police officers and dispatch officers who are fluent in both English and Polish. Crime amongst the Polish population is so prevalent that the New Britain Superior Court system also employs a translator for Polish speaking offenders.

HRA reports that staff have seen increase in individuals seeking help through its Polish Victim Advocacy program. HRA reports that it served 84 clients through the program in 2016-17. Though its 2017-18 report has not yet been finalized, HRA says that 89 individuals who were victims of domestic and family violence have been offered support.

With the exploding numbers of aging people of all ethnicities, HRA reports that the incidence of elder abuse is also increasing. These crimes are largely undetected because the elderly may be reluctant to report abuse due to fear, lack of physical and/or cognitive ability, or because they don't want to get the abuser (often a family member) into trouble. The U.S. Administration on Aging estimates that 5 million older adults are abused, neglected, or exploited and that only 1 in 5 of these crimes is discovered.

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