

WASHINGTON, D.C. VICTIMS' RIGHTS LAWS¹

Constitution

No sovereign constitution

Statutes

§ 23-1901 - Crime victims' bill of rights.

(a) Officers or employees of the District of Columbia engaged in the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime or the judicial process shall make their best efforts to see that victims of crime are accorded the rights described in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) A crime victim has the right to:

(1) Be treated with fairness and with respect for the victim's dignity and privacy;

(2) Be reasonably protected from the accused offender;

(3) Be notified of court proceedings;

(4) Be present at all court proceedings related to the offense, including the sentencing, and release, parole, record-sealing, and post-conviction hearings, unless the court determines that testimony by the victim would be materially affected if the victim heard other testimony or where the needs of justice otherwise require;

(5) Confer with an attorney for the prosecution in the case which does not include the authority to direct the prosecution of the case;

(6) An order of restitution from the person convicted of the criminal conduct that caused the victim's loss or injury;

(7) Information about the conviction, sentencing, imprisonment, detention, and release of the offender, and about any court order to seal the offender's criminal records;

(8) Notice of the rights provided in this chapter and under the laws of the District of Columbia; and

¹ Not intended to be exhaustive

(9) Be notified of any available victim advocate or other appropriate person to develop a safety plan and appropriate services.

(c) This section does not create a cause of action or defense in favor of any person arising out of the failure to accord to a victim the rights enumerated in subsection (b) of this section.

§ 23-1902. Notice to crime victims.

(a) The head of each department and agency of the District of Columbia engaged in the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime or in the judicial process shall designate the persons who will be responsible for identifying the victims of crime and performing the services described in subsection (c) of this section at each stage of a criminal case.

(b) At the earliest opportunity after the detection of a crime at which it may be done without interfering with an investigation, a responsible official shall identify the victim or victims of a crime.

(c)(1) At the earliest opportunity after the detection of a crime at which it may be done without interfering with an investigation, a responsible official shall inform identified victims of:

(A) Their right to receive the services described in this subsection and a listing of their bill of rights as contained in [section 23-1901](#);

(B) The name, title, business address and telephone number of the responsible official to whom the victim should address a request for assistance to obtain the services described in this subsection;

(C) The place where the victim may receive emergency medical and social services;

(D) Any restitution, crime victims' compensation, crime victims' assistance or other relief for which the victim may be eligible under this or any other law and the manner in which such relief may be obtained;

(E) The names and phone numbers of public and private victim assistance programs that are available to provide counseling, treatment, and other support to the victim;

(F) The procedure and resources available for reasonable protection of the victim; and

(G) The police report number, if available, and other identifying case information.

(2) During the investigation and prosecution of a crime, a responsible official shall provide the victim, to the extent possible, with timely notice of the:

(A) Status of the investigation of the crime, to the extent it is appropriate to inform the victim and to the extent that it will not interfere with the investigation;

(B) Arrest of a suspected offender;

- (C) Filing of criminal charges, the *nolle prosequi* of the case, or the dismissal of all charges against a suspected offender;
 - (D) Date of each scheduled court proceeding and any scheduling changes;
 - (E) Release or detention status of an offender or suspected offender;
 - (F) Acceptance of a plea of guilty, *nolo contendere* or an Alford plea, or the rendering of a verdict after trial; and
 - (G) Sentence or disposition imposed on an offender, including the date on which the offender will be eligible for parole or release.
- (d) After trial, a responsible official shall provide a victim with timely notice of the:
- (1) Scheduling of a release, parole, record-sealing, or post-conviction hearing for the offender.
 - (2) Escape, work release, furlough, or any other form of release from custody of the offender; and
 - (3) Death of the offender, if the offender dies while in custody or under supervision.
- (e) The victim or the representative of the victim appointed by the court has a continuing obligation to provide the appropriate investigative, prosecutive, judicial, or correctional agency with correct and up-to-date information on the victim's name and address or an alternate means by which the victim can be given notice.
- (f) This section does not create a cause of action or defense in favor of any person arising out of the failure of a responsible person to provide information as required by this chapter.