



Select Victims' Rights – Texas

This resource is intended to provide a base of knowledge regarding the crime victims' rights in Texas, and promising practices in ensuring compliance with and enforcement of those rights. To keep this *Guide* as user-friendly as possible in light of the breadth, complexity and evolving nature of law, the *Guide* does not include all laws. The *Guide* is intended for informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice, nor does it substitute for legal advice. For more in-depth information about the laws governing privacy, confidentiality and privilege in Texas see the companion resource: *Law Enforcement-Based Victim Services in Texas: Privacy, Privilege and Confidentiality*.

The following icons are used throughout this resource to highlight key moments for the user.





= Promising Practices: As used in this *Guide*, things identified as “promising practices” are procedures, methods or techniques, grounded in victim-centered and trauma informed research and experience, which afford victims meaningful rights in the justice system.







= Take Note: As used in this *Guide*, the “take note” indicator provides context for the law cited or discussed. For example, if a law has a particularly narrow application or does not explicitly prohibit an action the “take note” indicator is used to highlight or provide clarity around the law.






SELECT DEFINITIONS	Texas Constitutional Provisions and Statutes
<p>(1) “Close relative of a deceased victim” means a person who was the spouse of a deceased victim at the time of the victim’s death or who is a parent or adult brother, sister, or child of the deceased victim.</p> <p>(2) “Guardian of a victim” means a person who is the legal guardian of the victim, whether or not the legal relationship between the guardian and victim exists because of the age of the victim or the physical or mental incompetency of the victim.</p> <p>(2-a) “Sexual assault” means an offense under Section 21.02, 21.11(a)(1), 22.011, or 22.021, Penal Code.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.01(1)-(3).</p>


<p>(3) "Victim" means a person who is the victim of the offense of sexual assault, kidnapping, aggravated robbery, trafficking of persons, or injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual or who has suffered personal injury or death as a result of the criminal conduct of another.</p> <p> The above definitions explicitly apply to Chapter 56 of the Texas Criminal Procedures statutes, which includes §§ 56.02-56.93 unless otherwise provided.</p>	
<p>(1) "Applicant" means a person who applies to participate in the program.</p> <p>(2) "Family violence" has the meaning assigned by Section 71.004, Family Code.</p> <p>(3) "Family violence shelter center" has the meaning assigned by Section 51.002, Human Resources Code.</p> <p>(3-a) "Household" has the meaning assigned by Section 71.005, Family Code.</p> <p>(4) "Mail" means first class mail and any mail sent by a government agency. The term does not include a package, regardless of size or type of mailing.</p> <p>(5) "Participant" means an applicant who is certified for participation in the program.</p> <p>(6) "Program" means the address confidentiality program created under this subchapter.</p> <p>(6-a) "Sexual abuse" means any conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 21.02, 21.11, or 25.02, Penal Code.</p> <p>(6-b) "Sexual assault" means any conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 22.011 or 22.021, Penal Code.</p> <p>(6-c) "Stalking" means any conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 42.072, Penal Code.</p> <p>(7) "Trafficking of persons" means any conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 20A.02, 20A.03, 43.03, 43.04, 43.05, 43.25, 43.251, or 43.26, Penal Code, and that results in a person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) engaging in forced labor or services; or (B) otherwise becoming a victim of the offense. 	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.81(1)-(7).</p>



	<p>The above definitions explicitly apply to Chapter 56 of the Texas Criminal Procedures statutes, subchapter (C) regarding the address confidentiality program.</p>	
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<p>SELECT CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS</p>	<p>Texas Constitutional Provisions and Statutes</p>
<p>Law Enforcement Agencies And Prosecutors Shall Ensure Victims Are Afforded Their Rights.</p> <p>The office of the attorney representing the state, and the sheriff, police, and other law enforcement agencies shall ensure to the extent practicable that a victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is afforded the rights granted by this article and Article 56.021 and, on request, an explanation of those rights.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights. Victims should be informed that they are entitled to an explanation of their rights that includes all necessary information (e.g. how and when may they effectuate the relevant rights and what resources exist to assist them in doing so).</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(c).</p>
<p>Victim Standing To Enforce Victims’ Rights.</p> <p>A victim or guardian or legal representative of a victim has standing to enforce the rights enumerated in this section but does not have standing to participate as a party in a criminal proceeding or to contest the disposition of any charge.</p> <p> A promising practice is when notifying victims that they have standing to enforce their rights in court, to let them know that they may do so personally or with the assistance of an attorney. This notice should include an explanation of the different roles of a prosecuting attorney vs. an attorney hired by the victim to represent their interests and assert their rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(e).</p>



<p>Prosecutor Standing To Enforce Victims' Rights.</p> <p>The state, through its prosecuting attorney, has the right to enforce the rights of crime victims.</p> <p> The prosecutor's standing to enforce victims' rights does not deny or diminish victims' standing to enforce their rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(d).</p>
<p>Treated With Fairness And With Respect For The Victim's Dignity And Privacy.</p> <p>A crime victim has the right to be treated with fairness and with respect for the victim's dignity and privacy throughout the criminal justice process.</p>	<p>Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(a)(1).</p>
<p>Protection From Harm And Threats.</p> <p>A crime victim has the right to be reasonably protected from the accused throughout the criminal justice process.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to receive from law enforcement agencies adequate protection from harm and threats of harm arising from cooperation with prosecution efforts.</p>	<p>Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(a)(2); Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(1).</p>
<p>Notice Of Court Proceedings.</p> <p>On the request of a crime victim, the crime victim has the right to notification of court proceedings.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must "request" the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim's request to exercise rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(b)(1).</p>
<p>Present At All Public Court Proceedings.</p> <p>On the request of a crime victim, the crime victim has the right to be present at all public court proceedings related to the offense, unless the victim is to</p>	<p>Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(b)(2);</p>




<p>testify and the court determines that the victim’s testimony would be materially affected if the victim hears other testimony at the trial.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the right to be present at all public court proceedings related to the offense, subject to the approval of the judge in the case.</p> <p> The only constraint placed on the victim’s constitutional right to be present is if the court finds that the victim’s testimony would be materially affected if the victim hears other testimony at the trial. Even if the court so concludes, consider discussing with the prosecutor the possibility of the victim testifying first to best ensure the victim’s right to be present during the entirety of the trial.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(b).</p>
<p>Conferral.</p> <p>On the request of a crime victim, the crime victim has the right to confer with a representative of the prosecutor’s office.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(b)(3).</p>
<p>Restitution.</p> <p>On the request of a crime victim, the crime victim has the right to restitution.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p> <p> Victims should be informed that they are entitled to restitution upon the conviction of defendant for losses caused by defendant’s criminal conduct. Assisting victims with the documentation of their losses—including</p>	<p>Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(b)(4).</p>


<p>anticipated future expenses—is recommended from the earliest moments of the case.</p>	
<p>Information About The Conviction, Sentence, Imprisonment, And Release Of The Accused.</p> <p>On the request of a crime victim, the crime victim has the right to information about the conviction, sentence, imprisonment, and release of the accused.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(b)(5).</p>
<p>At Initial Contact Or At The Earliest Possible Time Thereafter Law Enforcement Must Provide Written Notice To Victims About Services, Compensation, Referrals To A Sexual Assault Program, And Contact Information For Victim Assistance.</p> <p>(a) At the initial contact or at the earliest possible time after the initial contact between the victim of a reported crime and the law enforcement agency having the responsibility for investigating that crime, that agency shall provide the victim a written notice containing:</p> <p>(1) information about the availability of emergency and medical services, if applicable;</p> <p>(2) notice that the victim has the right to receive information regarding compensation to victims of crime as provided by Subchapter B, Chapter 56, including information about:</p> <p>(A) the costs that may be compensated under that Act and the amount of compensation, eligibility for compensation, and procedures for application for compensation under that Act;</p> <p>(B) the payment for a medical examination for a victim of a sexual assault under Article 56.06 of this code; and</p> <p>(C) referral to available social service agencies that may offer additional assistance;</p> <p>(3) the name, address, and phone number of the law enforcement agency’s victim assistance liaison;</p> <p>(4) the address, phone number, and name of the crime victim assistance coordinator of the office of the attorney representing the state;</p> <p>(5) the following statement: “You may call the law enforcement agency’s telephone number for the status of the case and information about victims’ rights”; and</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.07(a)-(b).</p>

<p>(6) the rights of crime victims under Articles 56.02 and 56.021.</p> <p>(b) At the same time a law enforcement agency provides notice under Subsection (a), the agency shall provide, if the agency possesses the relevant information, a referral to a sexual assault program as defined by Section 420.003, Government Code, and a written description of the services provided by that program. A sexual assault program may provide a written description of its services to a law enforcement agency.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure defining “earliest possible time after the initial contact” to ensure that law enforcement provide victims required information promptly. Consideration should be given to providing written notice in the primary language of the victim, as well as in a form accessible to those with vision impairment.</p>	
<p>The Victim’s Safety Considered As Part Of Bail Determination.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to have the magistrate take the safety of the victim or his family into consideration as an element in fixing the amount of bail for the accused.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(2).</p>
<p>Information About Court Proceedings And Decisions.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right, if requested, to be informed:</p> <p>(A) by the attorney representing the state of relevant court proceedings, including appellate proceedings, and to be informed if those proceedings have been canceled or rescheduled prior to the event; and</p> <p>(B) by an appellate court of decisions of the court, after the decisions are entered but before the decisions are made public.</p> <p> Different victims’ rights are required to be afforded by different actors within the system. In this jurisdiction, the state’s attorney is responsible for providing notice of court proceedings, including appellate proceedings, and to give advance notice when proceedings are canceled or rescheduled. Appellate courts are tasked with providing advance notice of decisions.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(3)(A),(B).</p>

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<p>Information About Criminal Procedures.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to be informed, when requested, by a peace officer concerning the defendant’s right to bail and the procedures in criminal investigations and by the district attorney’s office concerning the general procedures in the criminal justice system, including general procedures in guilty plea negotiations and arrangements, restitution, and the appeals and parole process.</p>  <p>A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(4).</p>
<p>Provide Information To Probation Department When Conducting Presentence Investigation.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to provide pertinent information to a probation department conducting a presentencing investigation concerning the impact of the offense on the victim and his family by testimony, written statement, or any other manner prior to any sentencing of the offender.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(5).</p>
<p>Information About Compensation.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to receive information regarding compensation to victims of crime as provided by Subchapter B, including information related to the costs that may be compensated under that subchapter and the amount of</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(6).</p>

<p>compensation, eligibility for compensation, and procedures for application for compensation under that subchapter, the payment for a medical examination under Article 56.06 for a victim of a sexual assault, and when requested, to referral to available social service agencies that may offer additional assistance.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p>	
<p>Notice Of, Information About, And Participation In Parole Procedures And Process And Notice Of Release.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to be informed, upon request, of parole procedures, to participate in the parole process, to be notified, if requested, of parole proceedings concerning a defendant in the victim’s case, to provide to the Board of Pardons and Paroles for inclusion in the defendant’s file information to be considered by the board prior to the parole of any defendant convicted of any crime subject to this subchapter, and to be notified, if requested, of the defendant’s release.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(7).</p>
<p>Secure And Separate Waiting Area.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to be provided with a waiting area, separate or secure from other witnesses, including the offender and relatives of the offender, before testifying in any proceeding concerning the offender; if a separate waiting area is not available, other safeguards should be taken to minimize the victim’s contact with the offender and the offender’s relatives and witnesses, before and during court proceedings.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(8).</p>

<p>Prompt Return Of Property.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to prompt return of any property of the victim that is held by a law enforcement agency or the attorney for the state as evidence when the property is no longer required for that purpose.</p> <p> It is a promising practice to have a policy and procedure in place that clearly defines what “prompt” means in the context of the victim’s right to return of property. Instructions should be ready and available to provide to victims, explaining how they may promptly obtain their property, in addition to the name of a person they may contact to check the status of the return.</p> <p> If a defendant files a request for return of property, victims and the prosecution must be notified immediately to ensure that they are on notice and have an opportunity to be meaningfully heard on the matter.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(9).</p>
<p>Employer Intercession.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to have the attorney for the state notify the employer of the victim, if requested, of the necessity of the victim’s cooperation and testimony in a proceeding that may necessitate the absence of the victim from work for good cause.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(10).</p>
<p>Victim-Offender Mediation.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to request victim-offender mediation coordinated by the victim services division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(11).</p>


 <p>A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p>	
<p>Victim Impact Statements.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>The right to be informed of the uses of a victim impact statement and the statement’s purpose in the criminal justice system, to complete the victim impact statement, and to have the victim impact statement considered:</p> <p>(A) by the attorney representing the state and the judge before sentencing or before a plea bargain agreement is accepted; and</p> <p>(B) by the Board of Pardons and Paroles before an inmate is released on parole.</p> <p>(a) The Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse, with the participation of the community justice assistance division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and the Board of Pardons and Paroles, shall develop a form to be used by law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and other participants in the criminal justice system to record the impact of an offense on a victim of the offense, guardian of a victim, or a close relative of a deceased victim and to provide the agencies, prosecutors, and participants with information needed to contact the victim, guardian, or relative if needed at any stage of a prosecution of a person charged with the offense. The Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse, with the participation of the community justice assistance division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and the Board of Pardons and Paroles, shall also develop a victims’ information booklet that provides a general explanation of the criminal justice system to victims of an offense, guardians of victims, and relatives of deceased victims.</p> <p>(b) The victim impact statement must be in a form designed to inform a victim, guardian of a victim, or a close relative of a deceased victim with a clear statement of rights provided by Articles 56.02 and 56.021 and to collect the following information:</p> <p>(1) the name of the victim of the offense or, if the victim has a legal guardian or is deceased, the name of a guardian or close relative of the victim;</p> <p>(2) the address and telephone number of the victim, guardian, or relative through which the victim, guardian of a victim, or a close relative of a deceased victim, may be contacted;</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(12); Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.03.</p>


- (3) a statement of economic loss suffered by the victim, guardian, or relative as a result of the offense;
- (4) a statement of any physical or psychological injury suffered by the victim, guardian, or relative as a result of the offense, as described by the victim, guardian, relative, or by a physician or counselor;
- (5) a statement of any psychological services requested as a result of the offense;
- (6) a statement of any change in the victim's, guardian's, or relative's personal welfare or familial relationship as a result of the offense;
- (7) a statement as to whether or not the victim, guardian, or relative wishes to be notified in the future of any parole hearing for the defendant and an explanation as to the procedures by which the victim, guardian, or relative may obtain information concerning the release of the defendant from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice; and
- (8) any other information, other than facts related to the commission of the offense, related to the impact of the offense on the victim, guardian, or relative.

(c) The victim assistance coordinator, designated in Article 56.04(a) of this code, shall send to a victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim a victim impact statement, a victims' information booklet, and an application for compensation under Subchapter B, Chapter 56,2 along with an offer to assist in completing those forms on request. The victim assistance coordinator, on request, shall explain the possible use and consideration of the victim impact statement at sentencing and future parole hearing of the offender.

(d) If a victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim states on the victim impact statement that he wishes to be notified of parole proceedings, the victim, guardian, or relative is responsible for notifying the Board of Pardons and Paroles of any change of address.

(e) Prior to the imposition of a sentence by the court in a criminal case, the court shall, as applicable in the case, inquire as to whether a victim impact statement has been returned to the attorney representing the state and, if a victim impact statement has been returned to the attorney representing the state, consider the information provided in the statement. Before sentencing the defendant, the court shall permit the defendant or the defendant's counsel a reasonable time to read the statement, excluding the victim's name, address, and telephone number, comment on the statement, and, with the approval of the court, introduce testimony or other information alleging a factual inaccuracy in the statement. If the court sentences the defendant to a term of community supervision, the attorney representing the state shall forward any victim's impact statement received in the case to the community supervision and corrections department supervising the defendant.

<p>(f) The court may not inspect a victim impact statement until after a finding of guilt or until deferred adjudication³ is ordered and the contents of the statement may not be disclosed to any person unless:</p> <p>(1) the defendant pleads guilty or nolo contendere or is convicted of the offense; or</p> <p>(2) the defendant in writing authorizes the court to inspect the statement.</p> <p>(g) A victim impact statement is subject to discovery under Article 39.14 of this code before the testimony of the victim is taken only if the court determines that the statement contains exculpatory material.</p> <p>(h) Not later than December 1 of each odd-numbered year, the Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse, with the participation of the community justice assistance division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and the Board of Pardons and Paroles, shall update the victim impact statement form and any other information provided by the commission to victims, guardians of victims, and relatives of deceased victims, if necessary, to reflect changes in law relating to criminal justice and the rights of victims and guardians and relatives of victims.</p> <p>(i) In addition to the information described by Subsections (b)(1)-(8), the victim impact statement must be in a form designed to collect information on whether, if the victim is a child, there is an existing court order granting to the defendant possession of or access to the victim. If information collected under this subsection indicates the defendant is granted access or possession under court order and the defendant is subsequently confined by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice as a result of the commission of the offense, the victim services office of the department shall contact the court issuing the order before the defendant is released from the department on parole or mandatory supervision.</p> <p> A promising practice is to be familiar with the acceptable formats for victim impact statements so that victims can be informed about all of their options. Depending on your jurisdiction's law, victims may choose to: (1) read or speak their impact statement aloud at the sentencing proceeding, or have another person do it for them; (2) submit a written victim impact statement to the court in advance of sentencing; (3) provide an impact statement using technology to facilitate remote attendance; and/or (4) play or submit an impact statement that was created using audio and video technology.</p>	
<p>Privacy: Victim's Address And Phone Number To Be Kept Out Of The Court File.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.09.</p>

<p>As far as reasonably practical, the address of the victim may not be a part of the court file except as necessary to identify the place of the crime. The phone number of the victim may not be a part of the court file.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure about victim privacy in the context of police reports and court files. In addition to omitting the victim's address and phone number from police reports, it is important to know if law enforcement uses the victim's full name in reports. If the answer is yes, consider alternatives that better protect victim privacy, for example the use of initials.</p>	
<p>No Requirement To Attend Depositions In A Correctional Facility.</p> <p>Unless absolutely necessary, victims or witnesses who are not incarcerated may not be required to attend depositions in a correctional facility.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.10.</p>
<p>Impact Of A Continuance On Certain Victims.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>For a victim of an assault or sexual assault who is younger than 17 years of age or whose case involves family violence, as defined by Section 71.004, Family Code, the right to have the court consider the impact on the victim of a continuance requested by the defendant; if requested by the attorney representing the state or by counsel for the defendant, the court shall state on the record the reason for granting or denying the continuance.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(13).</p>
<p>Defense-Initiated Victim Outreach in Capital Felony Cases.</p> <p>A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>If the offense is a capital felony, the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) receive by mail from the court a written explanation of defense-initiated victim outreach if the court has authorized expenditures for a defense-initiated victim outreach specialist; (B) not be contacted by the victim outreach specialist unless the victim, guardian, or relative has consented to the contact by providing a written notice to the court; and (C) designate a victim service provider to receive all communications from a victim outreach specialist acting on behalf of any person. 	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.02(a)(14).</p>

<p>Additional Rights For Victims Of Sexual Assault Or Abuse, Stalking Or Trafficking.</p> <p>(a) In addition to the rights enumerated in Article 56.02, if the offense is a sexual assault, the victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:</p> <p>(1) if requested, the right to a disclosure of information regarding any evidence that was collected during the investigation of the offense, unless disclosing the information would interfere with the investigation or prosecution of the offense, in which event the victim, guardian, or relative shall be informed of the estimated date on which that information is expected to be disclosed;</p> <p>(2) if requested, the right to a disclosure of information regarding the status of any analysis being performed of any evidence that was collected during the investigation of the offense;</p> <p>(3) if requested, the right to be notified:</p> <p>(A) at the time a request is submitted to a crime laboratory to process and analyze any evidence that was collected during the investigation of the offense;</p> <p>(B) at the time of the submission of a request to compare any biological evidence collected during the investigation of the offense with DNA profiles maintained in a state or federal DNA database; and</p> <p>(C) of the results of the comparison described by Paragraph (B), unless disclosing the results would interfere with the investigation or prosecution of the offense, in which event the victim, guardian, or relative shall be informed of the estimated date on which those results are expected to be disclosed;</p> <p>(4) if requested, the right to counseling regarding acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection;</p> <p>(5) for the victim of the offense, testing for acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, antibodies to HIV, or infection with any other probable causative agent of AIDS; and</p> <p>(6) to the extent provided by Articles 56.06 and 56.065, for the victim of the offense, the right to a forensic medical examination if, within 96 hours of the offense, the offense is reported to a law enforcement agency or a forensic medical examination is otherwise conducted at a health care facility.</p> <p>(b) A victim, guardian, or relative who requests to be notified under Subsection (a)(3) must provide a current address and phone number to the attorney representing the state and the law enforcement agency that is investigating the offense. The victim, guardian, or relative must inform the</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.021(a)-(d).</p>
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attorney representing the state and the law enforcement agency of any change in the address or phone number.

(c) A victim, guardian, or relative may designate a person, including an entity that provides services to victims of sexual assault, to receive any notice requested under Subsection (a)(3).

(d) This subsection applies only to a victim of an offense under Section 20A.02, 20A.03, 21.02, 21.11, 22.011, 22.021, 42.072, or 43.05, Penal Code. In addition to the rights enumerated in Article 56.02 and, if applicable, Subsection (a) of this article, a victim described by this subsection or a parent or guardian of the victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:

(1) the right to request that the attorney representing the state, subject to the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, file an application for a protective order under Article 7A.01 on behalf of the victim;

(2) the right to be informed:

(A) that the victim or the victim's parent or guardian, as applicable, may file an application for a protective order under Article 7A.01;

(B) of the court in which the application for a protective order may be filed; and


(C) that, on request of the victim or of the victim's parent or guardian, as applicable, and subject to the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, the attorney representing the state may file the application for a protective order;

(3) if the victim or the victim's parent or guardian, as applicable, is present when the defendant is convicted or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision, the right to be given by the court the information described by Subdivision (2) and, if the court has jurisdiction over applications for protective orders that are filed under Article 7A.01, the right to file an application for a protective order immediately following the defendant's conviction or placement on deferred adjudication community supervision; and

(4) if the victim or the victim's parent or guardian, as applicable, is not present when the defendant is convicted or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision, the right to be given by the attorney representing the state the information described by Subdivision (2).



A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must "request" the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim's request to exercise rights.

 Consideration should be given to the adoption of a policy and procedure that clarifies how notice will be given about biological evidence to victims in active and cold cases, and post-conviction.	
<p>Duties Of The Victim Assistance Coordinator And Crime Victim Liaison.</p> <p>(a) The district attorney, criminal district attorney, or county attorney who prosecutes criminal cases shall designate a person to serve as victim assistance coordinator in that jurisdiction.</p> <p>(b) The duty of the victim assistance coordinator is to ensure that a victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is afforded the rights granted victims, guardians, and relatives by Articles 56.02 and 56.021. The victim assistance coordinator shall work closely with appropriate law enforcement agencies, prosecuting attorneys, the Board of Pardons and Paroles, and the judiciary in carrying out that duty.</p> <p>(c) Each local law enforcement agency shall designate one person to serve as the agency’s crime victim liaison. Each agency shall consult with the victim assistance coordinator in the office of the attorney representing the state to determine the most effective manner in which the crime victim liaison can perform the duties imposed on the crime victim liaison under this article.</p> <p>(d) The duty of the crime victim liaison is to ensure that a victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is afforded the rights granted victims, guardians, or close relatives of deceased victims by Subdivisions (4), (6), and (9) of Article 56.02(a) of this code.</p> <p>(d-1) The victim services division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, in consultation with the Board of Pardons and Paroles, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors’ offices, and other participants in the criminal justice system, shall develop recommendations to ensure that completed victim impact statements are submitted to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice as provided by this chapter.</p> <p>(e) On inquiry by the court, the attorney representing the state shall make available a copy of a victim impact statement for consideration by the court sentencing the defendant. If the court sentences the defendant to imprisonment in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the court shall attach the copy of the victim impact statement to the commitment papers.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.04(a)-(f).</p>

<p>(f) The commissioners court may approve a program in which the crime victim liaison or victim assistance coordinator may offer not more than 10 hours of post-investigation or posttrial psychological counseling for a person who serves as a grand juror, alternate grand juror, juror, or alternate juror in a grand jury investigation or criminal trial involving graphic evidence or testimony and who requests the post-investigation or posttrial psychological counseling not later than the 180th day after the date on which the grand jury or jury is dismissed. The crime victim liaison or victim assistance coordinator may provide the counseling using a provider that assists local criminal justice agencies in providing similar services to victims.</p>	
<p>Presence Of Advocate During Forensic Medical Examination.</p> <p>(a) Before conducting a forensic medical examination of a person who consents to such an examination for the collection of evidence for an alleged sexual assault, the physician or other medical services personnel conducting the examination shall offer the person the opportunity to have an advocate from a sexual assault program as defined by Section 420.003, Government Code, who has completed a sexual assault training program described by Section 420.011(b), Government Code, present with the person during the examination, if the advocate is available at the time of the examination.</p> <p>(b) The advocate may only provide the injured person with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) counseling and other support services; and (2) information regarding the rights of crime victims under Articles 56.02 and 56.021. <p>(c) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), the advocate and the sexual assault program providing the advocate may not delay or otherwise impede the screening or stabilization of an emergency medical condition.</p> <p>(d) The sexual assault program providing the advocate shall pay all costs associated with providing the advocate.</p> <p>(e) Any individual or entity, including a health care facility, that provides an advocate with access to a person consenting to an examination under Subsection (a) is not subject to civil or criminal liability for providing that access. In this subsection, "health care facility" includes a hospital licensed under Chapter 241, Health and Safety Code.</p> <p>(f) If a person alleging to have sustained injuries as the victim of a sexual assault was confined in a penal institution, as defined by Section 1.07, Penal Code, at the time of the alleged assault, the penal institution shall provide, at the person's request, a representative to be present with the person at any</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.045.</p>

<p>forensic medical examination conducted for the purpose of collecting and preserving evidence related to the investigation or prosecution of the alleged assault. The representative may only provide the injured person with counseling and other support services and with information regarding the rights of crime victims under Articles 56.02 and 56.021 and may not delay or otherwise impede the screening or stabilization of an emergency medical condition. The representative must be approved by the penal institution and must be a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) psychologist; (2) sociologist; (3) chaplain; (4) social worker; (5) case manager; or (6) volunteer who has completed a sexual assault training program described by Section 420.011(b), Government Code. 	
<p>Forensic Medical Examinations When The Sexual Assault Victim Has Reported The Assault—Costs.</p> <p>(a) If a sexual assault is reported to a law enforcement agency within 96 hours of the assault, the law enforcement agency, with the consent of the victim, a person authorized to act on behalf of the victim, or an employee of the Department of Family and Protective Services, shall request a forensic medical examination of the victim of the alleged assault for use in the investigation or prosecution of the offense. A law enforcement agency may decline to request a forensic medical examination under this subsection only if the person reporting the sexual assault has made one or more false reports of sexual assault to any law enforcement agency and if there is no other evidence to corroborate the current allegations of sexual assault.</p> <p>(b) If a sexual assault is not reported within the period described by Subsection (a), on receiving the consent described by that subsection the law enforcement agency may request a forensic medical examination of a victim of an alleged sexual assault as considered appropriate by the agency.</p> <p>(c) A law enforcement agency that requests a forensic medical examination of a victim of an alleged sexual assault for use in the investigation or prosecution of the offense shall pay all costs of the examination. On application to the attorney general, the law enforcement agency is entitled to be reimbursed for the reasonable costs of that examination if the examination was performed by a physician or by a sexual assault examiner or sexual assault nurse examiner, as defined by Section 420.003, Government Code.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.06(a)-(f).</p>

<p>(d) A law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney's office may pay all costs related to the testimony of a licensed health care professional in a criminal proceeding regarding the results of the forensic medical examination or manner in which it was performed.</p> <p>(e) This article does not require a law enforcement agency to pay any costs of treatment for injuries.</p> <p>(f) The attorney general may make a payment to or on behalf of an individual for the reasonable costs incurred for medical care provided in accordance with Section 323.004, Health and Safety Code.</p>	
<p>Forensic Medical Examinations When The Sexual Assault Victim Has Not Reported The Assault—Costs.</p> <p>(a) In this article:</p> <p>(1) "Crime laboratory" has the meaning assigned by Article 38.35.</p> <p>(2) "Department" means the Department of Public Safety.</p> <p>(3) "Sexual assault examiner" and "sexual assault nurse examiner" have the meanings assigned by Section 420.003, Government Code.</p> <p>(b) This article applies to the following health care facilities that provide diagnosis or treatment services to victims of sexual assault:</p> <p>(1) a general or special hospital licensed under Chapter 241, Health and Safety Code;</p> <p>(2) a general or special hospital owned by this state;</p> <p>(3) an outpatient clinic; and</p> <p>(4) a private physician's office.</p> <p>(c) In accordance with Subchapter B, Chapter 420, Government Code, and except as provided by Subsection (e), a health care facility shall conduct a forensic medical examination of the victim of an alleged sexual assault if:</p> <p>(1) the victim arrives at the facility within 96 hours after the assault occurred;</p> <p>(2) the victim consents to the examination; and</p> <p>(3) at the time of the examination the victim has not reported the assault to a law enforcement agency.</p> <p>(d) The department shall pay the appropriate fees, as set by attorney general rule, for the forensic portion of the medical examination and for the evidence collection kit if a physician, sexual assault examiner, or sexual assault nurse examiner conducts the forensic portion of the examination within 96 hours after the alleged sexual assault occurred. The attorney general shall reimburse the department for fees paid under this subsection.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.065(a)-(k).</p>

<p>(e) If a health care facility does not provide diagnosis or treatment services to victims of sexual assault, the facility shall refer a victim seeking a forensic medical examination under Subsection (c) to a health care facility that provides services to those victims.</p> <p>(f) The department, consistent with Chapter 420, Government Code, may develop procedures regarding the submission or collection of additional evidence of the alleged sexual assault other than through an examination as described by this article.</p> <p>(g) The department, consistent with Chapter 420, Government Code, shall develop procedures for the transfer and preservation of evidence collected under this article to a crime laboratory or other suitable location designated by the public safety director of the department. The receiving entity shall preserve the evidence until the earlier of:</p> <p>(1) the second anniversary of the date the evidence was collected; or</p> <p>(2) the date on which written consent to release the evidence is obtained as provided by Section 420.0735, Government Code.</p> <p>(h) The victim may not be required to:</p> <p>(1) participate in the investigation or prosecution of an offense as a condition of receiving a forensic medical examination under this article; or</p> <p>(2) pay for the forensic portion of the medical examination or for the evidence collection kit.</p> <p>(i) The attorney general and the department each shall adopt rules as necessary to implement this article.</p> <p>(j) A communication or record that contains identifying information regarding a person who receives a forensic medical examination under this article and that is created by, provided to, or in the control or possession of the department is confidential for purposes of Section 552.101, Government Code. In this subsection, "identifying information" includes:</p> <p>(1) information revealing the identity, personal history, or background of the person; or</p> <p>(2) information concerning the victimization of the person.</p> <p>(k) The attorney general may make a payment to or on behalf of an individual for the reasonable costs incurred for medical care provided in accordance with Section 323.004, Health and Safety Code.</p>	
<p>Mandatory Written Notice Of Rights By Prosecutors.</p> <p>(a) Not later than the 10th day after the date that an indictment or information is returned against a defendant for an offense, the attorney</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.08(a)-(e).</p>

representing the state shall give to each victim of the offense a written notice containing:

- (1) a brief general statement of each procedural stage in the processing of a criminal case, including bail, plea bargaining, parole restitution, and appeal;
- (2) notification of the rights and procedures under this chapter;
- (3) suggested steps the victim may take if the victim is subjected to threats or intimidation;
- (4) notification of the right to receive information regarding compensation to victims of crime as provided by Subchapter B, including information about:
 - (A) the costs that may be compensated under Subchapter B, eligibility for compensation, and procedures for application for compensation under Subchapter B of this chapter;
 - (B) the payment for a medical examination for a victim of a sexual assault under Article 56.06; and
 - (C) referral to available social service agencies that may offer additional assistance;
- (5) the name, address, and phone number of the local victim assistance coordinator;
- (6) the case number and assigned court for the case;
- (7) the right to file a victim impact statement with the office of the attorney representing the state and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice; and
- (8) notification of the right of a victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim, as defined by Section 508.117, Government Code, to appear in person before a member of the Board of Pardons and Paroles as provided by Section 508.153, Government Code.


(b) If requested by the victim, the attorney representing the state, as far as reasonably practical, shall give to the victim notice of any scheduled court proceedings, changes in that schedule, and the filing of a request for continuance of a trial setting.

(b-1) The attorney representing the state, as far as reasonably practical, shall give to the victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim notice of the existence and terms of any plea bargain agreement to be presented to the court.

(c) A victim who receives a notice under Subsection (a) and who chooses to receive other notice under law about the same case must keep the following persons informed of the victim's current address and phone number:

- (1) the attorney representing the state; and
- (2) the Texas Department of Criminal Justice if after sentencing the defendant is confined in the department.

(d) An attorney representing the state who receives information concerning a victim's current address and phone number shall immediately provide that

<p>information to the community supervision and corrections department supervising the defendant, if the defendant is placed on community supervision.</p> <p>(e) The brief general statement describing the plea bargaining stage in a criminal trial required by Subsection (a)(1) shall include a statement that:</p> <p>(1) the victim impact statement provided by the victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim will be considered by the attorney representing the state in entering into the plea bargain agreement; and</p> <p>(2) the judge before accepting the plea bargain agreement is required under Article 26.13(e) to ask:</p> <p>(A) whether a victim impact statement has been returned to the attorney;</p> <p>(B) if a victim impact statement has been returned, for a copy of the statement; and</p> <p>(C) whether the attorney representing the state has given the victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim notice of the existence and terms of the plea bargain agreement.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must “request” the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim’s request to exercise rights.</p>	
<p>Notice Of Release Or Escape.</p> <p>(a) The Texas Department of Criminal Justice or the sheriff, whichever has custody of the defendant in the case of a felony, or the sheriff in the case of a misdemeanor, shall notify the victim of the offense or a witness who testified against the defendant at the trial for the offense, other than a witness who testified in the course and scope of the witness’s official or professional duties, whenever a defendant convicted of an offense described by Subsection (c):</p> <p>(1) completes the defendant’s sentence and is released; or</p> <p>(2) escapes from a correctional facility.</p> <p>(a-1) The Texas Department of Criminal Justice, in the case of an inmate released on parole or to mandatory supervision following a term of imprisonment for an offense described by Subsection (c), or a community supervision and corrections department supervising a defendant, in the case of a defendant convicted of an offense described by Subsection (c) and subsequently released on community supervision, shall notify a victim or witness described by Subsection (a) whenever the inmate or defendant, if subject to electronic monitoring as a condition of release, ceases to be electronically monitored.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.11(a)-(h).</p>

(b) If the Texas Department of Criminal Justice is required by Subsection (a) to give notice to a victim or witness, the department shall also give notice to local law enforcement officials in the county in which the victim or witness resides.

(c) This article applies to a defendant convicted of:

- (1) an offense under Title 5, Penal Code, that is punishable as a felony;
- (2) an offense described by Section 508.187(a), Government Code, other than an offense described by Subdivision (1); or
- (3) an offense involving family violence, stalking, or violation of a protective order or magistrate's order.



(d) It is the responsibility of a victim or witness desiring notification of the defendant's release to provide the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the sheriff, or the community supervision and corrections department supervising the defendant, as appropriate, with the e-mail address, mailing address, and telephone number of the victim, witness, or other person through whom the victim or witness may be contacted and to notify the appropriate department or the sheriff of any change of address or telephone number of the victim, witness, or other person. Information obtained and maintained by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, a sheriff, or a community supervision and corrections department under this subsection is privileged and confidential.



(e) The Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the sheriff, or the community supervision and corrections department supervising the defendant, as appropriate:

- (1) shall make a reasonable attempt to give any notice required by Subsection (a) or (a-1):
 - (A) not later than the 30th day before the date the defendant completes the sentence and is released or ceases to be electronically monitored as a condition of release; or
 - (B) immediately if the defendant escapes from the correctional facility; and
- (2) may give any notice required by Subsection (a) or (a-1) by e-mail, if possible.

(f) An attempt by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the sheriff, or the community supervision and corrections department supervising the defendant to give notice to a victim or witness at the victim's or witness's last known mailing address or, if notice via e-mail is possible, last known e-mail address, as shown on the records of the appropriate department or agency, constitutes a reasonable attempt to give notice under this article.

(g) Not later than immediately following the conviction of a defendant described by Subsection (c), the attorney who represented the state in the prosecution of the case shall notify in writing a victim or witness described

<p>by Subsection (a) of the victim's or witness's right to receive notice under this article.</p> <p>(h) In this article:</p> <p>(1) "Correctional facility" has the meaning assigned by Section 1.07, Penal Code.</p> <p>(2) "Family violence" has the meaning assigned by Section 71.004, Family Code.</p> <p> Information obtained and maintained by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, a sheriff, or a community supervision and corrections department under this subsection is privileged and confidential.</p> <p> Victims who wish to be notified of defendant's release or escape should be informed that they must provide contact information to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the sheriff, or the community supervision and corrections department supervising the defendant, as appropriate. They should also be reminded that any changes in the contact information—due to a move or otherwise—would need to be reported to the relevant agency as well.</p>	
<p>Notice of Escape or Transfer.</p> <p>(a) The Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall immediately notify the victim of an offense, the victim's guardian, or the victim's close relative, if the victim is deceased, if the victim, victim's guardian, or victim's close relative has notified the department as provided by Subsection (b), whenever the defendant:</p> <p>(1) escapes from a facility operated by the department for the imprisonment of individuals convicted of felonies other than state jail felonies; or</p> <p>(2) is transferred from the custody of a facility operated by the department for the imprisonment of individuals convicted of felonies other than state jail felonies to the custody of a peace officer under a writ of attachment or a bench warrant.</p> <p>(a-1) The Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall immediately notify a witness who testified against a defendant at the trial for the offense for which the defendant is incarcerated, the witness's guardian, or the witness's close relative, if the witness is deceased, if the witness, witness's guardian, or witness's close relative has notified the department as provided by Subsection (b), whenever the defendant:</p> <p>(1) escapes from a facility operated by the department for the imprisonment of individuals convicted of felonies other than state jail felonies; or</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.12(a)-(d).</p>

<p>(2) is transferred from the custody of a facility operated by the department for the imprisonment of individuals convicted of felonies other than state jail felonies to the custody of a peace officer under a writ of attachment or a bench warrant.</p> <p>(b) It is the responsibility of the victim, witness, guardian, or close relative desiring notification of a defendant's escape or transfer from custody under a writ of attachment or bench warrant to notify the Texas Department of Criminal Justice of the desire for notification and any change of address.</p> <p>(c) In providing notice under Subsection (a)(2) or (a-1)(2), the department shall include the name, address, and telephone number of the peace officer receiving the defendant into custody. On returning the defendant to the custody of the department, the victim services division of the department shall notify the victim, witness, guardian, or close relative, as applicable, of that fact.</p> <p>(d) In this article, "witness's close relative" means a person who was the spouse of the deceased witness at the time of the witness's death or who is a parent or adult brother, sister, or child of the deceased witness.</p> <p> Victims who wish to be notified of defendant's escape or transfer should be informed that they must provide contact information to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. They should also be reminded that any changes in the contact information—due to a move or otherwise—would need to be reported to the relevant agency as well.</p>	
<p>Victim-Offender Mediation.</p> <p>The victim services division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall:</p> <p>(1) train volunteers to act as mediators between victims, guardians of victims, and close relatives of deceased victims and offenders whose criminal conduct caused bodily injury or death to victims; and</p> <p>(2) provide mediation services through referral of a trained volunteer, if requested by a victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim.</p> <p> A promising practice is to have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that victims are aware at the earliest stages of a case that they must "request" the exercise of certain rights. Agencies should carefully maintain documentation of a victim's request to exercise rights.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.13(1)-(2).</p>

<p>Clearinghouse To Provide Participants In The Criminal Justice System Victims' Rights Training.</p> <p>(a) The Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse may conduct an annual conference to provide to participants in the criminal justice system training containing information on crime victims' rights.</p> <p>(b) The clearinghouse may charge fees to persons attending the conference described by Subsection (a).</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.14(a)-(b).</p>
<p>Victim Access To Computer Database With Release Information.</p> <p>The Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall:</p> <p>(1) create and maintain a computerized database containing the release information and release date of a defendant described by Article 56.11(c); and</p> <p>(2) allow a victim or witness entitled to notice under Article 56.11 or 56.12 to access via the Internet the computerized database maintained under Subdivision (1).</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.15(1)-(2).</p>
<p>Address Confidentiality Program For Victims Of Family Violence, Sexual Assault Or Abuse, Stalking Or Trafficking.</p> <p>(a) The attorney general shall establish an address confidentiality program, as provided by this subchapter, to assist a victim of family violence, sexual assault or abuse, stalking, or trafficking of persons in maintaining a confidential address.</p> <p>(b) The attorney general shall:</p> <p>(1) designate a substitute post office box address that a participant may use in place of the participant's true residential, business, or school address;</p> <p>(2) act as agent to receive service of process and mail on behalf of the participant; and</p> <p>(3) forward to the participant mail received by the office of the attorney general on behalf of the participant.</p> <p>(c) A summons, writ, notice, demand, or process may be served on the attorney general on behalf of the participant by delivery of two copies of the document to the office of the attorney general. The attorney general shall retain a copy of the summons, writ, notice, demand, or process and forward the original to the participant not later than the third day after the date of service on the attorney general.</p>	<p>Tex. Crim. Proc. Code Ann. § 56.82(a)-(d).</p>

<p>(d) The attorney general shall make and retain a copy of the envelope in which certified mail is received on behalf of the participant.</p>	
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