Community Outreach Unit

The purpose of the Community Outreach program is to appropriately address all requests from crime victims/survivors, their families, families of incarcerated individuals, community partner agencies, and the concerned public. The Community Outreach unit will serve as the central source of information to these parties. (5-ACI-5F-06)

I. Definitions

A. Community Outreach Coordinator

Responsible for overseeing the services and programs offered to victims, family members of inmates/offenders currently under the care and supervision of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections (ODOC), and acts as the agency liaison to other victim advocacy groups. (5-ACI-5F-07)

B. Facility Victim Liaisons

Employee who is the point of contact at the facility for victims. The liaison will assist in the coordination of programs such as the Victim Impact Program for inmates/offenders, and the victim inmate/offender dialogue.

C. Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE)

VINE is a 24-hour, confidential, computer-assisted service that provides automated notification regarding current inmate/offender status to...
individuals who have registered with the automated system. Custody status changes covered in this service include inmate/offender transfer, escape, apprehension, release or death. (2-CO-4G-02, 5-ACI-5F-06, 4-ACRS-7F-06, 4-APPFS-1A-04)

D. **Victim**

A person who has been directly or indirectly affected by an act committed by an inmate/offender.

E. **Victim Inmate/Offender Dialogue**

A guided process that allows the victim of a crime (or a community advocate) and the inmate/offender to meet to discuss the impact the inmate’s/offender’s crime has had on the victim, and to explore restorative options that will give opportunity for the inmate/offender to take responsibility for their actions, help to restore the victim, and provide the inmate/offender the opportunity to give back to the community.

II. **Services Provided to Victims**

A. All information related to victims who are registered for VINE or the agency’s notification system is strictly confidential. Any correspondence and communication from the Community Outreach unit is confidential, unless stated otherwise. Inmates/offenders and/or their families will not be given the name, address, telephone number or any other information on persons registered. Confidential notification is critical to the safety of crime victims.

1. Notification may be provided through VINE. This notification system is designed to notify victims when an inmate’s/offender’s custody status changes, or in the event of escape, discharge, or death.

2. In order for victims to receive notification through VINE, the victim must be registered for said services at [http://www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com).

3. Victims may register for flash notifications of an inmate’s/offender’s custody status through use of the Victim Notification Request. The “Victim Notification Request” form ([Attachment B](#), attached) is shared between the ODOC and the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board for purposes of alerting victims of a change in custody with advance notice. This notification system is separate from VINE, and is intended **only** for victims.

   a. Registered victims will receive notice only in the event of a walkaway, escape, or release.
b. A Flash Notification Form (Attachment C, attached) will be created for each inmate/offender who has a victim registered for notification.

c. The Community Outreach unit shall forward the Flash Notification Form (Attachment C, attached) to the appropriate facility.

d. The facility shall ensure the Flash Notification Form (Attachment C, attached) is filed in Section 1 of the inmate's/offender's field file, above all other material.

e. Employees assigned to a field file with a Flash Notification Form (Attachment C, attached) shall notify the Community Outreach unit immediately when an inmate/offender walkaway, escapes, or is released.

B. Communication and Support

1. Victims who need assistance regarding the status of an inmate/offender may contact the Community Outreach unit at 405-425-2607, or community.outreach@doc.ok.gov

C. Cease and Desist Orders

When an inmate/offender is making unwanted or improper contact with a victim, the victim may request in writing that this contact cease. All such requests shall be made by contacting Community Outreach unit at 3400 N. Martin Luther King Ave. Oklahoma City, OK 73111, or by email at community.outreach@doc.ok.gov. The community outreach coordinator will communicate with the respective facility head to ensure the threats are addressed.

D. Victim Inmate/Offender Dialogue

The victim and inmate/offender may meet to discuss the impact the inmate’s/offender’s crime has made on the victim. This process may also be conducted over the phone, or video conference. Victim inmate/offender dialogue is a voluntary process and is initiated by the victim.

1. To request a victim inmate/offender dialogue, a victim or victim representative may contact the Community Outreach unit. Contact may be made on behalf of the victim by the district attorney, the Attorney General's Office, a victim advocate, or other state agencies providing services to a victim. The inmate/offender may also request a dialogue; however, if the victim has not expressed an interest, the inmate's/offender’s request will be denied. The inmate/offender will be advised of the denial of the request by the Community Outreach unit or the facility liaison.
2. If the inmate/offender agrees to the victim’s request for dialogue, the process outlined in Attachment A entitled “Process for Victim Inmate/Offender Dialogue” (attached), shall be completed. The DOC 090215A entitled “Community Outreach Unit — Inmate/Offender Consent Form” (attached) and DOC 090215B entitled “Community Outreach unit — Victim Consent Form” (attached) shall also be signed prior to beginning the process.

   a. Upon completion of the dialogue, the Community Outreach unit coordinator shall provide the “Victim Evaluation Form” (DOC 090215D, attached) to the participating victim, or may complete the evaluation via telephone call with the victim.

   b. An evaluation shall also be provided to the facility victim liaison for completion by the inmate/offender (Inmate/Offender Evaluation Form,” DOC 090215C, attached).

   c. The facility victim liaison may provide assistance to the inmate/offender in completing the evaluation, and ensure the form is submitted to the Community Outreach unit within 10 business days. This evaluation shall be used to determine the general outcome of the dialogue and to provide input from the participating parties in order to improve upon the process.

E. Apology Bank

The apology bank process is a system which allows inmates/offenders to file an apology letter for their crime victims/survivors with the agency. A list of approved letters (listed by inmate's/offender's name) shall be posted on the agency website. Letters may be requested by victims/survivors, or an advocate on the victim’s behalf, by contacting the Community Outreach Unit at 3400 N. Martin Luther King Ave. Oklahoma City, OK 73111, or by email at community.outreach@doc.ok.gov.

III. Referrals

Referrals to the Community Outreach unit may be made when crime victims, their families, inmates’ families, and/or the public require information on available resources for support of victims in the community, the custody status of inmates/offenders under the care and supervision of the agency, and questions relating to departmental policies and procedures. The Community Outreach unit will respond to all such communication and log each response/resolution within 24 business hours.

IV. Executions
A. The Community Outreach unit coordinator may work with the Attorney General’s office and the facility heads at Mabel Bassett Correctional Center and Oklahoma State Penitentiary to offer victim notification throughout the execution process.

B. When a surviving family member of a homicide victim wishes to witness the execution of the inmate, the Community Outreach unit shall work in cooperation with the Attorney General’s Office to provide support to the family member throughout the process.

V. Employees

A. Training

Facility victim liaisons shall be provided annual training to actively promote increased awareness and empathy of victims, and accountable behavior of the inmate/offender.

1. Victim awareness training will include victim confidentiality and sensitivity, as well as being responsive to victims’ concerns and suggestions. The focus will be to sensitize staff to the emotional, financial, and physical impact that crime has on individuals to increase their effectiveness in encouraging empathy and responsible behavior in inmate/offender populations.

2. Facility liaisons will be provided additional training specific to VINE and Victim Inmate/Offender Dialogue services.

3. Employees with inquiries regarding VINE should contact the Community Outreach unit at 405-425-2607.

VI. Inmate Involvement (5-ACI-1B-24)

Impact of Crime programs shall be made available to inmates where employees or volunteers are available to provide the training. Facility liaisons or approved volunteers shall be trained in the delivery of the program. The program shall utilize the “Victim Impact: Listen and Learn” curriculum.

VII. Community Involvement

A. The Community Outreach unit may provide outreach activities and presentations to various community groups, including victim advocates, crime victims, and community partner agencies related to services available through the Community Outreach unit.

1. The Community Outreach unit shall disseminate information to the public relating to services available through the agency.
2. The Community Outreach coordinator may represent the agency on planning committees of events important to the crime victim and survivor community.

VIII. Correspondence Tracking

A. The Community Outreach unit is responsible for reviewing, delegating, tracking, and memorializing all correspondence and responses related to general public concerns received by executive level offices.

1. Correspondence shall be reviewed and delegated to appropriate divisions for investigation within two business days.

2. Responses shall be gathered from divisions and provided to the general public within 15 business days unless concern is relative to the safety and security of the inmate.

3. Tracking and memorializing of all correspondence shall be maintained utilizing the agency’s confidential Smartsheet portfolio entitled “Correspondence Tracking” (Attachment D, attached).

IX. References

http://www.vinelink.com

X. Action

The community outreach coordinator is responsible for compliance with this procedure.

The chief of Strategic Engagement is responsible for the annual review and revisions.

Any exceptions to this procedure will require prior written approval from the agency director.

This procedure is effective as indicated.

Replaced: Operations Memorandum No. OP-090215 entitled "Victim Services" dated June 28, 2018

Distribution: Policy and Operations Manual
Agency Website
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