

STATE OF OHIO



DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
AND CORRECTION

SUBJECT:	PAGE 1 of 3
Victim Awareness Program	NUMBER: 03-OVS-05
RULE/CODE REFERENCE: ORC 5149.101	SUPERSEDES: New
RELATED ACA STANDARDS:	EFFECTIVE DATE: December 28, 2001
RELATED AUDIT STANDARDS:	APPROVED: <i>Reginald A. Wilkinson</i>

I. AUTHORITY

This policy is issued in compliance with Ohio Revised Code §5120.01 which delegates to the Director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) the authority to manage and direct the total operation of the Department and establish such rules and regulations as he prescribes.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish operational policies and procedures for the Victim Awareness Program.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all persons employed by the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, primarily Victim Awareness Program Facilitators and volunteers.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. Adult Parole Authority (APA):** That section of the Division of Parole and Community Services (DPCS) that includes the Parole Board and Field Services including Interstate Compact and the Offender Services Network.
- B. Facilitator:** An individual trained in conducting the Victim Awareness classes for offenders in the institutions and parolees supervised by the parole regions.
- C. Office of Victim Services (OVS):** Office within DRC created for the purpose of assisting victims of offenders who are under the Department's jurisdiction.

- D. **Victim:** A person who has been directly or indirectly impacted by a criminal act committed by an offender.
- E. **Victim Awareness Classes:** Classes offered within the institution and APA offices in which offenders participate in order to understand the impact that crime has on victims.
- F. **Victim Impact Panels:** One or more victims sharing their experiences for the purpose of allowing the audience to better understand victimization and to become aware of the long-term impact of crime on its victims.

V. POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction that all institutions and Adult Parole Authority Regions make the Victim Awareness Program available to offenders.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. **FACILITATOR SELECTION AND TRAINING:**

1. Recruitment/Screening: The OVS shall notify institutions and Adult Parole Authority Regions of upcoming training courses. Applications shall be accepted just prior to each training session. Selection shall be made based upon current program needs, recommendations from wardens and regional administrators.
2. Facilitator Training: The OVS shall provide training for new and existing facilitators to gain the information/experience necessary to meet the needs of the program. In order to facilitate the program, the facilitator must be trained and certified by the OVS.
3. Certified facilitators must attend an annual meeting conducted by OVS

B. **PROGRAM STRUCTURE:**

1. Program Evaluation: Facilitators will participate in any program evaluation implemented by the OVS.
2. Number of Sessions: Each institution is responsible for conducting at least two sessions of Victim Awareness Classes per year. Each session consists of a ten-chapter curriculum provided by the OVS. Duration of classes may vary.
3. Waiting Lists/Completion Lists: Each facilitator will maintain a list of offenders who are interested in the program and a list of offenders who have successfully completed the program.
4. Facilitators will also submit a quarterly report to OVS indicating the number of sessions completed, number of offenders enrolled for each session, number of

weeks the program lasted and the number of offenders who successfully completed the program.

5. Removal of offenders: Facilitators will structure a class that will promote dignity and respect given to all participants and volunteers. If any offender does not follow the guidelines established by the facilitator of the program, the offender may be removed from the program.
6. Preparation of Victim Impact Panelists: Facilitators are expected to communicate with the panelists prior to the panelist speaking at the institution or APA office. Facilitators should make every effort to schedule victim impact panels to accommodate the panelists. Facilitators should:
 - a. Invite potential panelists to observe a victim awareness class prior to their participation in a victim impact panel.
 - b. Ask the panelists how they would like to be introduced, how they would like the room set up, what type of equipment is needed for the presentation and if there are any special accommodations needed.
 - c. Prepare the panelists for their visit to the institution, including such elements as: security level, class demographics (class size) and attitudes of offenders.
 - d. Intervene if an offender asks inappropriate questions.
 - e. Panelist should be treated with dignity and respect.
 - f. Panelist should not speak at the institutions or APA office where the offender in their crime is incarcerated or under supervision.
 - g. Panelists should be greeted by the facilitator at the gate or front office upon arriving at the institution/APA Office.
7. Volunteers: A list of volunteers will be maintained at the OVS.
 - a. All volunteers must follow the institutional or APA policies according to policies DRC 311-01, Recruitment, Training and Supervision of Volunteers for Institutions and DPCS 5001.22, Volunteer Program, in order to volunteer with the Victim Awareness Program.
 - b. Facilitators should contact OVS to obtain or provide speaker information when confirming a speaker.
 - c. If the Facilitator has a potential speaker who would like to be in the speaker database, the facilitator should notify the OVS with the speaker's information.
 - d. Facilitators must notify the OVS of any problems or concerns about volunteers. The removal of a volunteer from a program will be at the discretion of the OVS.