


STATE OF OHIO



DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
AND CORRECTION

SUBJECT: Victim Coordinators	PAGE <u>1</u> OF <u>6</u>
	NUMBER: 03-OVS-03
RULE/CODE REFERENCE:	SUPERSEDES: 03-OVS-03 dated 03/15/07
RELATED ACA STANDARDS: 4-4447-1	EFFECTIVE DATE: April 23, 2010
	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

The purpose of this policy is to outline and establish responsibilities to be performed by institutional 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 institutional and APA staff performing duties in the position of Victim Coordinator.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Cease & Desist – An order for an inmate to stop contact, either written or by telephone, with an individual, as requested by that individual. This individual may or may not be the instant victim of the inmate's offense.

No Contact Order – An order for an offender on parole, transitional control, or post release control to have no communication with the instant victim or another individual who so requests it. A no contact order may be issued by the Parole Board for a victim of the instant offense without request or approval from the victim.

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

Victim Coordinator - A staff member employed by one of DRC's institutions or APA offices appointed to specialize in victim services in addition to his/her regular duties.

Victim Offender Dialogue - 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, in order to facilitate a healing and recovery process. This dialogue also focuses on the harm done to the victim and the offender's responsibility in the reparation of that harm.

V. POLICY

It is the policy of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction that any staff performing official duties as the Victim Coordinator at his/her respective work site shall operate within the mandatory guidelines provided below. Additionally, optional duties may be performed at the Victim Coordinator's discretion, following the approval of the Managing Officer and Office of Victim Services. It is the responsibility of the Victim Coordinator to ensure that his/her role as a Victim Coordinator will not interfere with the performance of his/her primary duties.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. Minimum Standards

1. Each Departmental institution and APA Office shall appoint one staff member to serve as the Victim Coordinator in addition to his/her regular duties, with a back up coordinator assigned when needed, as determined by the appropriate Managing Officer or designee.
2. The Managing Officer/designee will be responsible for the final selection of a Victim Coordinator within their respective work sites. The Managing Officer or designee will determine the appropriate method for selecting Victim Coordinators, whether by application, individual staff solicitation, etc. Any concerns about the performance or behavior of a Victim Coordinator may be brought to the attention of the Managing Officer or designee at anytime to re-evaluate the appointment.
3. Three centralized meetings will be conducted each year to provide the Victim Coordinator with education, training and information. It is mandatory that the Victim Coordinator and/or Co-Coordinator or representative attend these meetings.
4. If there is a scheduling conflict, it is the responsibility of the Victim Coordinator to contact the Victim Advocate from the Office of Victim Services (OVS) who is facilitating the meeting, whether it is centralized or regional and inform him/her of the situation.
5. Victim Coordinators will periodically provide in-service training to staff on victim issues.
6. Each Victim Coordinator will be required to attend 16 hours of additional victim-related training throughout the calendar year. *Two Days in May* would be an example of this training.
7. The OVS will develop a handbook which will be made available to each Victim Coordinator. The handbook will serve as a training and instructional guide to assist staff in their role as a victim coordinator. This handbook shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Services available to crime victims through OVS;
- b. Overview of laws impacting victims throughout the corrections process;
- c. Confidentiality of victim information;
- d. Any program evaluation summaries available about services through the OVS;
- e. Information about how crime victims may suggest policy or other operational recommendations as well as complaints or concerns about the system.

B. Requested Involvement from OVS

1. Victim Conference Day

Once each month, OVS coordinates Victim Conference Day. A three-month advance schedule of these days will be made available to each Victim Coordinator identifying the dates of Victim Conference Day and the advocate in charge. If a Victim Coordinator is interested in participating in Victim Conference Day, he/she will contact OVS and register as a volunteer for the day. A brief overview of the procedures for the day will then be sent to the Victim Coordinator, so he/she is aware of the expectations ahead of time. This is a day-long event in which the Victim Coordinators support families while providing information and crisis intervention, when necessary, to victims who are meeting with a Parole Board representative that day.

2. Cease & Desist

When the inmate is making unwanted or inappropriate contact with the victim, the victim will request, in writing, that this contact be stopped. OVS will contact the Victim Coordinator at the prison in which the inmate is housed and request that the Coordinator investigate whether or not the contact is actually taking place and then administer a Cease and Desist Order (DRC2575). If a victim is registered for notification with OVS, a copy of that order will be sent to the OVS.

3. No Contact

In a similar fashion, a victim may request that the parolee discontinue any contact with them once the offender is released onto parole, post release control or transitional control. OVS will contact the parole officer who supervises the offender to request the condition or sanction. In this capacity, OVS may also contact the Victim Coordinator in that APA Office to ensure that the request is being handled in a timely and sensitive manner. The Victim Coordinator shall provide assistance to the parole officer with any interactions he/she may have with the victim if requested.

4. Victim Photos or other Belongings

When a victim or guardian of a victim requests, institution staff may confiscate photos of victims or other personal belongings of the victim(s) that the inmate may have in his/her possession. All such requests shall be made by contacting OVS or the institution directly

through the Victim Coordinator and/or Institution Investigator. Such items may also be confiscated if the inmate having them causes disruption of the operation of the institution. The inmate may only have photos or other personal belongings of the victim(s) with the victim(s) approval or if those items are part of their legal information and necessary for future proceedings on his/her case. In circumstances regarding legal proceedings, photos of the victim(s) or other personal belongings must be maintained in a manner to be determined by the Managing Officer or designee and not displayed in their living quarters in any manner. Items removed from an inmate's possession at the request of a victim or their guardian shall be handled in accordance with Department Policy 310-SEC-43, Handling and Disposition of Contraband and returned to the victim or guardian if possible.

5. Quarterly Reports

Each Victim Coordinator will be responsible for submitting a quarterly report to OVS detailing victim involvement for the previous quarter. The report will contain statistical information deemed necessary by the OVS.

6. Committee Participation

Victim Coordinators are encouraged to represent OVS on various committees operating throughout the Department. Approval to do so must be granted by the appropriate administrators and OVS.

7. Victim Offender Dialogue

Victim Coordinators will assist OVS and dialogue facilitators in certain logistics related to dialogues, e.g. gate passes, appointments with inmate, meeting space, etc.

C. Duties Regarding Victims

1. Staff in institutions and/or APA offices is encouraged to refer all inquiries from victims to the Victim Coordinator. All victim inquiries shall be handled in a timely, professional manner.
2. Victim Coordinators are also encouraged to maintain contact with Victim/Witness programs in the local community, as their schedules permit. Activities may include shadowing the county advocate and vice versa. Other community involvement may include candlelight vigils; volunteering to make presentations to such organizations as MADD, POMC, domestic violence shelters, and rape crisis centers; providing information at county fairs or other venues with information booths; and attending any other victim-oriented activities. Any outside activities that require flexing of work hours must be approved by the Managing Officer or designee.

D. Duties Regarding DRC Staff

1. Any staff member who is victimized should 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 Department Policy 03-OVS-01, Crime Victims.
2. The Victim Coordinator should serve in an advisory role to other staff and act as the liaison to assist outside agencies. The Victim Coordinator shall be accessible to other staff members obtaining victim information, such as victim impact statements, investigation information, etc. In this role, they are providing support and not relinquishing confidential information. It is the responsibility of the Victim Coordinator to make his/her presence known to other staff and inform them of their role and availability.
3. Victim Coordinators may periodically be called upon to provide pre-service training at the Corrections Training Academy. A schedule of pre-service activities will be provided to all Victim Coordinators. Any interested Victim Coordinator should contact OVS to schedule a day that he/she will provide training.

E. Duties Regarding Offenders

1. Victim Offender Dialogue

Victim Coordinators will provide assistance in victim/offender dialogue per Department Policy 03-OVS-02, Victim Offender Dialogue.

2. Victim Awareness Programs

Victim Coordinators will ensure that all persons facilitating the Victim Awareness Programs for offenders have obtained appropriate training by the OVS after August 1, 2009.

3. Visitation of Offender and Victim

Inmate visitation must be in accordance with Department Policy 76-VIS-01, Inmate Visitation. The Managing Officer/designee may contact the Office of Victim Services for consultation regarding visitation, in which case the Office of Victim Services will provide a written opinion. The Managing Officer/designee shall render a final decision.

4. Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

Victim Coordinators are designated as support persons for inmates who have been sexually assaulted while incarcerated per Department Policy 79-ISA-01, Inmate Sexual Assault and Misconduct.

5. Victim Coordinators shall have access to offender records as needed.

Related Department Forms:

Direct Order to Cease Correspondence/Contact
Contraband Control Slip

DRC2575
DRC4086