



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY  
**DEPARTMENT WIDE**

REVISION DATE  
3/14/08

PAGE NUMBER  
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NUMBER  
**DOC 390.310**

# POLICY

TITLE  
**VICTIMS' COUNCIL**

## REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:

Effective: 1/7/05  
Revised: 1/29/07  
Revised: 3/14/08


## SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:

Updated Policy statement I. to clarify Victims' Council role

## APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**ELDON VAIL**, Secretary  
Department of Corrections

\_\_\_\_\_  
2/3/08  
Date Signed

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**REFERENCE:**

DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations

**POLICY:**

- I. The Victims' Council will advise the Department regarding existing or proposed programs, practices, and policies as they involve or affect crime victims.
- II. The Victims' Council will consist of representatives from community, state, and local organizations/agencies serving crime victims and survivors.


**DIRECTIVE:**

I. Functions

A. Council Review

1. The Victim's Council will review the following for impact on crime victims and, by a majority vote of its members, make recommendations to the Department Secretary:
  - a. Existing Department programs and practices.
  - b. Proposed programs and practices.
  - c. Proposed changes to the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Washington Administrative Code (WAC), or Department policy.
2. Council review will either be:
  - a. Requested by Department staff, in writing to the Victim Services Program Manager, who will submit the proposed review to the Victims' Council for consideration, or
  - b. Council-initiated, by a majority vote of its members.
3. Reviews may be carried out through:
  - a. Presentations and discussion at Victims' Council meetings,
  - b. Examination by Council members of written documents pertaining to the policy or practice under review, and
  - c. Communication among Council members, Department staff, and relevant stakeholders.


B. Proposals

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1. The Victim's Council will initiate proposals to create or modify programs, practices, and policies to increase victim and community safety, strengthen services for victims, or reduce the impact of crime and criminal justice processes on victims.
2. The Victims' Council may request briefings, documents, information, or other assistance from Department staff to develop a proposal. Such requests will be communicated to the Secretary directly or through the Victim Services Program Manager.
3. Proposals may be further refined through presentations and discussion at Victims' Council meetings and communication among Council members, Department staff, and relevant stakeholders.

## II. Membership

- A. The membership should include both agencies/organizations supporting the broad needs of victims, as well as victims of specific crime categories. These agencies/organizations should represent diverse ethnic backgrounds and broad geographic areas, both rural and urban.
- B. Each participating agency/organization will determine its Council representative. If s/he vacates the role, the agency/organization may appoint a replacement.
- C. Individuals may request to serve on the Victims' Council. However, the Council will have final determination before recommending the appointment to the Secretary.
- D. The Secretary will confirm the appointment of each representative through a formal acknowledgement letter to the agency/organization.
- E. Upon recommendation of the Victims' Council, the Secretary can appoint individuals with specialized expertise for a limited duration and/or special purpose. These members will:
  1. Serve only as it applies to their particular expertise relating to a specific victim's issue the Council is addressing.
  2. Be released from membership upon completion of their specific service.
- F. The Victims' Council will have 2 co-chairs, elected from its membership by the Council at large. Each co-chair will serve a 2 year term. One co-chair will be elected each year, ensuring there is an experienced chairperson at all times.
- G. Victim Services Program staff will serve as support staff for the Victims' Council.

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H. Victims' Council membership will be reviewed annually by the Council at large.

### III. Meetings

- A. The Victims' Council at large will hold regularly scheduled quarterly meetings. More frequent meetings may be held at the direction of the co-chairs or the Secretary.
- B. The meetings will address pre-established agenda items that will be provided to the members prior to the meeting date.
- C. Sub-groups from the Victims' Council at large may be identified to address specific issues/projects identified by the Council.
  - 1. The Victims' Council will assign a completion date for any assignment given to a sub-group.
  - 2. For purposes of consultation and guidance, the sub-group will provide periodic reports regarding the assignment to the Council at large.
  - 3. The Council at large will have final review and decision authority regarding the work of a sub-group prior to admitting the issue/item to Department Administration.
- D. Approved minutes of Victims' Council meetings will be taken and posted on InsideDOC.
- E. The co-chairs of the Victims' Council will ensure standing members are kept informed when the Council does not hold a regularly scheduled meeting.
- F. The Victims' Council will review meeting attendance, and may terminate a member for failure to attend regularly scheduled meetings. The agency/organization they represent will be contacted to fill the vacancy.

### IV. Reimbursement

- A. Victims' Council members will be reimbursed for actual travel costs to Council meetings per DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations.

### DEFINITIONS:

Words/Terms appearing in this policy may be defined in the glossary section of the Policy Manual.

### ATTACHMENTS:



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None

**DOC FORMS:**

None