



# Virginia Department of Corrections

## *Community, Media, and Other Agency Relations*

### **Operating Procedure 021.1**

#### *Victim Services Unit*

**Authority:**

Directive 021, *Victim Services*

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### **REVIEW**

The Content Owner will review this operating procedure annually and re-write it no later than three years after the effective date.

### **COMPLIANCE**

This operating procedure applies to all units operated by the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC). Practices and procedures must comply with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations, ACA standards, PREA standards, and DOC directives and operating procedures.

## Table of Contents

DEFINITIONS .....	3
PURPOSE .....	4
PROCEDURE.....	4
I.    Victim Services .....	4
II.   Tasks Assigned to the Victim Service Unit (VSU).....	4
III.  Victim Registration .....	4
IV.  Victim Notification .....	5
V.    Coordination with the VPB .....	7
VI.  Protecting Victims from Intimidation, Harassment or Harm .....	8
VII.  Visitation and Dialogue Requests from Victims.....	8
VIII. Victim or Victim Family Member Attendance at Executions.....	9
IX.  Training .....	10
X.   Victim Travel Fund .....	12
XI.  Regional Victim Advocates .....	12
REFERENCES.....	13
ATTACHMENTS .....	13
FORM CITATIONS .....	13

## DEFINITIONS

**Conditions of Supervision** - A document that details the rules a probationer/parolee must abide by in order to complete supervision successfully.

**Intimidation or Harassment** - Any contact, directly or through a third party, by an inmate/probationer/parolee incarcerated or under direct supervision of the DOC, and directed toward the victim or any citizen, that causes the victim or citizen to feel threatened, to fear for his or her safety, or to suffer emotional trauma resulting from the unwanted contact.

**Automated Information & Notification System** – The DOC may implement or contract with a private vendor to provide automated inmate/probationer/parolee information, and notification of inmate/probationer/parolee status changes via telephone, email, or letter. This database contains the names, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of registered victims and concerned citizens to be notified prior to the inmates' name change, work release status, release, transfer, parole interview, parole decision, in the event of an escape/apprehension, or death.

**Victim Services Provider** - Professionals or volunteers who provide services and assistance through system-based programs (i.e. law enforcement, prosecution, juvenile/criminal courts, and probation/parole), and community based programs (i.e. rape crisis centers, domestic violence programs and shelters, child advocacy centers, general victim assistance centers, and victim support groups, among others).

**Victim Services Unit (VSU)** - The unit that oversees the implementation of procedures and programs to ensure that the rights of victims of DOC inmates/probationers/parolees are enforced; (5-ACI-5F-07) the VSU serves as the primary contact between DOC and other national, state, and local victim assistance programs and is responsible for all matters related to victim information, registration, notification, protection from harassment and harm, referral to support programs, and victim advocacy. The VSU assists in the development of the Victim Impact Programs for inmates/probationers/parolees and consults on the training of correctional staff on general victim issues, as well as issues specific to inmate/probationer/parolee programs, and assists with recruiting crime victim-related volunteers to participate in the classes or programs.

**Victim/Survivor** - For purposes of this operating procedure, a person who is the documented victim of the crime for which the inmate is currently incarcerated; the term "victim/survivor" also includes the person's spouse, parent, child, sibling, or lawful representative of a crime victim who is deceased, who is a minor, is incompetent, or is physically or psychologically incapacitated. The term "victim" also includes a person whose life has been threatened by an inmate while incarcerated.

**Victim Travel Fund** - Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) funds that support a travel reimbursement program for crime victims that take part in criminal justice related activities through DOC.

## PURPOSE

This operating procedure establishes protocol and responsibilities for a comprehensive victim services program that honors and protects the rights and interests of victims of crimes committed by inmates/probationers/parolees under the custody of the DOC.

## PROCEDURE

### I. Victim Services

- A. In order to promote public safety, the DOC provides notification assistance and referral services to all victims of inmates/probationers/parolees under its custody.
- B. Additionally, the DOC establishes and maintains services for victims of crimes, including victim registration and notification, inmate/probationer/parolee status and location, inmate release plans, victim awareness education, impact of crime education for inmates/probationers/parolees, and the Victim/Offender Dialogue Program (VOD).
- C. The Virginia Victim's Bill of Rights, COV §19.2-11.01, *Crime victim and witness rights*, does not provide for victim input before a P&P Officer requests the Court or the releasing authority to add, remove, or modify any of the Court-ordered special conditions of supervision. (4-APPFS-2A-05)

### II. Tasks Assigned to the Victim Service Unit (VSU)

The following tasks are assigned to the VSU in collaboration with other agency units (4-ACRS-6D-02):

- A. Coordinate with the programs that collect restitution from inmates/probationers/parolees, and notify victims or survivors of their civil remedies when inmates/probationers/parolees fail to pay their restitution.
- B. Maintain confidential files on victims as legally allowed including victims or survivors of inmates/probationers/parolees sentenced to the DOC prior to the establishment of the VSU.
- C. Oversee victims' rights provisions when inmates/probationers/parolees are in the custody or supervision of the DOC.
- D. Provide educational information about victims' rights regarding the DOC; this information will be made available in languages commonly spoken by the victims or survivors and using technologies that meet the needs of deaf or hearing-impaired victims.
- E. Provide training to victim advocacy groups about the DOC and assist with training of DOC staff on victim awareness.
- F. Offer crisis intervention and referral to victim services agencies.
- G. With DOC program staff, intervene when an inmate/probationer/parolee is harassing, threatening, or endangering the victim or survivor.
- H. Collaborate with local, statewide, and national victim assistance resources.
- I. Assist facility staff in the development and implementation of Victim Impact Curriculums.
- J. Provide support and assistance to victims who request to witness an execution.
- K. Coordinate, review and manage VOD in accordance with Operating Procedure 021.2, *Victim/Offender Dialogue*.

### III. Victim Registration

- A. Victim comment and personal information must be kept confidential pursuant to COV §19.2-11.02, *Prohibiting inquiry into the immigration status of certain victims or witnesses of crime*. Any records pertaining to the victim must be kept confidential. Information regarding victim enrollment and participation in the program must also be kept confidential.

- B. The VSU has developed the Automated Information & Notification System brochure for distribution to Virginia Commonwealth Attorney's offices, local law enforcement agencies, and victim advocates. Under COV §19.2-11.01, *Crime victim and witness rights*, it is the responsibility of the local crime victim and witness assistance program to notify crime victims of the right to participate in the post-sentencing process.
- C. Registration is voluntary and is accomplished by the victim submitting the required registration form.
  - 1. The victim must contact the DOC VSU at [victimservices@vadoc.virginia.gov](mailto:victimservices@vadoc.virginia.gov) or 800-560-4292.
  - 2. The registration form can be found at <https://vadoc.virginia.gov/victim-services/>.
  - 3. Registration is not complete unless a registration form is received and processed by the VSU.
  - 4. If a form is received at the institutional level, the form should be forwarded via fax, mail, or email to the VSU general email: [victimservices@vadoc.virginia.gov](mailto:victimservices@vadoc.virginia.gov). Registration with a separate automated notification system, such as VINE or SAVIN, does not substitute for the official DOC registration process.
- D. The registration database for the DOC VSU will be housed within the office of the VSU, and maintained by the VSU and the Virginia Parole Board (VPB).
  - 1. The DOC Automated Information & Notification System must be confidential.
  - 2. Only VSU staff may have access. All other access must be approved by the VSU Director.
- E. In accordance with COV §19.2-11.01, *Crime victim and witness rights*, the victim is responsible for notifying the VSU of address, email or telephone changes. Notification may be accomplished in writing (letter or e-mail) or by phone.
- F. All victim notification forms are to be kept in the VSU. Any forms found in inmate/probationer/parolee records should be forwarded to the VSU.

#### IV. Victim Notification

- A. Notification of victims or other concerned citizens must be provided prior to the release of an inmate, pursuant to applicable Virginia statutes. (4-APPFS-1A-04)
- B. To promote public safety, the DOC will notify all registered victims of an inmate's release, transfer, escape, death, name change, work release, and parole events. DOC will provide public information on inmates/probationers/parolees upon request to those victims and concerned citizens registered with the DOC Automated Information & Notification System, and will receive and answer inquiries and complaints from victims, in compliance with current Code of Virginia requirements.
- C. All email and phone notifications to registered crime victims will be facilitated by the VSU. The DOC Automated Information & Notification System will provide all automated notification via telephone, e-mail, or letter. The VPB staff are responsible for the distribution of letter notifications related to parole events.
- D. The registered victim must be notified when the following occurs: (5-ACI-5F-06; 4-ACRS-7F-06; 2-CO-4G-02)
  - 1. Transfer of the inmate
    - a. Upon transfer of custody of the inmate to an authority other than the DOC.
    - b. Upon inmate transfer to a different location code within the DOC - notification will include the facility name.
    - c. Upon overnight transfer to a local hospital.
    - d. Interstate Corrections Compact (prison to prison transfers) or International Prisoner Transfer Program
      - i. The DOC Interstate Corrections Compact Coordinator will notify the VSU Director when an

- inmate applies for transfer to another state.
- ii. The VSU must contact, by letter, all registered victims regarding a requested Interstate or International Prisoner Transfer.
  - iii. The victim has 30 days, from the receipt of the letter, to submit verbal or written comments to the VSU each time an inmate requests Interstate Corrections Compact transfer or International Prisoner Transfer Program transfer.
  - iv. The VSU staff will be responsible for taking all verbal comments. Comments will be taken over the phone and summarized. All registration and victim comments will be confidential.
  - v. The VSU will forward comments to the DOC Interstate Corrections Compact Coordinator for consideration in final decisions. If the victim decides not to provide comment, the VSU will notify the DOC Interstate Corrections Compact Coordinator.
  - vi. VSU staff will contact victims to provide them with the transfer decision.
2. Death of the inmate - VACORIS will send an update to Automated Information & Notification System to ensure notification of any registered victim.
  3. Escape and recapture of the inmate
    - a. The Director's Office or other designated DOC staff will notify the VSU Director and provide specifics of the incident.
    - b. The VSU Director or designee will generate an override in the Automated Information & Notification System to show escape status changes for the inmate or inmates.
    - c. If accessible, the VSU Director will review the inmate's VACORIS record to locate victim notification information. VSU staff must attempt to reach by telephone, or other contact means if not reachable by phone, documenting each attempt in VACORIS. Upon confirmation that an escapee has been taken into custody, the DOC Director or designee will notify the VSU, who will inform the victim that the inmate has been returned to custody. If the victim is registered, an automated return to custody notification will be provided.
  4. Release from incarceration
    - a. VACORIS will send an update to the Automated Information & Notification System to ensure automated notification of any registered victims. The DOC Community Release Unit will notify the VSU, via e-mail, of any inmate being processed for release out of DOC custody that has an alert flag in VACORIS. The Community Release Unit will provide the VSU with release information including but not limited to the inmate's release plan, probation information, anticipated release date, and any change in release dates.
    - b. VSU staff must ensure that all registered victims listed in VACORIS, or the Automated Information & Notification System are notified of the release status of an inmate. The VSU must provide the victim information as deemed necessary regarding the inmate's release plan, community supervision information, and any other information that is deemed necessary and within confidentiality guidelines.
    - c. If requested by the registered victim and deemed appropriate by VSU, a recent photo of the inmate will be obtained from VACORIS and provided to the victim.
    - d. VSU staff will refer victims to the VPB staff to request additional conditions of parole.
    - e. If requested by the registered victim, VSU staff will liaise with supervising probation staff to address victim concerns related to the inmate's transition back into the community after release.
  5. Name change - Information will be sent from VACORIS to the Automated Information & Notification System to provide notification regarding name change.
  6. Work release
    - a. Pursuant to COV §53.1-160, *Notice to be given upon prisoner release, escape, etc.*, COV §53.1-133.02, *Notice to be given upon prisoner release, escape, etc.*, and Operating Procedure 830.5, *Transfers, Institution Reassignments*, 15 days prior to the release of any prisoner to an authorized work release program or release to attend a business, education, or other related community

program, the DOC must give notice to registered victims, as defined in COV §19.2-11.01, *Crime victim and witness rights*. VACORIS will send an update to the DOC Automated Information & Notification System to ensure automated notification of any registered victims.

- b. In accordance with Operating Procedure 830.5, *Transfers, Institution Reassignments*, inmates participating in a work release program will be responsible for making payments from their work release wages to restitution or costs as ordered by the Court. If requested, VSU can provide information on restitution amounts owed to registered victims of the crime. (5-ACI-1B-24; 4-ACRS-6D-02)

#### V. Coordination with the VPB

- A. Coordination between the DOC VSU and the VPB provides clarification of services that the VSU provides to victims of crime. The DOC VSU will refer victims to the VPB when issues directly related to parole events, notifications, concerns, and/or complaints are voiced to DOC VSU staff.
- B. The VPB staff are responsible for the printing and distribution of all parole related letter notifications generated from the Automated Information & Notification System. In addition to the victim notifications listed in Section IV.D., the VSU will provide automated telephone and email notification of:
  1. Parole interview date
  2. Parole decision
  3. Discretionary parole release
  4. Geriatric parole release
  5. Mandatory parole release
- C. Upon request, the VSU will provide public information on inmate/probationer/parolee status to those victims registered with the DOC notification program. The VSU will receive and answer inquiries and complaints from victims, in compliance with current Code of Virginia requirements.
- D. In order to receive automated notification of a parole interview or parole decision, all victims must be registered with the DOC VSU.
- E. Parole interview notification
  1. The VSU will coordinate the Automated Information & Notification System to provide the victim with 30 day advance notification of a parole interview.
  2. Victims will be notified that previously submitted input is still on file; however, if they wish to update input or provide initial input to the VPB, they should contact the VPB directly at 804-674-3081. This notification directs victims to contact the VPB directly if they want to schedule an appointment to meet with a member of the VPB.
  3. If a victim contacts the VSU regarding a parole interview or decision, VSU staff will refer the victim to the VPB. The VSU is not authorized to provide information regarding the parole process or the status of an inmate's parole review.
- F. Parole review notification - The VSU will coordinate the Automated Information & Notification System to provide automated notification of a parole review decision to all registered victims. The VPB staff are responsible for printing and mailing victim notifications for letter registrations from the Automated Information & Notification System. The VPB staff are responsible for ensuring all parole events are entered into CORIS in order for automated notifications to be provided.
- G. Victims who request that special conditions be placed on an inmate upon release should contact the VPB Victim Input Program Coordinator. The request will be made known to the VPB for consideration and if granted, the DOC Community Release Unit will make note of the condition.



**VI. Protecting Victims from Intimidation, Harassment or Harm**

- A. The DOC strives to ensure that crime victims and citizens are protected from intimidation, harassment, or harm by inmates/probationers/parolees who are incarcerated or under direct supervision of DOC, and to respond to alleged incidents reported by victims.
- B. Each facility and P&P District must maintain practices to prevent harassment of the public (including crime victims) by inmates/probationers/parolees who are in custody or otherwise under the supervision of the DOC, and to respond to complaints of harassment. When complaints of harassment are received, the DOC will forbid the inmate/probationer/parolee from further contact with the complainant and from engaging in any course of conduct with the intent to harass, torment, or threaten another person. This procedure does not apply to cases of harassment of one inmate/probationer/parolee by another.
- C. Complaints of inmate/probationer/parolee harassment/intimidation
  1. If the VSU is contacted directly by a citizen who is the subject of such conduct, VSU will open an investigation and gather all information and relevant evidence from the citizen.
  2. If the matter is referred for investigation, VSU staff will collaborate with local and state partners to obtain inmate/probationer/parolee phone records and court documents.
  3. The designated staff member will charge the inmate with institutional infraction, 136b, *“Threats or intimidation of a member of the general public or violation of any court ordered prohibition of contact with any individual”*.
  4. The inmate will be informed that harassment may result in further disciplinary action; see Operating Procedure 861.1, *Offender Discipline, Institutions*, Offense Code 136b, *Threats or intimidation of a member of the general public or violation of any court ordered prohibition of contact with any individual*) as well as criminal prosecution.
  5. If any court order was violated by the inmate engaging in unwanted contact, at the discretion of the VSU Director and the conclusion of the institutional disciplinary infraction procedure, VSU staff will refer the investigative information to the local Commonwealth Attorney for consideration of criminal prosecution.

**VII. Visitation and Dialogue Requests from Victims**

- A. Per COV §53.1-30, *Who may enter interior of state correctional facilities; searches of those entering*, an adult victim of a crime committed by an inmate in a state correctional facility may be allowed to visit with the inmate, provided such visit preserves the safety of the victim, staff, and inmate, as well as the security and good order of the facility. All adult victim requests for visitation must be reviewed and processed in accordance with Operating Procedure 851.1, *Visiting Privileges*.
- B. If the adult visitor is a crime victim/survivor of the inmate and does not wish to participate in regular on going visitation, the victim may request a one-time facilitated meeting with the inmate in accordance with Operating Procedure 021.2, *Victim/Offender Dialogue*.
  1. The VOD Committee will review all requests for a VOD prior to approval.
  2. Approved VOD’s must be conducted in accordance with Operating Procedure 021.2, *Victim/Offender Dialogue*.
  3. VOD is intended for one victim to meet with one inmate/probationer/parolee. If multiple inmate/probationer/parolees received convictions for the same offense, each dialogue will be processed separately. Exceptions may be reviewed by the VOD Committee and approved on a case-by-case basis.
- C. Minors who are a direct victim of a violent crime committed by the inmate/probationer/parolee will not be reviewed or approved for visitation or for a VOD with the inmate/probationer/parolee until they reach the age of 18 years.



**VIII. Victim or Victim Family Member Attendance at Executions**

- A. In accordance with Executive Memorandum 10-94 effective July 1, 1994, see Attachment 1, close family members of a victim of a capital murder should, whenever feasible, be afforded the opportunity to witness the execution of the person who murdered their loved one.
- B. Relatives of the victim will include:
1. Spouse at the time of the murder
  2. Mother or father, whether by birth, adoption or marriage
  3. Sisters or brothers, full or half
  4. Children, whether by birth, adoption or marriage
  5. Guardian or person standing in loco parentis
  6. Any other relatives chosen by any of the above-listed family members
- C. Preparation
1. The Office of the Attorney General Victim Notification Program will notify DOC VSU staff of the likelihood of execution. Victim contact information will, at minimum, include name, relationship to victim, address, and telephone number.
  2. VSU staff will thoroughly review VACORIS and the Automated Information & Notification System
  3. VSU staff will contact the DOC Communication Director to determine method of execution (lethal injection or electrocution).
- D. Verifying interest
1. No person under 18 years of age will be allowed to witness an execution.
  2. All family members wishing to witness an execution will submit a written request to the VSU two weeks prior to the execution date to allow the DOC to act on the request.
  3. If a victim chooses not to witness the execution, a representative from the VSU will notify the victim of the completed execution as soon as practicable.
  4. When more requests are submitted than the facility can accommodate, family members will decide among themselves who will witness the execution. The Secretary of Public Safety will have the discretion to deny permission to all family members if they are unable to decide who will witness the execution.
  5. VSU staff will provide a list of names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all victim witnesses to the DOC Director for final approval. The Operations Office at Greensville Correctional Center will receive a copy of the approved list of victim witnesses from the VSU.
  6. The DOC will determine the maximum number of victim witnesses who will be allowed to witness an execution taking into consideration available space.
  7. In the case of an execution of a murderer of multiple victims, the DOC will allocate as equally as practicable the spaces available to the family members of each victim for which a trial resulted in a conviction of capital murder.
  8. Prior to the execution date, a packet of execution related materials will be mailed by the VSU to all approved victim witnesses. The information will contain the following:
    - a. A fact sheet on witnessing executions
    - b. Directions to the undisclosed meeting location
    - c. Appropriate dress
    - d. Information informing victim witnesses that they will be required to show photo identification
    - e. The original letter from DOC of their approval as a victim witness

9. DOC must ensure that family members are physically separated from other witnesses and that there is no opportunity for verbal or visual contact between family members and the inmate or other witnesses.
10. DOC will reserve the right to remove immediately any family member who becomes disruptive of the proceedings.

E. Procedures for victims approved to view an execution

1. All victims approved to view the execution will be named on the official list approved by the DOC Director.
2. For security and privacy reasons, on the evening of the scheduled execution a VSU staff person will meet with all victim witnesses at the undisclosed location selected in advance by the DOC. Execution procedures will be reviewed with all victim witnesses and advisements will be made of media, protesters' location, and the unmarked transportation process.
3. VSU staff will encourage victim witnesses to leave personal items locked in their car. Cameras and tape recorders will not be permitted.
4. VSU staff will require all victim witnesses to sign a release of liability on the part of the Commonwealth prior to witnessing the execution.
5. All victim witnesses will be subject to a frisk search by an authorized Corrections Officer to ensure that witnesses are not carrying any items of contraband such as, cell phones, pagers, or recording devices.
6. On the night of the execution, the DOC will provide transportation for VSU staff and victim witnesses from the undisclosed location to the Greensville Correctional Center. Victim witnesses are not allowed to drive personal vehicles to the execution.
7. For confidentiality and privacy reasons, VSU staff and victim witnesses will be the last to enter the execution building prior to the execution and the first to leave once the execution has taken place.
8. For security reasons, VSU staff and victim witnesses will pass through the security area at the Greensville Correctional Center and then proceed to the victim viewing room.
9. Once the condemned is pronounced dead, VSU staff and victim witnesses will exit the building and will be returned to the undisclosed location by DOC staff.
10. VSU staff will debrief victim witnesses at the undisclosed location.
11. VSU staff will follow-up with victim witnesses subsequent to execution.

IX. Training

A. Victim awareness programs for staff

1. The VSU will conduct training for DOC staff involved with victim's issues to ensure awareness of victims' issues including the following topics: (5-ACI-5F-07)
  - a. Specific services available to crime victims
  - b. Changes in laws impacting victims
  - c. Way(s) of gaining access to the services
  - d. Confidentiality of victim information
  - e. Ways for victims to communicate complaints and other concerns
  - f. Program evaluation measures, which include victim input regarding the effectiveness of services and ways for them to make suggestions regarding agency policies and practices intended to assist crime victims.
2. Basic Skills for Corrections Professionals will include a training segment on the VSU, victimology, and impact of crime on victims.

B. Victim impact classes for inmates/probationers/parolees - Educational efforts will assist

inmates/probationers/parolees in understanding the harm they have caused and how to prevent destructive behavior in the future. They can be presented virtually or in a classroom setting or living unit setting. Classes will utilize a standard curriculum distributed by the [U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime. \(4-ACRS-6D-01\)](#)

1. The VSU will determine feasibility of victim impact education programs for inmates/probationers/parolees under the supervision and custody of the DOC. These classes or programs are intended to provide information and learning experiences for inmates/probationers/parolees to address the harm they have caused their victims; and to enable inmates/probationers/parolees to develop respect for the law and for the rights of other people, to learn responsible ways of being accountable for their actions, and to apply that knowledge to the rest of their lives. (5-ACI-1B-24)
2. It is in the interest of DOC to provide educational programs for inmates/probationers/parolees that will inform, instruct, and involve them in learning about the short and long-term psychological, financial, and physical impact of all types of crime on victims, their families, and community. Appropriately trained staff will instruct the classes.
3. Curriculum
  - a. The nationally tested curriculum will be reviewed by DOC staff for use by the program.
  - b. Adjustments to include state-specific references to victims' rights and policies, local resources or special crime issue attention will be added, as well as additional activities targeted towards specialized populations.
  - c. The VSU Director must approve any changes to the curriculum.
4. Class size
  - a. The curriculum consists of 13 sessions lasting approximately two hours each. The maximum recommended class size is 12 inmates/probationers/parolees.
  - b. Changes to length, frequency, or size should be approved by VSU in alignment with the *Initial Program Description*.
5. Utilization of guest speakers
  - a. Instructors will always supplement the curriculum by including local crime victims, their survivors, and victim services program staff for personal presentations.
  - b. The VSU will assist in recruiting guest speakers and, when not logistically practical, training videos will be provided. The VSU will develop a suggested selection and screening process for victim speakers, and a procedure for victims entering the facility, including a briefing and debriefing before and after their participation.
  - c. The VSU will recommend ways for victim speakers to be recognized for their involvement, including certificates, awards, and special presentations or contributions.
  - d. Victim speakers must be registered with VSU.
6. Inmate/probationer/parolee selection
  - a. All inmates/probationers/parolees are eligible for participation in the classes or programs.
  - b. Inmates/probationers/parolees must not be grouped by crime type or condition. Exceptions to this may include violent or mentally ill inmates/probationers/parolees or those with difficulty in cognitive learning-type settings
  - c. Ideally, this program should be available at the start of an inmate's/probationer's/parolee's incarceration or supervision, with other correctional programs building on this personal responsibility model.
  - d. Inmates/probationers/parolees should volunteer to participate with support from the counselor or treatment staff.
  - e. Each inmate/probationer/parolee must be pre-interviewed by the class instructor to help them understand the expectations of the program.

- f. Inmates/probationers/parolees must have enough incarceration or supervision time left to complete the program.
  - g. Disruptive or rude behavior will be grounds for removal.
  - h. Completion of the program will not be used to support sentence reductions.
7. Staff instructor selection criteria - Each Unit Head will nominate instructors for the victim impact classes using the following guidelines:
- a. The instructor will be an employee or former employee (retiree) of the DOC.
  - b. The instructor will volunteer to participate in these programs.
  - c. The instructor must complete the required training provided by VSU or another facilitator approved by VSU prior to beginning this program.
  - d. The instructor must have the following abilities or experience:
    - i. Ability to be assertive and confront inmates/probationers/parolees, but also able to assist inmates/probationers/parolees in recognizing their attitudes and beliefs about crime victimization.
    - ii. Ability to keep a discussion on track and not be easily diverted when inmates/probationers/parolees move the discussion away from serious or victim-related subjects; this usually happens when they are uncomfortable with the topic, do not know how to deal with their feelings, or are trying to blame others for their behaviors.
    - iii. Ability to understand conflicting attitudes of both inmates/probationers/parolees and victims, but not allowing inmates/probationers/parolees or themselves to rationalize or justify crime in any way.
    - iv. Practiced in using experiential learning (student participation) through written work, discussion, activities, and exercises that facilitate learning.
    - v. Ability to assist or direct inmates/probationers/parolees whose own victimization is disclosed or relived in the class by ensuring that the inmate/probationer/parolee will be appropriately referred to counseling or treatment staff.
- C. Community awareness - VSU staff will provide outreach and conduct presentations about services available through the DOC, as well as DOC procedures, to selected community groups, including victim advocates, crime victims and other community members.

#### X. Victim Travel Fund

- A. Department of Criminal Justice Services grant funds support a travel reimbursement program for crime victims that take part in criminal justice-related activities through DOC, such as participating in VOD, speaking at conferences, trainings, programming, and attending VPB appointments.
  - 1. The program will cover mileage reimbursement at the state rate. Considerations will be given for state rate lodging, per diem and airfare on a case by case basis.
  - 2. Funds are supplied by grant funding, if all allocated funds are spent, the program will not be available until the beginning of the next fiscal year. After an initial screening for appropriateness by VSU staff, approval will be required by the DOC Director or designee.
- B. Victims cannot apply for or receive reimbursement from DOC if they are being reimbursed for the same expenses from any other source.
- C. Application and eligibility information can be received by contacting the Victim Impact Advocate at 804-674-3243.

#### XI. Regional Victim Advocates

Regional Victim Advocate positions have been developed in the DOC VSU to provide the following services:

- A. Assist in determining safety planning, appropriate conditions and release plans, and local referrals in collaboration with probation and parole and local victim advocates.

- B. Assist in problematic and high risk inmate/probationer/parolee release cases.
- C. Collaborate with local victim advocates to facilitate victim registration, information, and transition to the DOC VSU.
- D. Provide victim awareness and victim related staff training for DOC.
- E. Manage site visits with P&P Offices, institutions, facilities, victim advocates, and community stakeholders.
- F. Develop local partnerships to increase victim registrations with DOC VSU.
- G. Run VACORIS release reports to determine upcoming releases in assigned region; contact registered victims to determine appropriate services and referrals.
- H. Assist the VPB Victim Input Program and Attorney General's Office Victim Notification Program as requested in assigned region.
- I. Assist with restitution, threats/harassment, Virginia Victims Fund, Victim Impact Statements, violation hearings, absconder status and release from supervision, as available.
- J. Provide outreach services to underserved crime victim populations including geographically isolated and reentry/post release victims of crime.

## REFERENCES

COV §19.2-11.01, *Crime victim and witness rights*

COV §19.2-11.02, *Prohibiting inquiry into the immigration status of certain victims or witnesses of crime*

COV §53.1-30, *Who may enter interior of state correctional facilities; searches of those entering*

COV §53.1-133.02, *Notice to be given upon prisoner release, escape, etc.*

COV §53.1-160, *Notice to be given upon prisoner release, escape, etc.*

Operating Procedure 021.2, *Victim/Offender Dialogue*

Operating Procedure 830.5, *Transfers, Institution Reassignments*

Operating Procedure 851.1, *Visiting Privileges*

Operating Procedure 861.1, *Offender Discipline, Institutions*

[Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision](#)

[U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime](#)

## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1, *Executive Memorandum 10-94*

## FORM CITATIONS

None