
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS POLICE

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: Victim Services

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I. PURPOSE

- A. To inform Police Department personnel of the guidelines in assisting the victims of our city, informing victims of their rights, and referring victims to the Victim Services Unit.

II. VICTIMS' RIGHTS

- A. The Kansas City, Kansas Police Department and its members understand that by taking the oath to protect the lives and property of the citizens of this city, we assume the most important task ever given to a single group. Although a great deal of training is dedicated to the rights of the criminal, very little thought or training is given to the rights of victims.
- B. The Department understands that we depend on the aid of victims and witnesses. In return, they deserve support and fair treatment. Although the police officer is only one component of the criminal justice system, it is the first and often the most important component to the victim. The officer's action, or lack of, often determines the course that the victim will travel through the criminal justice system.
- C. To ensure that citizens are aware of their rights as a victim the Department has included the Kansas Victims' Bill of Rights in the Citizen Information Form and provides this to the victim or reporting witness upon completion of all criminal offense reports. The wording includes, in part: "In order to insure the fair and compassionate treatment of victims of crime and to increase the effectiveness of the criminal justice system by affording victims of crime certain basic rights and considerations, the victims of crime shall have the following rights."
- D. Victims shall receive through formal and informal procedures prompt and fair redress for the harm which they have suffered.
- E. Training will be conducted by the Victim Service's Unit which is intended to sensitize criminal justice personnel to the needs and concerns of victims.

III. CITIZEN INFORMATION FORM

- A. Anytime an offense report is completed by a sworn member of the Department, the officer who takes the report will furnish the victim or reporting person with the Citizen Information Form. The Citizen Information Form contains the following:
1. The complaint number.
 2. The reporting officer's signature and serial number.
 3. The Kansas Crime Victims' Bill of Rights.
 4. Contact telephone numbers for the Victim Service's Unit and general assistance provided by the Department, essential departments within the Unified Government, and other local public and private agencies.
 5. Instructions for filing a misdemeanor summons (when the suspect is no longer at the scene and cannot be taken into custody at the time the report is made).
- B. When reports are taken over the telephone, the Citizen Information Form will be mailed to the victim by a Teleserve operator.

IV. FIELD OPERATIONS RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Initial Response
1. Victims shall be treated with courtesy, compassion, and with respect for their dignity and privacy and should suffer the minimum of necessary inconvenience of their involvement with the criminal justice system.
 2. Information regarding the availability of criminal restitution, recovery of damages in a civil cause of action, the crime victims' compensation fund and other remedies and the mechanisms to obtain such remedies shall be made available to the victims.
 3. Information should be made available to the victims about their participation in the criminal proceedings and the scheduling progress and ultimate dispositions of the proceedings.
 4. The views and concerns of victims should be ascertained and the appropriate assistance and direction provided throughout the criminal process.
 5. Measures may be taken, when necessary, to provide for the safety of victims and their families and to protect them from intimidation and retaliation.
 6. Victims should be informed of the Victims Service's Unit for services and referrals.
 7. Victims, in turn, should report the crime and cooperate with law enforcement authorities.

- B. The Report Desk located in the Midtown Patrol Division is staffed 24 hours per day to assist victims in making police reports.
 - 1. Officers will familiarize themselves with the services available to victims available in this jurisdiction from the Department or from other agencies and organizations within the metropolitan area. The most frequently sought information is available on the Citizen Information Form.
 - 2. The Report Desk personnel and dispatched officers will provide assistance to citizens requesting this information and referrals to the Victim Services Unit.
- C. The Department is committed to ensuring that when officers are injured or crimes have been committed against them, they will be afforded the same rights as victims set out in this order. Furthermore, policies have been established to coordinate assistance to officers and families of officers surrounding line of duty deaths or serious injuries in accordance with General Order 1.07 (Line of Duty Death or Serious Injury).
- D. The Director of the Operations Bureau will make the appropriate informational literature available to officers indicating referrals and assistance programs provided for victims and witnesses of crime in our service area.

V. CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION BUREAU RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Waiting areas are provided in the Victims Services Unit and the Criminal Investigations Bureau (CIB). In an effort to make the victim's contact with the Department a positive one, these areas will be kept clean and comfortable. Reference materials will be provided.
- B. The Victim Services Unit will ensure that the appropriate letters are sent to the victims, listing case numbers, Detectives name and phone number. The detective will be available to provide information as to the status of the case and answer any questions the victims might have.
- C. Information should be made available to victims about their participation in the criminal proceedings and the scheduling progress and ultimate dispositions of the proceedings.
 - 1. When the Wyandotte County District Attorney files an arrest warrant on a suspect, a letter will be sent to the victim informing them of such filing and also explaining the stages of prosecution.
 - 2. When possible, victims / witnesses will be notified upon the arrest of a suspect in their investigation and any significant changes to the arrestee's custody status.
 - 3. When the personal interests of victims are affected the views or concerns of the victim should, when appropriate and consistent with criminal law and procedure, be brought to the attention of the courts.
- D. Detectives will attempt to schedule line-ups, interviews, and other required appearances at the convenience of the victim and witness, and, if needed in extreme cases, the detective may provide transportation for those appearances.
- E. In the event that the victim/witness has been threatened or has credible reason for fearing intimidation by the suspect or the suspect's family or friends, the detective assigned the case will contact the Wyandotte County District Attorney's Office and determine the need to file additional charges, as well as contact the Uniform Division assigned to the victim's area and determine an appropriate course of action.

- 1. Though retaliation against victims / witnesses is uncommon, any threats will be taken seriously. Late night phone calls, verbal abuse, and slow-moving vehicles past a witness' house are all common methods used to frighten and intimidate witnesses. If criminals are allowed to intimidate witnesses and prevent testimony, their hold on the community becomes stronger, and violence may increase.
- 2. Witnesses and victims should be instructed to notify authorities of any attempts at intimidation.

- F. Whenever the victim's property is being held in the Department's Logistics/Property Unit, the detective assigned the case will assist in the prompt return of the property (except for contraband, disputed property, etc.) in accordance with General Order 80.2.(Found, Safekeeping, and Evidentiary Proper

VI. VICTIM SERVICES UNIT

- A. The Victim Services Unit is assigned to the Criminal Investigation Bureau and the program supervisor reports to the Criminal Investigation Bureau Executive Officer. The Victim Services Unit will assist victims during the follow up investigation.
- B. The Victim Services Unit is charged with acting as a liaison between victims and the Department, and will assist victims in ensuring that their rights are upheld and needs are met. This includes assisting them with Crime Victim's Compensation applications where aid is available, and in assisting them in monitoring the status of their case and with referrals to appropriate community and government services.
- C. The Victim Services Unit will ensure that the appropriate letters are sent to the victims. The listed case numbers, Detective's name and phone number or CIB's number 913-573-6020, criminal justice information, and the VSU contact information.
- D. The Victim Services Unit has appropriate informational forms for victims which list, support and assistance available to them by the Unified Government, state and private agencies for their assistance. The Victims Services Unit will assist victims with referrals as needed.
- E. The Victim Services Unit Supervisor will conduct an annual analysis of the Victims Services Units needs and available services. The analysis will include:
 - 1. The extent and major types of victimization within the Department's jurisdiction.
 - 2. An inventory of information and service needs of victims in general, and special victims, such as those victimized by domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, and underserved victims..
 - 3. Victim services available within the jurisdiction (such as the District Attorney's Office).
 - 4. Identification of all unfulfilled needs and the selection of those that may be appropriate for the agency to meet.
- F. The Supervisor will use the analysis to develop policies and procedures that will achieve the following goals:
 - 1. Guide the implementation and delivery of victim assistance services by agency personnel.

2. Ensure the confidentiality of records and files of victims and their role in case development to the extent consistent with applicable law.
 3. Guide the agency efforts to periodically inform the public and media of the victim services and victims' rights.
 4. Govern the relationship between the Department and victim services efforts of other agencies and organizations.
- G. The Victim Services Unit Supervisor will act as the coordinator between the various bureaus within the Department for the victims' needs activities. The Supervisor will also serve as the liaison with outside agencies and organizations for victims' rights and needs.
- H. The Victim Services Unit Supervisor will attend meetings with Department Staff, the Wyandotte County District Attorney's Office, and appropriate Unified Government Departments to assist the needs of victims and review programs that are available for victims and witnesses.

VII. ON CALL VICTIM SERVICES PROCEDURES

- A. The Victim Services Unit Supervisor schedules personnel to facilitate an on-call advocate twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
- B. At no time will the advocate be unduly exposed to volatile situations in which there may be a threatened use of force or impending possibility of violence which might culminate in physical injury.
- C. Victim Advocates are available on an on-call basis and will respond to all homicide scenes. Dispatch will be contacted for all other Major Case pages to determine if the Victims Services Unit is needed.
- D. When summoned to a crime scene, the Advocate is under the direct supervision and guidance of the Commander of the crime scene.