

# Victims' Rights Self-Assessment Checklist

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*This assessment checklist is designed for your department or agency to acknowledge and/or ensure your compliance with victims' rights laws as well as to consider some best practices that may enhance opportunities to honor a victim's constitutional right to a meaningful role in the juvenile justice process.*

- Do you have an interagency agreement that clearly defines responsibility for victim notification?  
*Does it define who is responsible for notification throughout all stages of the process?*
  - Are all identified victims promptly notified of their rights?
  - Is your initial victims' rights notification letter victim-centered/sensitive?  
*Are you addressing initial notification letters to parents of minor victims?*
  - Is your staff considering cultural responsiveness when providing resources?  
*Are you connecting victims with local culturally specific programs?*  
*Are you communicating with victims in their preferred language?*  
*Have you identified a professional interpretation service for victims who do not speak English?*
  - Do you include the Victims' Rights in the Juvenile Justice System brochure and the Victims' Rights Request Form for Juvenile Cases in your initial notification letters?
  - Are you contacting victims by phone prior to sending initial notification letters or shortly after?  
*Is your staff using victim-centered/sensitive language when conversing with victims?*
  - Are you inquiring about accessibility needs prior to court hearings?"  
*Do the materials you are sending to victims meet accessibility needs?*  
*If the materials are available on your website, do they meet accessibility needs?*
  - Are you using the JJIS Victim Module to document notifications, requested rights and contacts?  
*Is this information treated with privacy in mind?*
  - Do you know what information about the youth can be released to victims?
  - Do you notify victims of the grievance process if they feel their rights have been violated?
  - Do you have a separate area (away from the offender) for your victims to wait for court hearings?  
*Is the space welcoming and inclusive of all communities?*
  - Do you ask for victim's rights to be preserved if case has been dismissed via plea negotiations?
  - Do you make it a practice to make victim notification a part of the record at every hearing?
  - Do you notify victims of every critical stage hearing, including PVs, & disposition review hearings?
  - Are you notifying victims (even those on dismissed cases) when a youth applies for expunction?
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Do you know about the Crime Victims' Compensation Program, and do you make referrals?

