

How to Receive Notification for Parole Hearings, Releases and Appeals, etc.

All crime victims and next of kin can register for notification to find out about parole hearings and releases of offenders from custody with:

- **The Sacramento based California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation [CDCR], Office of Victim Survivor Rights and Services [OVSRS]**
- **Victim Information Notification Everyday [VINE]**
- **The Attorney General's Victim Services Unit**

Inmate Locator

First, it is important to note that any person can check on which institution an inmate is located at by using the Inmate Locator. The web site for this service is: <http://inmatelocator.cdcr.ca.gov/>

OVSRS

Any victim or next of kin can "register" with the Sacramento based, CDCR Office of Victim Survivor Rights and Services [**OVSRS**] on felony matters. That office has the responsibility, by law, to notify any "registered" victim, or next of kin, of any **release**, death or escape by the inmate. In addition, witnesses can also register to receive the same information (DDA's can also register).

In addition, that office supplies the registration information to the Board of Parole Hearings who in turn is obligated to notify any registered victim or next of kin of any upcoming **parole hearing** on any lifer (life top sentence) case at least 90 days before the hearing. (See Pen. Code § 3043.)

The law requires that the victim or next of kin keep their registration information up to date, as if the information is outdated, or they decline to register, they will ordinarily not attempt to proactively locate them. That office also accepts input from victims and next of kin as to special conditions of parole (including the 35 mile distance the offender must stay away from the victim's residence on violent felonies). The office can be found at the following web page:

http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Victim_Services/

In addition, a victim or next of kin can email the office at: victimservices@cdcr.ca.gov

Finally, they may also contact them via telephone at: 877-256-6877.

VINE

Also, there may be cases in which the defendant never served a term in state prison, or is incarcerated in county jail pursuant to realignment and Penal Code section 1170(h). In those cases they should be encouraged to register with **VINE**.

A victim or next of kin need only input the offender's last name and first initial and county of commitment and they will be taken to a page with the offender's information. There they will learn if the offender is in county jail or state prison. They can go further and register in either scenario. If the offender is in county jail, the registration will be completed through the sheriff's office. If the offender is in state prison, OVSRS will receive notification of their registration and follow up. If the offender is a lifer, they will be directed to register directly with OVSRS and contact information will be provided. The web address for VINE is:

<https://vinelink.com/#/map>

Attorney General's Victim Services Unit

As a separate issue, victims and next of kin can receive updates on writs and appeals filed by offenders (state and county) and handled by the Attorney General's Office. To enable this notification, victims and next of kin should "register" with the California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, **Victim Services Unit**, and keep their registration information up to date. That office has the responsibility to notify any "registered" victim, or next of kin, any vital appellate information about the case. The office can be found at the following web page:

<http://oag.ca.gov/victimservices>

In addition, a victim or next of kin can email the office through this link:

<http://oag.ca.gov/victimservices/contact>

Finally, they may also contact them via telephone at: (877) 433-9069.

ICAN

The Crime Victims Assistance Network (ICAN) is a nonprofit organization based out of Sacramento that provides support for victims' participation in the parole hearing process. We work closely with them, and have found them to be very helpful. Their services are free of charge and they may be able to help you with preparation, support and accompaniment to the hearing.

Their website is: <http://ican-foundation.org/>

Their office number is: (916) 273-3603. Please ask to speak with Christine Ward.

You may also email them at cward@ican-foundation.org

Note: For more information, please see Penal Code sections 679.03, 3003, 3043, 3058.6 and 3058.8. In addition, please see Article I, section 28, subdivisions (b)(7)(15)(16) and (17) of the California Constitution, and Section 2029 of Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations.