

## CERV Wrap-Around Expenditures Analysis: May 2022 to May 2023

**Working Paper 2023-16**

Irshad Altheimer, Ph.D.,  
Professor, Department of Criminal Justice  
Director, Center for Public Safety Initiatives  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
[ixagcj@rit.edu](mailto:ixagcj@rit.edu)

Venita D'Angelo,  
Research Assistant, Center for Public Safety Initiatives  
[vcd1763@rit.edu](mailto:vcd1763@rit.edu)

Ava Douglas,  
Research Assistant, Center for Public Safety Initiatives  
[aid4232@rit.edu](mailto:aid4232@rit.edu)

Alexander Tobey,  
Research Associate, Center for Public Safety Initiatives  
[adtgcj@rit.edu](mailto:adtgcj@rit.edu)

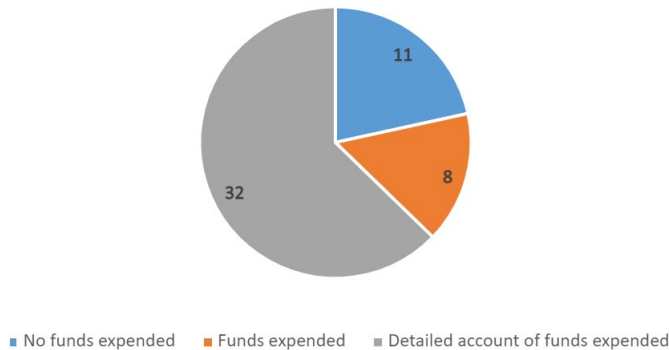
## Introduction

Community Engagement to Reduce Victimization (CERV) is a community-based violence intervention program that seeks to reduce retaliatory dispute-related violence in Rochester, NY (Burt et al., 2021). “CERV’s goals include...reducing hospital readmissions, decreasing pain and suffering for victims and their families and guiding the development of a trauma informed, public health response to urban retaliatory violence” (Burt and Altheimer, 2021, p. 2). One way that CERV helps meet these goals is by its provision of wrap-around support for violence victims and their surrogates. “Wrap-around services or wrap-around funds are money or resources (e.g., a hotel stay) provided to violence victims, their surrogates, or any other member of a dispute to reduce the risk of retaliation occurring” (Burt et al., 2021, p. 3). This paper focuses on the distribution of wrap-around services for CERV participants.

## Analysis

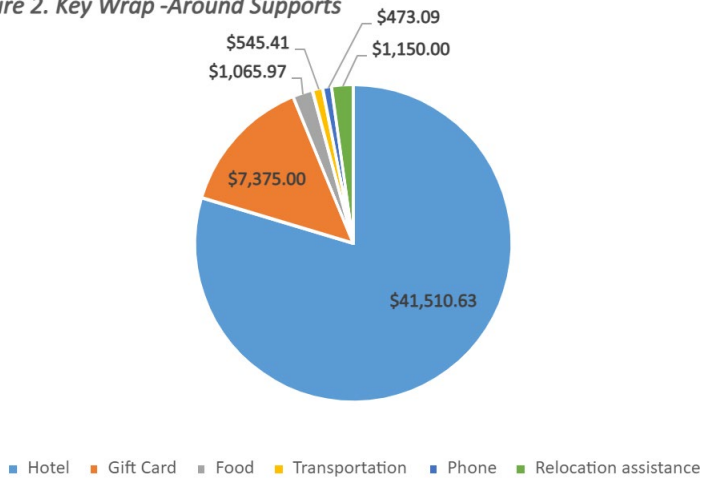
The point of wrap-around funds is to directly intervene in the short-term, post victimization. The CERV coordinator is able to use these funds to improve the situation of the victim and/or their surrogates. For example, they may be used to cover a short-term hotel/motel stay, for purchasing gift cards the victim can use as they see fit, or to set them up with a mobile phone. As shown in Figure 1, from May 2022 to May 2023, CERV assisted 51 individuals and expended a total of \$53,357.55.

Figure 1. Breakdown of cases



Total spent per individual ranged widely from \$15.85 to \$4,800. This variation is in part due to the fact that different people have different needs. Some individuals needed multiple forms of wrap-around support while others only needed a few. The median total per dispute was \$1,075 (median is the middle of a range indicating that half of the values are below, and half are above the amount). Figure 2 displays the amount expended by CERV for each of its key wrap-around supports.

Figure 2. Key Wrap -Around Supports



The data indicates that a primary need for victims of violence is safe housing. From May 2022 to May 2023 CERV spent \$41,510.63 to temporarily relocate individuals by covering the cost of their hotel/motel stays. Emphasis must be placed on the temporary nature of this support as it does not

provide individuals with long-term housing solutions, and many participants of CERV indicated that they would like to be relocated permanently (Alzheimer et al., 2023). CERV often tries to connect individuals with the Department of Health and Human Services or the Family Crisis Intervention Team, both of which offer housing support; however, both have a lengthy eligibility criteria list that often excludes victims of violence (Burt, Alzheimer & Duda-Banwar, 2021).

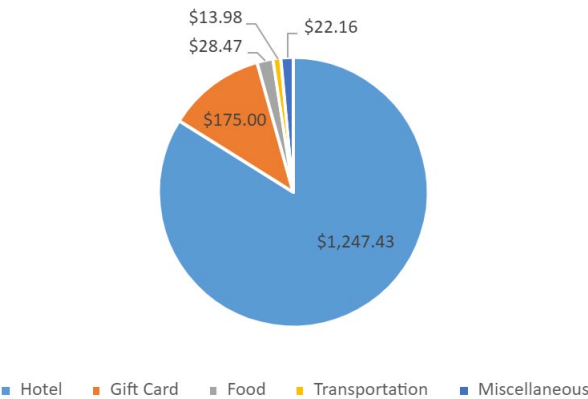
CERV also meets the needs of violence victims by providing them with pre-paid VISA gift cards which they then use to purchase things they need like personal care items, diapers, and clothing. From May 2022 to May 2023 CERV expended \$7,375 on pre-paid gift cards for individuals. Additionally, CERV spent \$1,150 helping individuals relocate permanently, usually by covering the cost of a moving company.

While CERV did not spend nearly as much on other wrap-around supports, that does not make them any less significant. CERV spent \$473.09 to ensure individuals were able to remain connected to the CERV coordinator and their other newfound support in the community. In most cases, CERV purchased a reloadable phone for individuals who needed them, allowing them to keep in touch and make important connections on their own. Additionally, \$545.41 was spent on transportation support, which includes getting individuals to important health-related appointments. CERV spent \$1,065.97 on food for individuals, a relatively modest amount that is likely explained by the fact that CERV also provided individuals with prepaid gift cards that they might have used to buy food themselves.

# Case Studies

Figure 3 illustrates the wrap-around supports provided to a young woman (K) victimized by gun violence.

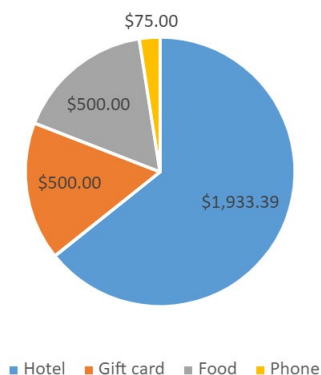
Figure 3. Wrap-Around expenditures for K



This individual was harmed as a result of her partner having disputes in the neighborhood. While he was the intended target, the shooter was indiscriminate and this young woman suffered great physical injuries, including gunshot wounds to the upper torso. The CERV coordinator ensured this individual was moved to safe housing upon her release from the hospital. Once relocated, they provided her with additional support including pre-paid gift cards and groceries. While this case is still ongoing, it exemplifies what CERV can do for victims of violence.

Figure 4 illustrates the wrap-around supports provided to a man (M) who was brutally victimized by gun violence.

*Figure 4. Wrap-Around expenditures for M*



This particular individual was shot more than five times, with several bullets entering his lower body, making walking a challenge to this day. To assist this individual the CERV coordinator ensured that he had safe housing upon his release from the hospital and worked diligently to connect him with resources in the community that could help him find gainful employment once he was physically capable. This individual was incredibly receptive to the interventions of CERV and worked to maintain all the connections they had been given. One connection led to paid, on-the-job training which has allowed him to continue along his positive trajectory and provide for his family financially. CERV offers the crucial support victims need during a time when they are most likely to be receptive.

## Conclusion

Wraparound services support a holistic approach to violence intervention. Not only does the CERV program strive to connect individuals with tangible support and connections in the community, it also provides individuals with invaluable tools that they can use to improve their circumstance. For example, a pre-paid gift card might cover a week's worth of groceries and having a working cell phone means individuals can stay connected with their newfound resources in the community. While

temporary relocation is not a permanent solution, it does offer individuals an opportunity to get away from a hostile environment and consider their next steps without the added stress of constantly looking over their shoulder. People cannot be expected to drastically alter their lifestyle without having the support and means to do so. By providing individuals with prepaid gift cards, disposable phones, and other wrap-around supports, CERV makes individuals believe that their circumstances can be improved and that they are cared for and supported by their community.

## References

Alzheimer, I., Pratt, N., D'Angelo, V., & Alexander, T. (2023). A review of CERV data from 5/26/22 to 5/2/23 (Working Paper 2023-xx). *Center for Public Safety Initiatives, Rochester Institute of Technology*.

Burt, J., & Alzheimer, I. (2021). *Community Engagement to Reduce Victimization (CERV)*.  
<https://www.rit.edu/liberalarts/sites/rit.edu.liberalarts/files/docs/CRIM%20Resources/Community%20Engagement%20to%20Reduce%20Victimization.pdf>

Burt, J., Duda-Banwar, J., & Alzheimer, I. (2021). *Wrap-Around Services for Victims of Violence*.  
<https://www.rit.edu/liberalarts/sites/rit.edu.liberalarts/files/docs/CRIM%20Resources/Wrap%20Around%20Funds%20for%20Victims%20of%20Violence.pdf>



---

## About the Center for Public Safety Initiatives

The Center for Public Safety Initiatives (CPSI) is a dynamic, multi-disciplinary research center that examines strategies to reduce crime and enhance the administration of justice. It provides program evaluation, data analytics, and project management services to area law enforcement, community non-profits, and other criminal justice professionals, and it contributes to general knowledge generation of the nature and causes of crime and violence. Its educational goals include training graduate and undergraduate students in strategic planning, program evaluation, and policy analysis.

The foundation of the Center is the practice of action research in which relevant data and analyses are brought to bear on the day-to-day decision-making processes of organizations. The Center supports the practice of policy development and implementation in real time and is a testing ground for 21st century university engagement, demonstrating how rigorous research and analysis can play a role in improving the lives of society's most marginalized citizens.

To access our full library of white papers, visit our website at [rit.edu/cpsi](http://rit.edu/cpsi)



### Learn more

- [rit.edu/cpsi](http://rit.edu/cpsi)
- [CPSI@rit.edu](mailto:CPSI@rit.edu)
- (585) 475-6386



This project was supported by Grant No. 21-03897 awarded by the Greater Rochester Health Foundation. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the funder.