

Help for jurors on violent crime trials

by UPI

DETROIT -- Oakland County, Mich., is beginning a new counseling program for jurors who serve on cases involving tragic events or violent crimes. The program will begin in Detroit this week with the trial of Jimmie Reed Jr. accused of shooting his ex-girlfriend and then setting fire to the bed where she slept with their newborn baby, The Detroit Free Press reported Monday. Under the county's Juror Debriefing Program trained counselors will be provided to help jurors in the Reed trial deal with the sorrow, grief and anger such cases evoke. They will be trained in a method of questioning and empathetic listening that often is used by those helping people cope with workplace violence, school shootings and domestic assaults, the newspaper says. Michigan is not the first state to address the problem. New York, Arizona and Oregon already provide jurors with access to counselors and Texas is considering a law to fund 10 hours of psychological services for jurors who serve on cases involving violent crimes.

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