

VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT

As a victim of crime, one of the most important rights you have is to let the Court know, prior to sentencing, how the crime has affected you and your family. A **Victim Impact Statement** helps to ensure your right to be heard, even if you cannot personally appear at sentencing.

After you complete your impact statement, please send it to the Yuma County Adult Probation Department or the Court hearing the case. Addresses are provided on the following page to assist you in returning your statement to the appropriate agency or court. If the defendant in your case is an adult and you have questions or need assistance you should contact the adult probation office at (928) 329-2210. If the defendant in your case is a juvenile and you have questions or need assistance you should contact the juvenile probation office at (928) 314-1900. You may also contact Victim Services at (928) 817-4303 for assistance. If you choose to contact us, please ask to speak with an advocate when you call.

You should complete and return your impact statement as soon as possible so that it may be included in the probation department's pre-sentence report. If your Impact Statement is not received before sentencing, the court will not be able to consider how this crime affected you. Your original impact statement will become part of the Court's file, and as such, may be seen by the defendant and/or his attorney. With this in mind, we suggest that you do not include personal identifying information such as your address and/or telephone number. We also suggest that you make a copy of your completed impact statement for your own records.

Some of the things you may wish to consider when deciding what to include are:

- Physical Injuries suffered by you or your family member(s) and medical treatment required as the result of victimization.
- Psychological injuries suffered and psychological treatment required as the result of victimization.
- The treating physician's prognosis for recovery from your physical and/or psychological injuries and the need for long term care.
- Why you need to recover financial losses (restitution) from the defendant and what effect not doing so would have on you. You may include things like, loss of income and stolen property that was not recovered or damaged to the extent that it was rendered useless. These are just a two examples. Please remember your losses must be directly related to this victimization and that you might be asked to justify the cost of the losses you claim.
- Lingering pain, anxiety, anguish and nightmares.
- Adverse effects on your lifestyle and that of your family.
- How you felt when you received notification of the passing of your loved one and how breaking the news to other family members and friends affected you and them.
- The effect of the loss of a loved one on you and your family. How the loss will affect you in the long term (ex. He/She was the only provider in your home.)
- How your sentencing recommendation, if imposed, might help you through the healing process.

We have provided the following example of how an impact statement may look. You may use our example if you like but you should include all the suggested information that applies to you, being as specific as possible.

State v. _____

Court Case Number: SC-

Your Honor:

As the victim in this case, I respectfully request that you consider the following when you sentence the defendant.

1. Explain the nature and extent of any physical, psychological or emotional harm or trauma you suffered.
2. Explain the extent of any economic loss or property damage you suffered.
3. You may give your opinion on your need for and the extent of restitution (money to be paid to you by the defendant when ordered by the court.)
4. You should also include whether you have applied for or received any compensation for your loss or damage. This information should include, but is not limited to, compensation received from the Victims Compensation Fund and/or Insurance Companies.
5. Sign your letter and print your name below your signature.