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Online Resources: Victim Impact Statements

One of the rights commonly guaranteed to victims is the right to be heard, and one key moment in which this right may be exercised is in connection with sentencing proceedings. One way to be heard in connection with sentencing proceedings is through a victim impact statement, which may take a number of forms. Statements may be written, video or audio recorded, or leverage other technology-enhanced formats. Statements may also be spoken or read aloud by the victim or their representative in person, or victims may choose to have their statements facilitated with remote participation using videoconferencing, telephone, or other technology. A victim's right to be heard is personal to them, and they may choose to exercise or waive the right.

This compilation of resources and sample statements is for reference only and has been created to assist victims, victim advocates and victims' rights attorneys as they think about victim impact statements. Some of these materials may contain jurisdiction-specific guidance or information; contact a local victim advocate, victims' rights attorney or prosecutor's office for more information about the processes and procedures in your area.

General Information*

- **National Crime Victim Law Institute**
 - Select Video Resources:
 - *Crafting Victim Impact Statements: Talking to Survivors About Victim Impact Statements*
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BC2c_otFDM
 - *The Crime Victim's Right To Be Heard at Sentencing*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUNP6UtpzQQ>
 - Select Written Resources:
 - *Considerations When Advising Victims about Methods for Exercising their Right to Be Heard at Sentencing*
 - <https://law.lclark.edu/live/files/26752-victim-input-at-sentencing-qr-codepdf>
 - *Victim Impact Statements: Twelve Practice Tips*
 - <https://law.lclark.edu/live/files/25756-victim-impact-statements-twelve-tipspdf>



This resource was supported by Grant No. 2017-VF-GX-K026 awarded by Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in these materials are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Last Updated: July 2020

- *Survey of Select Federal and State Laws Governing Victim Impact Statements and a Victim’s Right to Be Heard Post-Conviction Regarding the Imposition and Completion of Sentence*
 - <https://law.lclark.edu/live/files/26753-right-to-be-heard-post-conviction-survey-qr>
- Paul G. Cassell, *In Defense of Victim Impact Statements*, 6 Ohio St. J. Crim. Law 611 (2009).
 - https://kb.osu.edu/bitstream/handle/1811/73078/OSJCL_V6N2_611.pdf?sequence=1

Prompts, Templates & Guides

- **Grant County Victim and Witness Services**
 - *Creating Your Victim Impact Statement*
 - <https://www.gcvwu.com/victimimpactstatements.htm>
- **Mothers Against Drunk Driving**
 - *Victim Impact Statement Booklet*
 - <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/919936/>
 - *Your Victim Impact Statement*
 - <https://1800victims.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Your-Victim-Impact-Statement.pdf>
- **Office of Justice Programs, Minnesota Department of Public Safety**
 - *Victim Impact Statements*
 - <https://www.anokacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/6401/OJP-Victim-Impact-Statement-Brochure?bidId>
- **Spokane County, Washington**
 - *VIS Questions for Consideration*
 - <https://www.spokanecounty.org/456/VIS-Questions-for-Consideration>
- **Texas Department of Criminal Justice**
 - *Victim Impact Statement: Just for Kids*
 - https://www.tdcj.texas.gov/documents/Victim_Impact_Statement_Packet_Just_for_Kids_English.pdf

Sample Victim Impact Statements

- Chanel Miller, self-identified author of the formerly anonymously issued statement written in connection with the conviction of Brock Turner, a student at Stanford who committed sexual assault against her
 - <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/katiejmbaker/heres-the-powerful-letter-the-stanford-victim-read-to-her-ra>
- National Crime Victim Law Institute
 - *Three Redacted Sample Victim Impact Statements*
 - <https://law.lclark.edu/live/files/17711-sample-victim-impact-statements1pdf>
- Survivor Resources



- *Victim Impact Statements*
 - <https://survivorresources.org/grief-knowledge/victim-impact-statements/>
- JUST Alternatives
 - *Victim Impact Statements*
 - <https://justalternatives.org/victim-impact-statements-links-for-victim-survivors/>

* Local communities may offer additional, jurisdiction-specific information and resources, some of which may be translated into languages spoken within the community. For example, see the Marion County, Oregon, Victim Impact Statement webpage, which includes links to a number of different victim impact statement forms that victims may choose to use as they prepare a victim impact statement, some of which are translated into Spanish:

<https://www.co.marion.or.us/DA/victimassistance/Pages/Victim%20Impact%20Statements.aspx>.

