



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY  
**DEPARTMENT WIDE**

REVISION DATE  
8/27/20

PAGE NUMBER  
1 of 5

NUMBER  
**DOC 390.310**

## **POLICY**

TITLE

**VICTIMS COUNCIL**

### **REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:**

Effective: 1/7/05  
Revised: 1/29/07  
Revised: 3/14/08  
Revised: 8/23/10  
Revised: 8/1/12  
Revised: 8/27/20

### **SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:**


Updated terminology throughout  
Added Policy Statement I. that the Department will collaborate with the Victims Council to solve and address issues  
Directive II.A. - Added that one victim/survivor will serve as a member on the council  
II.B., and II.G. - Removed unnecessary language  
II.C., III.A.-D., and III.F. - Adjusted language for clarification  
Removed II.D. that anyone can request to serve on the council  
II.E. - Removed language for clarification  
Added III.C.1. that co-chairs will ask for volunteers to serve on newly designated sub-committees  
Added III.E. that a quorum must be established to conduct a vote.  
IV.A. - Added language for clarification

### **APPROVED:**

Signature on file

\_\_\_\_\_  
**STEPHEN SINCLAIR**, Secretary  
Department of Corrections

7/23/20  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

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## REFERENCE:


DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; [DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations](#)

## POLICY:

- I. The Department will collaborate with the Victims Council to solve and/or address issues relevant to protecting the safety of victims and survivors.
- II. The Victims Council will advise the Department regarding existing or proposed programs, practices, and policies as they involve or affect crime victims.

## DIRECTIVE:

- I. General Responsibilities
  - A. Council Review
    1. The Victims Council will review the following for impact on crime victims/survivors and, by a majority vote of its members, make recommendations to the Secretary:
      - a. Existing/proposed programs and practices.
      - b. Proposed changes to the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Washington Administrative Code (WAC), or Department policy.
    2. Council review will be:
      - a. Requested by employees, in writing to the Victim Services Program Manager, who will submit the proposed review to the council for consideration, or
      - b. Through a majority vote of the council's members.
    3. Reviews may be conducted through:
      - a. Presentations and discussion at council meetings,
      - b. Examination by council members of written documents pertaining to the policy or practice under review, and
      - c. Communication among employees, council members, and relevant stakeholders.
  - B. Proposals
    1. The council will initiate proposals to create or modify programs, practices, and policies to increase victim and community safety, strengthen services

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for victims/survivors, or reduce the impact of crime and criminal justice processes on victims/survivors.

2. The council may request briefings, documents, information, or other assistance from employees to develop a proposal. Such requests will be communicated to the Secretary directly or through the Victim Services Program Manager.

## II. Membership

- A. The Victims Council will consist of one victim/survivor not representing an agency/organization, and representatives from community, state, and local agencies/organizations that should include those that:
  1. Support the broad needs of victims/survivors,
  2. Represent different crime categories, and
  3. Represent diverse ethnic backgrounds and broad geographic areas, both rural and urban.
- B. The council will have 2 co-chairs, elected from its membership by the council. Each co-chair will serve a 2 year term. One co-chair will be elected each year, ensuring there is an experienced chairperson at all times.
- C. Each participating agency/organization will determine its council representative. If the role becomes vacated, the agency/organization may appoint a replacement.
- D. The Secretary will confirm the appointment of each representative through a formal acknowledgment letter.
- E. Victim Services Program employees will serve as support staff for the council.
- F. Council membership will be reviewed annually by the council.
- G. Upon recommendation of the Victims Council, the Secretary can appoint individuals with specialized expertise for a limited duration and/or special purpose. These members will:
  1. Serve only as it applies to their particular expertise relating to a specific victim's issue the council is addressing.
  2. Be released from membership upon completion of their specific service.


## III. Meetings

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- A. The Victims Council will meet at least quarterly. Meetings may be held more often at the direction of the co-chairs or Secretary.
- B. Each meeting will follow an agenda developed and mutually agreed upon by the co-chairs. Whenever possible, the agenda will be distributed to the members 2 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.
- C. Sub-committees from the council may be used to address specific issues/projects identified by the council.
  1. The co-chairs will ask for volunteers to be part of any newly designated sub-committee and will appoint one of those volunteers to set an initial meeting of the sub-committee.
  2. The council will assign a completion date for any assignment given to a sub-committee.
  3. For purposes of consultation and guidance, the sub-committee will provide periodic reports regarding the assignment to the council.
  4. The council will have final review and decision authority regarding the work of a sub-committee prior to submitting the issue/item to the Secretary through the Victim Services Program Manager.
- D. The co-chairs of the council will ensure members are notified when the council will not hold a regularly scheduled meeting.
- E. The decisions of the council will be made by a majority vote of the appointed members present. A quorum of 50% of membership must be present in order to conduct a vote.
  1. In the event that a council member cannot be present, a colleague may attend the meeting on behalf of the agency/organization, but that person will not be able to provide input at the meeting or vote on behalf of the absent council member.
- F. Council members are expected to attend 75% of the scheduled meetings per year. The Victims Council will review meeting attendance, and may terminate a member for failure to meet the attendance requirement. The agency/organization they represent will be contacted to fill the vacancy.

#### IV. Reimbursement

- A. Victims Council members traveling from outside of the county will be reimbursed for actual travel costs to council meetings per DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations.

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**DEFINITIONS:**

Words/terms appearing in this policy may be defined in the glossary section of the Policy Manual.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None

**DOC FORMS:**

None