
Victim and Witness Assistance

309.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that members address victim- and witness-related issues appropriately.

309.2 POLICY

The Humboldt County Probation Department (HCPD) recognizes the difficulties faced by victims and witnesses of crime. The members of the HCPD will treat victims with compassion and provide them the services required by law.

309.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

Member responsibilities include the following:

- (a) Members preparing a pre-sentence/social study investigation are expected to include available information regarding the impact of the offense on the victim and the victim's family and any sentencing/disposition recommendations from the victim as required by California Constitution Article I § 28.
- (b) Officers who supervise a probationer requesting a transfer to another county shall provide written notice of the date, time, and place set for hearing on the motion to the victim, if a victim exists. (Cal. Rules of Court, Rule 4.530).
- (c) Members should follow county protocol as applicable regarding notice to witnesses who were threatened by the offender following the offender's arrest and each victim or next of kin of the victim of a violent offense of their right to request and receive a release notification (Penal Code § 679.03).
- (d) Officers should provide victims, or the parents or guardians of the victim if the victim is a minor, or the next of kin of the victim if the victim has died written material containing their rights pursuant to Penal Code § 1191.1 and Penal Code § 1191.2.

309.4 VICTIM SAFETY

Officers should never guarantee a victim's safety from future harm but may make practical safety suggestions to victims who express fear of future harm or retaliation. Officers should never guarantee that a person qualifies as a victim for the purpose of compensation or restitution but may direct the person to the proper written department material or available victim resources.

Officers should report all known allegations of victim intimidation to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and prosecutor as soon as practicable.

309.5 VICTIM INFORMATION

Written victim information materials should include the following:

- (a) Shelters and other community resources for victims, including domestic violence and sexual assault victims.

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- (b) An advisement that a person who was arrested may be released on bond, probation, or other forms of release and that the victim should not rely upon such status or supervision as a guarantee of safety.
- (c) A clear explanation of relevant court orders and how they can be obtained.
- (d) Information regarding available compensation for qualifying victims of crime.
- (e) VINE® information (Victim Information and Notification Everyday), including the telephone number and whether this free service is available to allow victims to check on an adult offender's custody status and to register for automatic notification when a person is released from jail.
- (f) Notice regarding U visa and T visa application processes.
- (g) Resources available for victims of identity theft.
- (h) Victims' rights provided in Penal Code § 1191.1 and Penal Code § 1191.2, including:
 - 1. Their right to attend all sentencing or disposition proceedings.
 - 2. Adequate notice of all sentencing or disposition proceedings.
 - 3. Information concerning the victim's right to civil recovery against the offender.
 - 4. The requirement that the court order restitution for the victim.
 - 5. The victim's right to receive a copy of the restitution order from the court and to enforce the restitution order as a civil judgment.
 - 6. The victim's responsibility to furnish the probation department, district attorney, and court with information relevant to any losses.
 - 7. The victim's opportunity to be compensated from the Restitution Fund if eligible. This information shall be in the form of written material prepared by the Judicial Council in consultation with the California Victim Compensation Board, shall include the relevant sections of the Penal Code, and shall be provided to each victim for whom the probation officer has a current mailing address.

309.6 WITNESSES

Officers should never guarantee a witness' safety from future harm or that the witness's identity will always remain confidential. Officers may make practical safety suggestions to witnesses who express fear of future harm or retaliation.

Officers should report all known allegations of witness intimidation to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and prosecutor as soon as practicable.