



# Victim Statements

## Purpose and Use of Victim Statements

Victim statements offer victims and their families a meaningful way to participate in the post-conviction phase of the criminal justice process. These statements help the Prisoner Review Board (PRB or the Board) understand the emotional, physical, and financial impact a crime has had on those affected. During any hearing, the Board carefully reviews statements submitted by victims, their families, or other individuals who wish to be heard, using them to inform decisions related to parole, clemency, and other matters.

## Submitting a Victim Statement

Victim statements may be submitted to the PRB in several formats:

- ❖ By mail or email
- ❖ As a prerecorded audio or video statement
- ❖ In person during a hearing before the Board

In many cases, **statements can be submitted confidentially** if the individual prefers to keep their input private. There are, however, some exceptions to this.

- If a victim **chooses to testify or present a statement at a hearing**, the statement may become part of the **official record**.
  - A victim may **waive privacy** by:
    - speaking publicly at a hearing
    - sharing their statement with media
    - submitting it in a forum that is open to the public
    - allowing it to be read aloud during a hearing.
- Information in a victim statement may be disclosed if it reveals:
  - threats of harm
  - ongoing abuse or violence
  - safety concerns that require action
  - This can trigger **law enforcement or supervision responses**.

The PRB's Victim & Witness Services Unit (VWS) may, in some instances, be able to provide written or oral Spanish translation services. Victims and families who wish to communicate in Spanish should not hesitate to contact us for translation support.

Victim statements may be submitted to the Illinois Prisoner Review Board's Victim & Witness Services through the following channels:

❖ **Mailing Address:**

- **Illinois Prisoner Review Board Victim & Witness Services Unit, 1001 North Walnut Street, Springfield, Illinois 62702**

❖ **Email:**

- [prb.victimservices@illinois.gov](mailto:prb.victimservices@illinois.gov)

❖ **Telephone:**

- **1-217-782-7273 or 1-800-801-9110**

## Suggestions for Writing Victim Statements

- **Opening Identification:** Your name, relationship to the case, and case number.
- **Emotional Impact:** Fear, anxiety, sleep issues, grief, loss of trust. Start here so decision-makers grasp the human cost.
- **Physical Impact:** Injuries, chronic pain, medical treatment, mobility limits.
- **Financial Impact:** Bills, lost work, property damage, childcare, travel to court. Attach estimates or receipts if requested.
- **Daily Life Changes:** Security upgrades, moving homes, therapy, missed milestones.
- **Requested Outcome:** Safety-related conditions, no-contact orders, and an appropriate outcome from your perspective.
- **Closing:** A brief statement of what accountability and safety mean for you.



## Dos and Don'ts

- **Do** be specific and use plain language.
- **Do** focus on the crime's impact on yourself and your family, and not case strategy or legal arguments.
- **Do** ask your Victim-Witness Advocate to confirm local requirements and page limits.
- **Don't** include new allegations or threats, and **don't** insult the person who harmed you; it may undercut your credibility.

## Assistance from the Victim & Witness Services Unit

Victims, their families, or advocates may contact the VWS for guidance on submitting a victim statement. Staff are available to answer questions and provide support throughout the process. Additionally, VWS staff can offer real-time updates on projected release dates, current custodial status, and upcoming hearing schedules. They also assist victims in requesting specific release conditions—such as No Contact provisions—to be considered by the Board.

Source: <https://requestletters.com/home/writing-a-powerful-victim-impact-statement-free-sample>