



Public Safety
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Victims of Crime Staying Informed



Canada 

*The information in this booklet is presented in English.
This publication is also available in other languages through
the National Office for Victims.*


*Les renseignements contenus dans le présent livret sont présentés en
anglais. Il est également possible d'obtenir la publication dans une autre
langue auprès du Bureau national pour les victimes d'actes criminels*

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Victims of crime have a right to certain information, under Canadian law, about the person who harmed them while that person is under the jurisdiction of the Correctional Service of Canada or the Parole Board of Canada. This information is not provided automatically – a written request must be made to either agency via a process commonly referred to as registering.

This booklet is a guide to what victims are entitled to know, how to obtain that information, the role victims can play in providing information that may affect decisions about offenders and other services offered at the federal level.

ARE YOU A VICTIM OF CRIME?

You are considered a victim of crime if:

- You have been harmed (suffered loss or have been physically or emotionally hurt) as a result of someone committing a criminal offence, even if the person who harmed you has not been prosecuted or convicted for the offence against you; or
- You have been harmed as a result of someone committing a criminal offence and you have made a complaint to the police or Crown Attorney; or
- You are a spouse, conjugal partner, relative of, or person responsible for a victim who has died or is not able to act for himself or herself (e.g., the victim is ill or a child).



HOW CAN YOU RECEIVE INFORMATION?

Information about an offender is not provided automatically. You, or someone you have authorized in writing to act on your behalf, as your representative, is required to contact either the Correctional Service of Canada or the Parole Board of Canada to request information. This written request is commonly referred to as “registering.”

If the offender is incarcerated in a provincial institution, with the exception of Ontario and Quebec, the request should be directed to the Parole Board of Canada. You will be kept informed until the end of the offender’s sentence or until you ask to no longer be notified. If the offender is incarcerated in a provincial institution in Ontario you can call **1-888-579-2888**. If the offender is incarcerated in a provincial institution in Quebec, you can call **1-866-909-8913**.

HOW CAN YOU REGISTER?

To find out how to register for the victim notification service and to obtain other general information, please call either the Correctional Service of Canada at **1-866-806-2275** or the Parole Board of Canada at **1-866-789-INFO (4636)**. You can call these toll-free information lines from anywhere in Canada and the United States.




WHAT INFORMATION ARE YOU ENTITLED TO RECEIVE?

Upon request and as a registered victim, you **will** be provided with the following:

- the offender's name;
- the offence and the court which convicted the offender;
- the date the sentence starts and length of sentence; and
- the offender's eligibility and review dates for temporary absences, day parole and full parole.

In addition, upon request, you **may** be provided the following information at the discretion of the Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada or the Chairperson of the Parole Board of Canada when your interest in the information clearly outweighs any invasion of the offender's privacy that could result from the release of this information:

- the offender's age;
- the location of the penitentiary where the sentence is being served;
- the date, if any, on which the offender is to be released on unescorted or escorted temporary absences, work release, parole or statutory release;
- the date of any Parole Board of Canada hearing;
- any conditions attached to the offender's temporary absence, work release, parole or statutory release;

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- the offender's destination when released on any temporary absence, work release, parole or statutory release, and whether the offender will be in your vicinity while travelling to that destination; and
 - whether the offender is in custody and, if not, why not.

You may also request Parole Board of Canada decisions from their Decision Registry. This may include the reasons for decisions related to conditional release, return to prison, detention, and the decisions and reasons of the Appeal Division of the Parole Board of Canada. The Board may exempt information in these written decisions that could reveal a confidential source of information, jeopardize a person's safety or hinder an offender's return to society as a law-abiding citizen.

YOU HAVE A VOICE IN THE CORRECTIONS AND PAROLE PROCESSES

The Correctional Service of Canada and the Parole Board of Canada welcome any information you may have about safety concerns and the effect that the offence has had on you, your family or the community. You may choose to provide a victim statement, detailing information about the physical, emotional or financial impact the offence has had on you or any other information that you think



is relevant. You can also request that the Correctional Service of Canada or the Parole Board of Canada consider imposing special conditions on the offender's release. You can provide information to either agency at any time.

As a victim, you may also make an oral statement to the Parole Board of Canada at the offender's parole hearing. Even if you do not wish to present a statement, you may still apply to observe a parole hearing. You have the choice to read a written statement at the hearing or to record it on audio or video for presentation should you not be able to attend the hearing or if you prefer this option. Parole Board of Canada will require a written copy of your statement 30 days prior to the hearing if it does not require translation and 45 days prior if it does.

You may also apply to the Department of Justice's Victims Fund for financial assistance to attend Parole Board of Canada hearings of the offender who harmed you. You must register as a victim in order to obtain this assistance. The Victims Fund also provides financial assistance for a support person to attend or support a registered victim at Parole Board of Canada hearings.



WILL THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE BE SHARED WITH THE OFFENDER?

Personal information about you, such as your address, telephone and facsimile numbers, is not shared with the offender. However, the law requires the Correctional Service of Canada and the Parole Board of Canada to disclose to the offender any information that will be considered during the decision-making process, including information provided by a victim, or a summary of that information.

HOW DOES THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICE OF CANADA USE THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE?

If you have filed a Victim Impact Statement at sentencing, the Correctional Service of Canada is required, by law, to obtain a copy. In the absence of a Victim Impact Statement, a community parole officer may complete a community assessment to obtain information from you to assist the Correctional Service of Canada in assessing the offender's level of risk. Victim information is used as follows:

- in making decisions on the institutional security level required to protect society;
- in making a recommendation to the Parole Board of Canada as to whether the offender should be granted a conditional release, such as parole, and what additional special conditions to impose on the release;



- in making decisions as to whether the offender should be released on a temporary absence or a work release; and
- in evaluating the offender's overall risk of re-offending and need for programs.

HOW DOES THE PAROLE BOARD OF CANADA USE THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE?

The information you provide to the Parole Board of Canada is a valued aid in understanding the seriousness of the offence committed and assessing whether the offender recognizes the harm he or she has done. This information will help the Board assess whether:

- the offender is likely to re-offend if released on conditional release;
- additional conditions might be necessary to manage a particular risk to society that the offender might present, especially if the offender will be living near you or is a member of your family. The Parole Board of Canada may, for example, impose a special condition for the offender not to contact you.



FEDERAL SERVICES FOR VICTIMS

PUBLIC SAFETY CANADA

National Office for Victims


Established in 2005, the National Office for Victims is part of Public Safety Canada and is a central resource offering information and support on federal corrections issues. As part of its mandate, the office:

- operates a toll-free line, **1-866-525-0554**, which victims may call from anywhere in Canada or the United States;
- provides referrals to the Correctional Service of Canada and the Parole Board of Canada for specific enquiries;
- ensures that a victim's perspective is included in national policy development; and
- develops information products for dissemination to victims, victim service providers and the general public.

For more information, please visit the National Office for Victims website at **www.publicsafety.gc.ca/nov**.

Correctional Service of Canada

In addition to registering victims, the Correctional Service of Canada's Victim Services Program has dedicated Regional Victim Services Managers and Victim Services Officers



who are responsible for managing information, victim notification and other services to victims of offenders under federal jurisdiction.

For more information, please call the Correctional Service of Canada, toll-free at **1-866-806-2275** or visit their website at **www.csc-scc.gc.ca**.

The Correctional Service of Canada also offers victim-offender mediation. The mediation process is entirely voluntary. To find out more, please contact the Correctional Service of Canada's Restorative Justice Unit at **613-947-7309**.

Parole Board of Canada

The Parole Board of Canada has a team of Regional Communications Officers in each region to provide information and services to victims. Through these Officers, registered victims can obtain a copy of Parole Board of Canada decisions, present victim impact statements at Parole Board of Canada hearings and attend hearings as observers. Regional Communications Officers are also available to attend Parole Board of Canada hearings with victims.

For more information, please contact the Parole Board of Canada by calling, toll-free, **1-866-789-INFO (4636)** or visit the website at **www.pbc-clcc.gc.ca**.




DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE Policy Centre for Victim Issues

The Policy Centre for Victim Issues at the Department of Justice provides a victim's lens for criminal law reform and policy development. The Policy Centre for Victim Issues works closely with other federal departments to ensure a consistent approach to improving the experience of victims in the criminal justice system.

The Policy Centre for Victim Issues has a broad mandate that includes:

- conducting research;
- raising awareness about the needs and concerns of victims;
- developing public information materials;
- consulting with stakeholders to identify areas of concern and options for law and policy reform;
- administering the Victims Fund which supports victims through funding to provinces and territories; and
- funding victim services organizations and providing limited financial assistance directly to victims so they may travel to the Parole Board of Canada hearings of the offender who harmed them.



For more information about financial assistance to attend Parole Board of Canada hearings, please contact the Policy Centre for Victims Issues by calling, toll-free, **1-866-544-1007** or visit the website at **www.justice.gc.ca**.

FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

The Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime is a new, independent resource for victims in Canada. The Office was created in 2007 to ensure the federal government meets its responsibilities to victims of crime.

Victims of crime can contact the Office to learn more about their rights under federal law and the programs and services available to them, or to make a complaint about any federal agency or federal legislation that has an impact on victims. In addition to its direct work with victims, the Office also works to ensure that policy makers and other criminal justice personnel are aware of victims' needs and concerns. The Ombudsman can also identify and review emerging and systemic issues that may negatively impact victims and make recommendations to the federal government in this regard.

For more information, please contact the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime by calling, toll-free, **1-866-481-8429** or visit the website at **www.victimfirst.gc.ca**.