

STATE OF OHIO



DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
AND CORRECTION

SUBJECT: Victim Coordinators	PAGE <u> 1 </u> OF <u> 5 </u> NUMBER: 03-OVS-03
RULE/CODE REFERENCE: ORC 2950.17	SUPERSEDES: 03-OVS-03 dated 04/10/15
RELATED ACA STANDARDS: 4-4447-1	EFFECTIVE DATE: May 3, 2016
	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 (DRC) to outline and establish responsibilities to be performed by institution and Adult Parole Authority (APA) victim coordinators. This will assist victim coordinators in carrying out their mission of responding to victim issues through support, intervention, and education in partnership with the Office of Victim Services (OVS).

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all institution and APA staff performing duties in the position of victim coordinator.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Cease & Desist - A formal order documented on a Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Contact form (DRC2575) that directs an inmate to cease contact/communication with an individual. This individual may or may not be the victim of the inmate's instant offense.

Staff Victimization - Physical, emotional, or other injury or threat of injury to staff by an inmate, parolee, or other staff member.

Victim Coordinator - An employee designated by their managing officer to serve as a liaison between their institution/APA region and OVS. The victim coordinator assists the institution, APA and OVS with victim related matters.

Victim Offender Dialogue - A formal process that provides victims of violent crime the opportunity for a structured, face-to-face meeting with the offender(s) of their crime in a secure, safe environment.

V. POLICY

It is the policy of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) that any staff performing official duties as the victim coordinator at their respective work site shall operate within the mandatory guidelines provided in this policy. Additional duties may be performed by the victim coordinator with prior approval from the managing officer and OVS. It is the responsibility of the victim coordinator to ensure their role as a victim coordinator will not interfere with the performance of their primary duties.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. Minimum Standards

1. Each institution shall appoint at least two (2) staff members to serve as the victim coordinators. Each APA region shall appoint victim coordinators based upon geographic area to ensure adequate coverage is provided for the entire region. Victim coordinators shall perform the victim coordinator responsibilities in addition to their regular duties.
2. The managing officer/designee shall be responsible for the selection of the victim coordinators. The managing officer/designee may consult with or request assistance from OVS in the selection of victim coordinators. Concerns about the performance or behavior of a victim coordinator shall be brought to the attention of the managing officer/designee and/or OVS. The managing officer/designee may remove a victim coordinator from this duty at any time. OVS may recommend removal of a victim coordinator when they have concerns regarding their performance or behavior within this role. OVS and the managing officers shall work collaboratively to ensure that victim coordinators are performing to the expected standards.
3. New victim coordinators shall participate in a one (1) day Corrections Training Academy (CTA) approved OVS victim coordinator training prior to commencing this role. Victim coordinators shall participate in four (4) trainings annually as scheduled by OVS. It is mandatory at least one (1) victim coordinator from each institution and two (2) victim coordinators from each APA region attend each scheduled training.
4. If there is a scheduling conflict in attending one (1) of the four (4) annual victim coordinator trainings, it is the responsibility of the victim coordinator to notify their regional victim advocate from OVS.
5. Victim coordinators may provide in-service training to staff on victim related topics. The training content shall be approved by OVS prior to conducting the training.
6. Victim coordinators shall maintain skills that are relevant to the duties expected of them. These skills include, but are not limited to, victim sensitivity, confidentiality requirements and victim visitation protocols. OVS shall share training opportunities with victim coordinators to assist them with maintaining their skills. Examples of appropriate training includes victim coordinator quarterly trainings, *Two Days in May*, victim sensitivity webinars, etc.

7. OVS shall provide information and materials to victim coordinators during the new victim coordinator training and subsequent quarterly trainings that will aid them in performing their duties.
8. All employees, contractors and volunteers are encouraged to refer all inquiries from victims and victim related matters to the victim coordinator or OVS. All victim inquiries shall be treated confidentially and be handled in a timely, professional manner.
9. Victim coordinators are also encouraged to provide educational material to staff as it pertains to victims' rights, awareness months and victim organization awareness events (e.g. candlelight vigils, etc.). Victim coordinators may be asked by OVS to assist with community events such as setting up information booths at various venues and/or attending awareness events.

B. Victim Coordinator Duties

1. Victim Conference Day

Each month OVS coordinates a Victim Conference Day. This is a day-long event in which a victim advocate and/or victim coordinators support families while providing information and crisis intervention to victims who are meeting with a parole board representative. Victim coordinators may assist with Victim Conference Day by arranging logistics for the meeting as well as attending on behalf of OVS to provide support to victim/s. A victim coordinator shall contact OVS if they are interested in participating in Victim Conference Day. OVS shall provide training to victim coordinators on the procedures of Victim Conference Day and the role of the victim coordinator during these meetings. Only at the request of the victim may the victim coordinator be present in the meeting during the victim's appointment with the parole board representative. Victim coordinators are to adhere to the confidentiality laws as it pertains to victims and not disclose information shared during the appointment.

2. Cease & Desist

When an inmate is making unwanted or inappropriate contact/communication with a person, the person may request 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 (DRC2575). 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. If a Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Contact (DRC2575) is issued, a copy of that order shall be sent to OVS. Victim coordinators may assist with the issuance of a Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Contact (DRC2575) when that request is made directly to institution staff.

3. Victim Coordinator Quarterly Reports

A Victim Coordinator Quarterly Report (DRC2610) documenting the collective activities of victim coordinators at each institution shall be electronically submitted to the OVS staff member who oversees victim coordinators. Each APA victim coordinator shall complete the Victim Coordinator Quarterly Report (DRC2610) and submit it electronically to the OVS staff member who oversees victim coordinators. This report shall be submitted no later than the 15th day of the month following the end of the quarter.

4. Victim Offender Dialogue (VOD)

Victim coordinators shall provide assistance in victim offender dialogue per DRC policy 03-OVS-02, Victim Offender Dialogue (VOD). Victim coordinators shall assist OVS and VOD facilitators with logistics related to dialogues, including but not limited to the following:

- a. At the request of OVS, the victim coordinator shall meet with the offender, *briefly* explain the VOD program and inquire if the offender is willing to participate. The victim coordinator shall notify OVS of the offender's decision;
 - b. OVS shall notify the victim coordinator of the names of the assigned VOD facilitators;
 - c. It is the responsibility of the victim coordinator to handle logistics for the VOD meetings. This information shall be shared with the VOD facilitators prior to each scheduled meeting date.
 - i. Secure the appropriate meeting room.
 - ii. Ensure the offender is present for the meeting at the designated time and location.
 - iii. Ensure that proper security measures are in place.
 - iv. Provide security protocol information (e.g. how and who to contact at the conclusion of the meeting; after hour guidelines; emergency practices; inmate and VOD facilitator escort protocols).
 - v. Ensure appropriate gate passes are processed in a timely manner.
 - d. An offender may request the Victim Coordinator or another staff member to serve as their support person for a VOD. Victim Coordinators may not assign themselves or be directed to serve as a support person for the offender. The victim coordinator/staff person who performs the role of the support person shall remain quiet during all meetings, maintain confidentiality of the information shared during meetings and the dialogue, and not interfere with the VOD process.
5. At the request of OVS or APA, the victim coordinator may provide support to victims during the violation hearing process or during a victim interview.
6. Duties Regarding DRC Staff

- a. Any staff member who is victimized shall be informed of the role of the victim coordinator and given the opportunity to speak to the victim coordinator or any staff of OVS if desired per DRC policy 03-OVS-01, Crime Victim Services.
 - b. The Victim Coordinator may provide resource information to staff that have been victimized.
7. Visitation of Offender and Victim

Inmate visitation must be in accordance with DRC policy 76-VIS-01, Inmate Visitation. The managing officer/designee may contact OVS for consultation regarding visitation, in which case OVS shall provide a written opinion. The managing officer/designee shall render a final decision. Request for visitation from a victim of the inmate may be referred to the victim coordinator for additional information and/or recommendation. The managing officer/designee may authorize the victim coordinator sit in and monitor a first visit if the victim is approved for visitation.

Related Department Forms:

Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Contact
Victim Coordinator Quarterly Report

DRC2575
DRC2610