




SUBJECT: Crime Victim Services	PAGE <u> 1 </u> OF <u> 7 </u>
	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 04/10/15
RELATED ACA STANDARDS: 4-4447, 4-4447-1	EFFECTIVE DATE: May 15, 2017
	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 provide confidential services and assistance with dignity, respect and sensitivity to crime victims of offenders under the jurisdiction of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) and other persons as deemed appropriate.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and inmates of the Ohio 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 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.

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.

V. **POLICY**

It is the policy of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) to provide victims of offenders under the jurisdiction of DRC with confidential services and assistance. The Office of Victim Services (OVS) shall provide direct services and assistance to victims to include the following: relevant policies and procedures of DRC, information regarding the status of their offender, assistance with concerns regarding an offender or concerns with any DRC policy, procedure or protocol, changes in laws impacting the victim, victim-centered program information, and other assistance as deemed appropriate. OVS shall conduct community outreach to inform victims of services available through OVS and publicize information on how to contact the office. OVS shall provide crisis intervention, support, and advocacy for victims of crime and their families with dignity, respect and sensitivity throughout the correctional process.

VI. **PROCEDURES**

OVS shall offer victims the opportunity to participate in and be notified of certain events occurring during an offender's incarceration.

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 DRC policy 105-PBD-13, Statutory Notice.
- b. A registration confirmation letter will be mailed to the registrant when the registration process is completed.
- 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. An electronic 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 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.

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. 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 (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. 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 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.

4. Victim Offender Dialogue

Victims may request to meet with the offender(s) involved in their cases. OVS shall handle each request in accordance with DRC 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).

5. Full Board Hearings

OVS shall prepare and present full board hearing petitions on behalf of victims, victim representative and/or the prosecuting attorney. The 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.

6. 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 with the Parole Board in scheduling and facilitating victim conference day appointments and will provide information and support to the victim(s) during their appointment.

7. Executions

- a. The OVS shall provide victims with notification and support throughout the execution process in accordance with DRC 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 (3) witnesses to the execution, per the Ohio Revised Code, DRC policy 03-OVS-06, Victim Involvement in the Execution Process, and DRC policy 01-COM-11, Execution.

8. 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 DRC policy 100-APA-14, Sanctions for Violations for Conditions of Supervision.

9. Other Victim Related Services

OVS shall respond to questions, concerns and requests from community victim advocates, media, justice officials, legislators and other stakeholders.

10. Victim contact information and information provided by victims of crime is confidential as mandated by Ohio Revised Code 5120.21. All DRC employees are responsible for protecting the confidentiality of victim information and statements.

11. Victims may provide input on services and programs offered by DRC. This input may be provided directly to OVS or through community victim advocacy programs.

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 twenty (20) education and outreach contacts 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 employees that includes, but is not limited to, educating employees on policies and issues that impact victims and the DRC. 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. Training

All OVS staff shall be trained on specific services available to victims, changes in law impacting crime victims and victim's rights. The staff shall attend continuing training to ensure they are current on best practices and services for crime victims. OVS shall conduct training for DRC employees to ensure staff members are aware of victims' issues that impact DRC, 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. Victim-Centered Programs and Activities

1. DRC victim-centered programs and activities shall be approved, monitored and evaluated by OVS to ensure that the program is victim sensitive and appropriate. DRC institutions and APA shall provide OVS with a copy of the victim-centered program and program

facilitator information. OVS will review the program prior to implementation to determine if the program content is appropriate and sensitive to victims. OVS shall approve, disapprove or send the program back for revisions. OVS shall share victim-centered program information with the Ohio Council on Victims Justice for victim input and recommendations.

2. Victim Awareness Program – OVS shall provide direct oversight of the Victim Awareness Program conducted in the institutions and APA. OVS shall coordinate training for new Victim Awareness facilitators as needed. Victims may participate as an impact speaker in accordance with DRC policy 71-SOC-01, Recruitment, Training, and Supervision of Volunteers.
3. Personal Responsibility for Violence Elimination (PROVE) – OVS shall provide direct oversight of the PROVE Program. Only those facilities that have been authorized by OVS are permitted to conduct batterer’s intervention program. Institutions or APA offices wanting to offer this program at their site shall contact OVS for approval. Only those that have had the PROVE facilitator training and are authorized by OVS may facilitate this program.

D. Other Services

1. 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 DRC 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.

2. 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.

3. Staff Victimization

Staff who have been a victim of a crime, whether inter-departmentally or in the community, may be referred to OVS for information on crime victim rights. The criminal act does not require prosecution for services to be provided.

Related Department Forms:

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