

# THE VICTIM SERVICES PERSPECTIVE

Serving Crime Victims of Tennessee since 1993



## TENNESSEE BOARD OF PAROLE VICTIM SERVICES:

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Welcome back to the Victim Services Perspective Newsletter. This edition is our first publication since COVID shut down the world two years ago. A lot has changed and evolved since that time. Board of Parole Victim Services is no exception. After serving the State of Tennessee for 24 years, with her last 10 years as a valuable employee in Victim Services, Carolyn Scott retired in October 2021. In January 2022 Ebony Trammell transferred from Board Operations to Victim Services as a Program Specialist to fill the void left by Ms. Scott's retirement. Victim Services further expanded in 2022 with the addition of Tiffany Johnson, another valuable Board Operations transfer. The position was created to facilitate the submission of Victim Impact Video Statements, a new option for victims and others to express their concerns and views to the Board without the need to be physically present at a parole hearing. After a two-year hiatus from publishing Victim Services Perspective, we hope that you will join us as we welcome Spring with a renewed hope for the future that comes with new beginnings.

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# AMERICAN HEART MONTH - FEBRUARY 2023



Board of Parole Central Office Staff wore red to raise awareness for heart health.

**Why do we observe American Heart Month every February? Well, every year more than 600,000 Americans die from heart disease. The number one cause of death for most groups, heart disease affects all ages, genders, and ethnicities. Risk factors include high cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, and excessive alcohol use.**

**Do you know how to keep your heart healthy? You can take an active role in reducing your risk for heart disease by eating a healthy diet, engaging in physical activity, and managing your cholesterol and blood pressure. This is a great chance to start some heart-healthy habits!**



# DID YOU KNOW???



## The Board Now Offers Video Impact Statements

### Victim Impact Video Statements

The Board of Parole has created a new process to submit victim impact video statements, allowing victims and interested parties to have their voices heard at parole hearings without having to be physically present. Beginning in 2022, victim impact video statements are now allowed to be submitted into the Board. Previously, only written statements or those attending in person were allowed.

### What is a victim impact statement?

Victim impact statements, whether they are submitted in writing or via video, provide the opportunity for victims to describe to the Parole Board the impact the crime has had on their life – financially, physically, and emotionally.

Victim impact statements give Board members insight into the continuing impact of the crime. Victims can also inform the Board about any concerns they have for their safety or the safety of the community.

### Why are victim impact video statements available?

Victims and interested parties who may be unable to attend the hearing, or for whatever reason choose not to attend, have this option available to them. It is also available to victims and interested parties who are attending the hearing but may not be comfortable reading their statements.

# VICTIM IMPACT VIDEO STATEMENTS CONT'D

## How do you submit a victim impact video statement?

All victim impact video statements must be scheduled through the Board of Parole's Victim Services Division at either [BDVictim.Impact@tn.gov](mailto:BDVictim.Impact@tn.gov), 615.532.8112, or toll-free at 866.795.7467. All video statements are recorded through **Microsoft TEAMS**, either remotely from a mobile device or computer, or in person at BOP Central Office, located at 500 James Parkway, 4th Floor, Nashville, TN 37243.

## Are victim impact statements considered confidential?

Victim impact video statements are the confidential property of the Board of Parole. The recordings will not be played during the hearings, nor will the content be discussed during the hearings. The recordings will be viewed by the hearings officer and/or Board members who are voting on a parole case.

## How long should my video statement be?

Video Impact Statements can be up to five minutes long.

## Do videos have to be submitted for each parole hearing?

Once a victim impact statement is submitted, it will be considered at each subsequent hearing the offender has until the BOP is notified by the victim or person in opposition of their desire to no longer have the video considered.

## Who can view my video impact statements?

Victim Impact Statements are viewable to only Victim Services staff, hearings officers, and Board members. They become a permanent and confidential part of the offender's file unless a victim or interested party submits a Victim Impact Video Statement Discontinuation Form.





Mental health is wealth, especially during Mental Health Awareness Month. The stigma around mental health and treatment has long existed, even though this has started to change. Still, people hesitate to seek help or even talk about it with their loved ones for fear of being judged and facing unnecessary backlash. Simple logic dictates that if we are hurt anywhere, we must seek treatment to get better. This applies to both our mental and physical well-being.

## HOW TO OBSERVE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

### **Take care of yourself**

Life has numerous ups and downs. Some are solvable but others not so much. When your mental health acts up, seek the right treatment and make yourself better because, after all, life has much more to offer than just pain and suffering.

### **Take care of your loved ones**

Check up on your friends and family. Many times, all people need is a shoulder to cry on and/or an ear to listen. Support and encourage them if they are being treated for any mental problems.

### **Talk about mental health**

One of the best ways to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month is by talking about it with your peers. The more you talk about it, the more normalized it will become. This is one of the aims of the month as the stigma attached to mental health has led to countless delays in treatment AND research on the matter.

# EVENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS



## Survivor Voices

Elevate. Engage. Effect Change.

You are cordially invited...

The Tennessee Board of Parole, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Tennessee Department of Correction, and Tennessee Rehabilitative Initiative in Correction (TRICOR), invite you to be our guest for a dove release ceremony honoring victims of crime. This event is being held to commemorate National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which takes place April 23-29, 2023.

The ceremony will occur at 11:00 a.m. EDT on Friday, April 28, 2023, at The Walker Pavilion in Coolidge Park, 120 River St, Chattanooga, TN 37405. The event should run approximately 45 minutes. During the ceremony, we will also recognize victim advocates for their work of assisting crime victims.

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**National Crime Victims' Rights Week April 23–29, 2023**





# You're Invited!

Please join Knox County District Attorney General Charme Allen and her Office to kick-off National Crime Victims' Rights Week

**Friday, April 21**  
**2:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

Special remarks will start at 2:30 p.m.

**Knoxville Family Justice Center Auditorium**

400 Harriet Tubman St, Knoxville, TN 37915

For more information or to RSVP, email [emily.scheuneman@knoxcounty.org](mailto:emily.scheuneman@knoxcounty.org)

This project is supported by a National Crime Victims' Rights Week Community Awareness Project subgrant awarded by the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators under a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant from the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

# EVENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS CONT'D...



**National Crime Victims' Rights Week**  
April 23–29, 2023

**Survivor Voices | Elevate. Engage. Effect Change.**

## NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS CEREMONY

District Attorney General James B. Dunn cordially invites you to attend the National Crime Victims' Rights Ceremony on Friday, April 28, 2023 at 11 :00 a.m. The ceremony will be held on the Courthouse lawn at the Cocke County Courthouse. The commemorative ceremony will honor and remember all people whose lives have been touched by violent crime. Please bring a photo of your loved one to the ceremony. A table is reserved where your photo will be placed to honor all victims.

We invite and encourage everyone to wear purple to the ceremony. The color purple is a means to raise awareness of the issues associated with violent crime, and let survivors know they are not alone. The association between the violence awareness movement and the color purple is a way of remembering and honoring the victims and survivors of violent crime. Purple is a symbol of peace, courage, and survival.

For more information contact Kim Hudson, Victim Witness Coordinator at ( 423) 623-1285, Stevie Croxdale, Assistant Victim Witness Coordinator at (865) 429-7021 ext. 113, Jessica Savarese, Assistant Victim Witness Coordinator at (865) 416-44 77, Stephanie Johnson, Assistant Victim Witness Coordinator at (865) 828-6462 or Teresa Hamil-

Please join Sullivan County District Attorney General Barry Stabus and his office for their National Victim Crimes Week Ceremony:

Sunday, April 23

2 p.m.

The memorial will be in the parking lot at the Justice Center



## EVENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS CONT'D...



*You and Your Family and Friends are invited to the Davidson County 2023 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Ceremony. This ceremony is designed to honor and remember those impacted by violent crime in our community. The program will feature survivors who will share their stories as well as connection to agencies in the community who provide services. All are invited. Please come.*

**Sunday, April 30, 2023**  
**Fifty Forward**  
**174 Rains Avenue**  
**Nashville, TN 37203**

Program will begin at 3:00 PM

*You are invited to join us in honoring and remembering those whose lives have been impacted by violent crime. Whether you are a survivor, care about a survivor, work in the field, or just want to show your support, your presence is welcomed.*

**THE CEREMONY THIS YEAR WILL BE HELD INSIDE.** Though masks will not be required, they will be available for anyone who would like to wear one.

**VIRTUAL OPTION:** We invite anyone who would prefer a virtual program to join us on [facebook.com/remember.crime survivors](https://facebook.com/remember.crime survivors) to view the program.

**The Homicide Remembrance Board** will be displayed from **Friday April 21 through Sunday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at the downtown library** (615 Church Street) on the third floor. When you get off the elevator turn left toward the non-fiction desk. Library hours are Monday-Friday 9-6, Saturday 9-5, and Sunday 2-5. Ninety minutes **free parking** is available in the garage directly behind the library – Bring you parking ticket in and when you leave, use the machine at the checkout desk to validate the time.

***For additional information:***

**Valerie Craig at (615) 390-5202 or [valerie.craig@tnvoicesforvictims.org](mailto:valerie.craig@tnvoicesforvictims.org)**

**Susan Tucker-Smith at (615) 862-5500 ext.70243 or Amy Griffith at (615) 862-7773**

**ADA accommodations contact James Gray @ 862-8400.**



# SHOW ME THE NUMBERS



## TENNESSEE BOARD OF PAROLE VICTIM SERVICES QUARTERLY STATISTICS

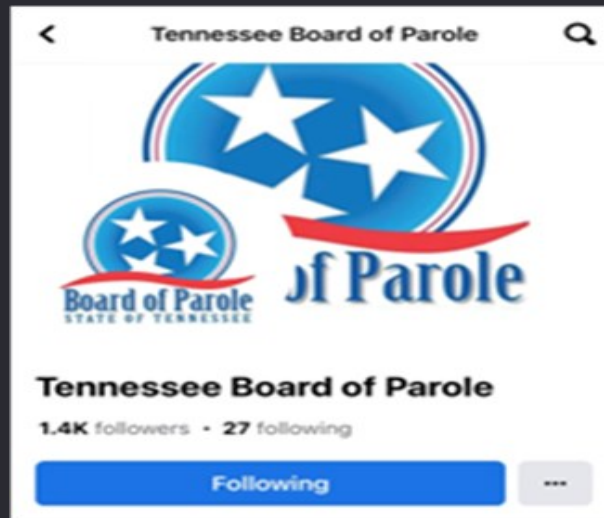


Telephone Calls at Central Office	January	February	March
Phone Calls Received/Returned	163	131	140
Interested Parties Registered for Notifications	10	16	14
Hearing Information	65	53	40
Parole & Release Inquiries	17	11	17
Opposition Letter Information	4	5	6
Contact Information Updates & Attempts	19	19	34
Other	30	27	29

Statewide Hearings Collaboration	January	February	March
Virtual Video Hearing Rooms Scheduled (Includes Grants/Revos/T/S, etc. hearings)	37	40	50
Scheduled Video Hearings for Opposition	35	18	23
Opposition Attending Video Hearings	12	45	66

Central Office Correspondences	January	February	March
All Correspondence Items Processed	237	304	275
Letters of Opposition	164	184	135
Request for Notification/Victim Impact Statements	34	60	64
Returned PHNIP/PDNIP	32	24	35
Other	9	22	10

# CONNECT WITH US ON FACEBOOK



IF YOU'RE A VICTIM OF CRIME,  
PLEASE CONTACT FOR HELP:

- Tennessee Domestic Violence Hotline - 800-356-6767
- National Domestic Violence Hotline - 800.799.SAFE
- Battered Women's Justice Project - 800.903.0111
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving - 877.ASK.MADD
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children - 800.843.5678
- Tennessee Human Trafficking Hotline—1-855-558-6484
- National Human Trafficking Hotline - 888.373.7888
- Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund - 866.960.6039

**Tennessee Board of Parole  
VICTIM SERVICES DIVISION  
500 James Robertson Pkwy,  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Davy Crockett Tower  
Nashville, TN 37243**

Phone: 615-532-8112  
Toll Free: 866-795-7467  
Fax: 615-253-5677  
Email: [victim.witness@tn.gov](mailto:victim.witness@tn.gov)

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