

STATE OF OHIO



DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION  
AND CORRECTION

SUBJECT:  Crime Victim Services	PAGE <u> 1 </u> OF <u> 4 </u>  NUMBER: 03-OVS-01
RULE/CODE REFERENCE: ORC 5120.60    ORC 5149.01 ORC 2930.16    ORC 2967.12 ORC 2949.25	SUPERSEDES: 03-OVS-01 dated 11/22/2004
RELATED ACA STANDARDS:	EFFECTIVE DATE: March 15, 2007
RELATED AUDIT STANDARDS:	APPROVED:  <i>Tony J. Collins</i>

**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 provide guidance for the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction related to crime victims.

**III. APPLICABILITY**

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

**IV. DEFINITIONS**

**ADULT PAROLE AUTHORITY:** That section of the Division of Parole and Community Services which includes the Parole Board, Field Services and Interstate Compact on Probation and Parole.

**OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES:** That section of the Division of Parole and Community Services, established by Ohio Revised Code 5120.60 to provide information, support and educational services to crime victims, staff of the Department and the community.

**VICTIM:** A person who has been directly or indirectly affected or has suffered from an act committed by an offender.

**VICTIM REPRESENTATIVE:** The designated family member of a victim or an official representative of the victim. For this policy, reference to victims will also apply to the representative/designated family member.

## 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 are informed and considered in decisions related to their offenders' liberty. The Office of Victim Services shall provide crisis intervention, support and advocacy for victims of crime and their families throughout the correctional process.

## VI. PROCEDURES

When feasible, crime victims should be afforded every opportunity to participate in the corrections process throughout the Department.

The Office of Victim Services (OVS) shall coordinate these efforts through the following:

### A. DIRECT SERVICES TO VICTIMS

1. Victim Notification – The OVS shall provide victim notification for registered crime victims in accordance with requirements of the Ohio Revised Code and Department Policy 03-OVS-04, Victim Notifications.
2. Crisis Intervention – Various points throughout the corrections process may create a crisis for victims. OVS may intervene by providing emotional support and referrals for victims whenever requested.
  - a. Victim who are experiencing harassment or intimidation from inmates in prison or offenders under supervision in the community often request assistance. The OVS, in conjunction with Victim Coordinators or other DRC personnel, as needed, may assist victims during this time.
  - b. Victims who have received a threat or are otherwise fearful of an offender about to be released may call the 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 – The OVS shall oversee coordination of workplace violence issues in accordance with Department Policy 31-SEM-08, Prevention of Workplace Violence. Staff who are victimized either in the workplace or in the community may participate in all services available through the OVS.
4. Services to Stop Unwanted Offender Contact/Activities
  - a. Cease and Desist Orders: When an inmate is making unwanted or inappropriate contact with the victim, the victim may request in writing that this contact be stopped. All such requests shall be made by contacting the OVS or the institution directly. The OVS shall coordinate the investigation and administration of a

cease and desist order, when appropriate, as directed in Policy 03-OVS-03, Victim Coordinators.

- b. No Contact Orders: Victims may request in writing that a parolee discontinue any contact with them once the offender is released onto parole, post release control, or transitional control. The OVS shall coordinate the investigation and administration of a no contact order, when appropriate, through the Parole Board or the Adult Parole Authority, as directed in Department Policy 03-OVS-03, Victim Coordinators.
  - c. Victim Photos or Belongings: An inmate may only have photos or other personal belongings of the victim(s) with the victim(s) permission or if those items are part of their legal information and necessary for future proceedings on his/her case. When a victim or guardian of a victim requests, institution staff shall confiscate photos of victims or other personal belongings of the victim(s) that the inmate may have in his/her possession. Such items may also be confiscated if the fact that the inmate has them causes disruption of the operation of the institution. 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 warden/designee but may not in any case be displayed in the living quarters in any manner. Procedures for the confiscation of victim photos and/or belongings are further addressed in Department Policy 03-OVS-03, Victim Coordinators.
5. Victim Offender Dialogue – Victims may request to meet with the offender(s) involved in their case. The OVS shall handle each request in accordance with Policy 03-OVS-02, Victim Offender Dialogue, and in coordination with the appropriate Warden (if the offender is incarcerated) or Regional Administrator (if the offender is under community supervision).
  6. Executions
    - a. The OVS shall provide victims with notification and support throughout the execution process in accordance with 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.

## **B. EDUCATION and TRAINING**

1. Community Awareness – The OVS staff and Victim Coordinators shall provide outreach and presentations to various groups, including victim advocates, crime victims and other community members about services available through the OVS and policies and procedures of the Department.

2. Department Training – The OVS shall conduct training for DRC staff to ensure staff are aware of victims’ issues.
3. National Partnerships – The OVS works in with other states’ correctional agencies to coordinate both direct services for victims as well as discuss ways to improve services nationally in this field.

**C. INMATE PROGRAMMING**

1. Victim Awareness Program – The OVS shall oversee the DRC Victim Awareness Program, per Department Policy 03-OVS-05.
2. PROVE (Personal Responsibility of Violence Elimination) Batterer’s Intervention Program - The OVS shall oversee the Personal Responsibility of Violence Elimination Batterer’s Intervention Program, per Department Policy 03-OVS-07.