

Suggestions for Completing your Victim Impact Statement

The following suggestions are offered only as a guide. If you need more space, please use additional pages and simply attach those pages to the Impact Statement when you return it to the Prosecutor's Office.

What is a Victim Impact Statement? How is it used?

As a crime victim, you have the right under the Crime Victim Rights Act of 1985 to have your Impact Statement included in the pre-sentence investigation report that is prepared by the probation department for sentencing purposes. This statement will help the Judge determine the defendant's sentence. Only you know how best to describe the ways in which the crime has impacted you. Many victims find it helpful to organize their statement by the emotional, physical, and financial effects. Some victims have found it helpful to write a rough draft before completing the final statement.

If you would like to tell the court about the emotional impact of the crime, you may want to consider:

- Has this crime affected your lifestyle or those close to you?
- Have your feelings about yourself or your life changed since this crime?
- Has your ability to relate to others changed?

If you or your family members were injured, you may wish to tell the court about the physical impact of this crime:

- Describe the physical injuries you or members of your family suffered.
- Describe how long these injuries lasted or how long they are expected to last.
- Describe any medical treatment you have received or expect to receive in the future.

Elements of a Good Victim Impact Statement

- 3 to 5 minutes of reading time.
- Highlight what the crime has meant personally to the author.
- Explain how the crime affected you emotionally and physically.
- Include any out-of-pocket expenses you incurred because of the crime.

If you have any questions or would like help in preparing your Victim Impact Statement, please call the Victim Rights Coordinator.

Addressing the Court

You have the right to address the court prior to the court sentencing the defendant. You may also choose to have a representative address the court on your behalf. If you are planning on addressing the court during the sentencing hearing, please contact the Victim Rights Coordinator to let her know.

It is VERY important that you return your Victim Impact Statement at least 7 days prior to the scheduled sentencing date to the Shiawassee County Prosecutor's Office Victim Rights Coordinator to make sure it is included in the pre-sentence investigation report that is presented to the judge.

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