

# New Jersey Department of Corrections

## OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES (OVS)



## Division of Programs & Community Services

### OVS MISSION

*The **Office of Victim Services** is devoted to protecting the rights of victims of crime and assisting them in obtaining meaningful services and locating appropriate resources throughout the community while being sensitive to the needs of victims.*

*The **Office of Victim Services** further provides timely information and services aimed at enhancing and improving the victim's knowledge of New Jersey's correctional system.*

Traditionally, the needs of crime victims have gained greater emphasis in correctional organizations throughout the nation through the post-sentencing phase. Historically, the focus of victim services was placed on the trial and sentencing phases.

Federal laws have begun to expand the scope of victims' rights by addressing victim notification, victim impact statements, protection, and restitution throughout the correctional process.

To this end, the New Jersey Department of Corrections specifically established the **Office of Victim Services (OVS)** in the year 2000 in order to strengthen the Department's role in responding to the needs of victims of crime.

### SPECIFIC SERVICES OFFERED

- ⌘ Assist victims with concerns related to offenders ordered to the jurisdiction of the New Jersey Department of Corrections.
- ⌘ Provide support for all affected individuals of crime (i.e., family and community members), and act as a referral agent to assist victims in obtaining resources.
- ⌘ Collaborate with local, state, and federal agencies in order to increase awareness of victims' issues throughout the community.
- ⌘ Assist victims relative to the Department's community release process.
- ⌘ Offer a **Victim-Impact Program** entitled "**Focus on the Victim**" (**FOV**) to offenders assigned to New Jersey's adult state correctional institutions. The **FOV** Program seeks to raise the offender's understanding and awareness of the long-term impact of his/her actions on victims of crime and society as a whole. Facilitated by trained staff members, the **FOV** Program outlines the impact of crime on victims, communities, as well as the victim's family members.
- ⌘ **Volunteer Guest Speaker Network** – One of the most significant aspects of the Focus on the Victim Program is the personalizing of the crime and its effect on victims, families, and the community. To enforce this message, the FOV Program provides the opportunity for victims/survivors, secondary victims, and victim service professionals to speak directly to inmates participating in the FOV Program about the significant impact that crime has on victims.
- ⌘ For more information concerning our Volunteer Guest Speaker Network, please contact us at (800) 996-2029 or (609) 943-5390.

### NEW JERSEY CRIME VICTIMS' BILL OF RIGHTS

Crime victims are entitled to the following rights:

- To be treated with dignity and compassion by the criminal justice system.
- To be informed of the criminal justice process.
- To be free from intimidation.
- To have inconveniences associated with participation in the criminal justice process minimized to the fullest extent possible.
- To be informed about available remedies, financial assistance and social services.
- To be compensated for their loss whenever possible.
- To submit a written statement about the impact of the crime to a representative of the county prosecutor's office which shall be considered prior to the prosecutor's final decision concerning whether formal criminal charges will be filed.
- To make, prior to sentencing, an in-person statement directly to the sentencing courts concerning the impact of the crime.

*"Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding."  
Albert Einstein*

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### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

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#### ***Am I entitled to receive restitution from the offender (s) who committed a crime against me?***

You are entitled to receive restitution if it is ordered by the judge at the time of sentencing. When restitution is ordered, the Department of Corrections will begin their collection process while the offender is under their jurisdiction (adult offenders serving time in a state correctional facility). OVS staff is available to assist victims with specific questions regarding the status and collection process of their restitution.

#### ***I have been receiving threats or unwanted contact from an inmate. What can I do?***

You may call or write to the following contact to express your concerns in order for the matter to be further investigated:

New Jersey Department of Corrections  
Office of Victim Services  
P.O. Box 863  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625  
(609) 943-5390  
or  
toll free in NJ (800) 996-2029

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### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

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#### ***How can I locate information regarding an inmate's location, status, and sentencing information who is in the custody of the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC)?***

The NJDOC operates a web site that provides information on the offender's status, location, release dates, and sentence.

To access this web site, enter the following address:

<http://www.state.nj.us/corrections>.

#### **Proceed as follows:**

- Click on "Offender Search" located on the left-hand side of the screen.
- Respond to the Disclaimer (Yes/No).
- Enter either the offender's name, SBI number, and/or any other identifying information about the offender.
- Next, click on "Submit" located at the bottom of the screen.
- Select the appropriate offender from the search results provided.

If more information is needed, you may contact OVS directly and a staff member will be available to assist you with technical assistance.

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### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

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#### ***What is VINE and what will it do for me?***

The VINE (Victim Information Notification Everyday) System provides victim notification 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you are interested in this service, you will need to register with VINE by calling toll-free 1-877-VINE-4-NJ (1-877-846-3465) from a touch-tone phone and follow the directions prompted by this service. You may also visit the following web site for more information, <http://www.victimwitness.nj.gov/vine>

#### ***If I am notified by the Prosecutor's Office that an inmate is eligible for community release, what can I do?***

You can forward your comments in writing regarding the release of an inmate into a community setting to the Office of Victim Services. The New Jersey Department of Corrections, Division of Programs and Community Services, has established a Victim Notification Classification Committee that meets to address concerns expressed by victims regarding the potential release of an inmate into a community program.

#### ***What other resources can I be provided with as a victim of a crime?***

OVS staff is available to assist victims in locating appropriate resources and making referrals throughout the community. OVS maintains a directory of victim related resources/services throughout the state, along with national victim support agencies. OVS collaborates with various state and local agencies and organizations in order to establish a network of services for victims.

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### **CONTACTS:**

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**New Jersey Department of Corrections  
Office of Victim Services**  
P.O. Box 863  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625  
(609) 943-5390 or  
toll free in NJ (800) 996-2029  
fax (609) 984-4635  
[www.state.nj.us/corrections](http://www.state.nj.us/corrections)

**New Jersey State Parole Board  
Victim Services**  
609-292-4582

**State of New Jersey Victims of  
Crime Compensation Board (VCCB)**  
877-658-2221

**New Jersey State Office of  
Victim-Witness Advocacy**  
609-896-8855

**Office for Victims of Crime  
Directory of Crime Victim Services**  
<http://ovc.njrs.org/findvictimservices>

**New Jersey Department of  
Community Affairs  
Domestic Violence Hotline**  
800-572-SAFE (7233)

**Mothers Against Drunk Driving  
(MADD) Hotline**  
800-438-MADD (6233)

**New Jersey Coalition Against  
Sexual Assault Hotline**  
800-601-7200

**New Jersey's Crime Victim's  
Law Center**  
973-729-9342  
**New Jersey Division on Women**  
609-292-8840