

National Crime Victims' Rights Week April 6-12, 2014

30 Years: Restoring the Balance of Justice

Every April, the Office for Victims of Crime observes National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVIRW) by promoting the rights of victims and honoring victims of crime and their advocates.

For 30 years the nation has made dramatic progress in securing rights, protections, and services for victims. Every state has enacted victims' rights laws and, all have victim compensation programs.

More than 10,000 victim service agencies now help people throughout the country. In 1984, Congress passed the bipartisan Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), which created a national fund to ease victims' suffering. The Crime Victims Fund is financed by fines and penalties paid by offenders, and supports victim services, such as rape crisis and domestic violence programs, and victim compensation programs. These funds pay many of victims' out-of-pocket expenses from the crime, such as counseling, funeral expenses, and lost wages.

Victims' rights advocates have scored remarkable victories over the last 30 years. But there is more work to be done.

In Oregon, victims' rights are written into our constitution, it guarantees victims the right to:

- Be present, heard and informed in advance of, any critical stage of the criminal justice proceedings when the criminal defendant is present.
- Get information about the defendant's conviction, sentence, criminal history, and to know before the defendant is released from prison.
- Receive prompt restitution from the defendant.
- Receive a copy of a transcript of any open court proceeding.
- Have a District Attorney consult the victim about plea negotiations in violent felony cases.

An amendment to the constitution guarantees the victim the right to be reasonably protected from the offender. It also requires the judge to make decisions about pre-trial release on the principle of reasonable protection of the victim and the public.

If you would like additional information about the Department of Corrections' crime victim services and programs, please visit [DOC Programs for Victims of Crime](#) website.