

STATE OF OHIO



DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION  
AND CORRECTION

SUBJECT:	PAGE <u>1</u> OF <u>6</u>
<b>Crime Victim Services</b>	NUMBER: 03-OVS-01
RULE/CODE REFERENCE: ORC 5120.60; 5149.01; 2930.16; 2967.12; 2949.25; 2950.17	SUPERSEDES: 03-OVS-01 dated 04/16/14
RELATED ACA STANDARDS:	EFFECTIVE DATE: April 10, 2015
	APPROVED: 

**I. AUTHORITY**

This policy is issued in compliance with Ohio Revised Code 5120.01 which delegates to the Director of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction the authority to manage and direct the total operations of the Department and to establish such rules and regulations as the Director prescribes.

**II. PURPOSE**

It is the policy of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction is to establish the services and assistance that will be provided to crime victims of offenders under the jurisdiction of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction by the Office of Victim Services, and to establish the services and assistance that will be available to interested parties and the public regarding victim related concerns.

**III. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and inmates of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC); most specifically the staff of the Office of Victim Services (OVS) and victim coordinators.

**IV. DEFINITIONS**

**Courtesy Registration** – A designation marked in the victim registration database reserved for a person who is not the victim pursuant to ORC2930.01 but who is registered to receive notifications regarding a DRC offender.

**Immediate Family** – The victim’s immediate family per ORC 2967.02 that includes mother, father, spouse, sibling, or child of the victim, who is entitled to receive notice under Ohio law. In no case does “victim immediate family” include the offender.

**Victim** – A victim of an offense for which the offender is serving a sentence who has registered with the Office of Victim Services to receive notice of those events occurring during an inmate’s incarceration with respect to which the victim is entitled to receive notice under Ohio law.

**Victim Representative** - A person who is a member of the victim’s family or other person who under Ohio law may exercise the rights of a victim with respect to which the victim is entitled under Ohio law.

**Victim Advocate** - A staff member of the Office of Victim Services who specializes in providing to services to victims of offenders under the jurisdiction of DRC.

**Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE)** – An automated victim notification system providing offender status information on offenders confined in local jails or state correctional facilities.

## V. POLICY

It is the policy of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to ensure that victims are treated with respect and sensitivity and that they receive assistance that includes, but is not limited to, providing information about the policies and procedures of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction and the status of offenders under its jurisdiction. The Office of Victim Services shall also make available publications that will assist victims in contacting staff of DRC about problems with offenders under the supervision of the Adult Parole Authority or confined in state correctional institutions under DRC’s jurisdiction. OVS shall provide crisis intervention, support, and advocacy for victims of crime and their families throughout the correctional process.

## VI. PROCEDURES

The Office of Victim Services shall coordinate efforts to afford victims the opportunity to participate in or be notified of events occurring during an offender’s incarceration through the following:

### A. Direct Services to Victims

1. Victim Notification and Registration
  - a. The OVS shall provide victim notification for registered crime victims in accordance with requirements of the Ohio Revised Code and Department Policy 105-PBD-13, Statutory Notice.
  - b. OVS shall process and respond to requests for registration and shall acknowledge registration requests by providing written notice to the registrant that the request for registration was received and processed.
  - c. Victims and others who wish to receive notifications may request registration by submitting a Victim Notification Form (DRC3193), a letter or email requesting registration or by calling OVS. OVS may complete the registration for anyone requesting to receive notification through the Victim Information and Notification Everyday system (VINE).
  - d. A file containing the registrants’ name, current address, and telephone number shall be created within the computerized database for each person registered. Each

registration shall be designated as a “victim” or “courtesy” registration. The victim, victim’s immediate family and victim representative shall be designated as a victim registration. All others shall be designated as a “courtesy” registration. It is the registrant’s responsibility to provide any changes in this information so that the OVS can maintain current contact information.

- e. When a victim requests not to receive notifications, OVS shall request the victim to complete a form documenting the victim’s desire to “opt-out” by completing the Victim Notification Opt-Out (DRC 3209). Upon receiving the opt-out form, OVS shall document the victim’s desire to opt-out in DOTS Portal and scan the opt-out form to OnBase. OVS shall not provide any notifications in relation to that particular inmate and offense or offenses for which the opt-out applies unless and until the victim subsequently contacts OVS for registration and notification.

## 2. Crisis Intervention

Various points throughout the corrections process may create a crisis for victims. OVS may intervene by providing emotional support and contact information for community resources.

- a. Victims who are experiencing harassment, intimidation, have received a threat from an offender, or are otherwise fearful of an offender about to be released may call OVS for assistance. OVS staff shall work with community victim advocates or other resources to help the victim develop safety planning as necessary.

## 3. Workplace Violence

Workplace violence/workplace domestic violence incidents shall be reported to the Workplace Violence Liaison/designee in the Office of Human Resources EEO Section per Department Policy 31-SEM-08, Response to Workplace Violence and Workplace Domestic Violence. When necessary, OVS may provide support either in person or via telephone to victims of workplace violence/workplace domestic violence. This additional support may include such services as critical incident stress management, safety planning, and referrals to appropriate resources as needed.

## 4. Services to Stop Unwanted Offender Contact/Activities

- a. Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Contact: When an inmate is making unwanted or inappropriate contact with a person the individual may request that this contact be stopped. The person making the request shall be asked to submit a letter and/or documentation to support the need for a Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Contact. OVS shall contact the Victim Coordinator at the institution in which the inmate is housed and request assistance in determining if a Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Contact (DRC2575) is necessary. A copy of the signed Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Order (DRC2575) shall be sent to OVS.
- b. No Contact Orders: A person may request in writing that an offender discontinue any contact with them once the offender is released onto parole, post release control, or transitional control. OVS shall contact the Parole Board or the parole officer that

supervises the offender to request the condition or sanction. OVS may contact the Victim Coordinator in that APA office to ensure that the request is being handled in a timely and sensitive manner.

- c. **Victim Photos or Belongings:** Inmates are prohibited from having photos or personal belongings of the victim(s) in their cases. Sex offenders who have offended against minors (17 years old or younger) are prohibited from having photographs of any minor children. Sex offenders who have offended against minors (17 years old or younger) that possess publications whose primary audience and/or subject matter are minor children or parents of minor children shall have such publications reviewed on a case by case basis in accordance with the recommendation of Sex Offender Services to accomplish successful treatment and rehabilitation.

#### 5. Victim Offender Dialogue

Victims may request to meet with the offender(s) involved in their cases. The OVS shall handle each request in accordance with Department Policy 03-OVS-02, Victim Offender Dialogue, and in coordination with the appropriate Managing Officer (if the offender is incarcerated) or Regional Administrator (if the offender is under community supervision).

#### 6. Full Board Hearings

OVS shall prepare and present full board hearing petitions on behalf of victims, victim representative and/or the prosecuting attorney. The Ohio Parole Board chair may also petition for a full board hearing. OVS shall support the victim throughout the full board hearing process by educating the victim on the hearing process, providing directions and information regarding the hearing and by being present to support the victim through the full board hearing.

#### 7. Victim Conference Day

Victims may contact OVS to schedule appointments with a Parole Board representative to provide input to the Parole Board in relation to the offender's release consideration hearing. OVS shall work closely with the Parole Board in scheduling and facilitating victim conference day appointments which shall include providing information and support to the victim(s).

#### 8. Executions

- a. The OVS shall provide victims with notification and support throughout the execution process in accordance with Department Policy 03-OVS-06, Victim Involvement in the Execution Process.
- b. When a surviving family member of a homicide victim wishes to witness the execution of the offender, staff of the OVS shall support the family member throughout the process. Surviving families may designate up to three witnesses to the execution, per the Ohio Revised Code, Department Policy 03-OVS-06, Victim

Involvement in the Execution Process, and Department Policy 01-COM-11, Execution.

9. Violation Hearings

Victims may be required to provide testimony when an offender violates the conditions of supervision. An OVS victim advocate may be present at this hearing to provide support to that victim during this process as defined in Department Policy 100-APA-14, Sanctions for Violations for Conditions of Supervision.

10. Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

OVS shall coordinate the PREA Memorandums of Understanding meetings with local rape crisis programs and the institutions. They shall also develop and instruct the Victim Support Person training for institution and APA staff and coordinate the creation and printing of the PREA Emotional Support Posters.

11. Other Victim Related Services

The Office of Victim Services shall respond to questions, concerns and requests from community victim advocates, media, justice officials, legislators and other stakeholders.

**B. Education and Outreach Services**

1. Community Outreach

The OVS staff shall conduct outreach to provide education and information to various groups such as, community-based victim advocates, crime victims, and other community members about services available through OVS. The OVS staff shall conduct a minimum of 20 education and outreach meetings annually. The education and outreach efforts shall be documented on the OVS External Outreach Report (DRC2508).

2. Institution/APA Outreach

OVS shall conduct internal education and outreach to DRC staff that includes, but is not limited to, educating staff on policies and issues that impact victims and the department. The staff of OVS shall be available to serve as subject matter experts regarding the impact of DRC policies and activities on crime victims. Institution/APA outreach shall be documented on the OVS Internal Outreach Report (DRC2509).

3. Department Training

The OVS shall conduct training for DRC staff to ensure staff members are aware of victims' issues that impact the Department, staff, victims, and the community.

4. National Partnerships

The OVS may work in partnership with correctional agencies in other states, to coordinate direct services for victims and improve services nationally in this field.

**C. Inmate Programming**

OVS shall monitor and evaluate the Victim Awareness and PROVE program offered at institutions and APA regions. The Victim Awareness and PROVE program evaluation shall be documented on the OVS Program Evaluation Report (DRC2523) or the OVS Internal Outreach Report (DRC2509).

**Related Department Forms:**

OVS Program Evaluation Report	DRC2523
OVS External Outreach Report	DRC2508
Advocate Outreach Form-Institution OVS Internal Outreach Report	DRC2509
Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Contact	DRC2575
Victim Notification Opt-Out Form	DRC3209
Victim Notification Form	DRC3193