



National Crime Victims' Rights Week begins April 8



EXPAND THE CIRCLE REACH ALL VICTIMS

National Crime Victims'
Rights Week | April 8-14
2018

Every year in April, the National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) is held in order to promote victims' rights and honor crime victims and their advocates. The theme of the 2018 NCVRW, which will take place from April 8 to 14, is "Expand the Circle: Reach All Victims."

The 2018 NCVRW will emphasize the importance of inclusion in victim services. This year's theme addresses ways to ensure every crime victim has access to services and support, and how professionals, organizations, and communities can work together to support all crime victims.

Victim Services Division Director Angie McCown affirmed the agency's longstanding support for those who have suffered the direct effects of crime, saying "TDCJ Victim Services is committed to connecting crime victims to resources and educating them on their rights under the law. This is a team effort. We will continue to expand our circle of reach so that all victims have a voice in the criminal justice system."

Observation of NCVRW began in 1975, and six years later President Reagan established it as an annual event observed across the nation. NCVRW organizers work to protect and improve the rights and help provide the resources crime victims need to rebuild their lives. Since 1984, the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) has provided a source of funding for victims' compensation through criminal fines, penalties and forfeitures. The VOCA funding has helped provide critical services to those who have suffered the effects of violent crime.

In 1993, TDCJ established a Victim Services section in the agency's Parole Division so crime victims could be notified about their offender's parole status. In 1997, the agency's mission statement was amended to include "to assist victims of crime" and the Victim Services section was elevated to divisional status. Today, the Victim Services Division continues to grow, providing new and innovative programs to help support crime victims.

It's important to keep in mind that, while Victim Services staff works directly to support crime victims, every TDCJ employee contributes to this effort by securely incarcerating offenders, delivering effective rehabilitation programs and providing appropriate supervision to former offenders as they transition back into the community. Acknowledging their support, VSD Director McCown commented "I feel privileged to work with everyone at TDCJ and I appreciate all that you do each and every day to make a difference in the lives of victims."

For more information, including resource guides and observation ceremonies, visit the NCVRW and the Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse websites. The NCVRW is supported by the Office for Victims of Crime, a component of the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. ▲