

Here are several questions you may wish to consider when compiling your Victim Impact Statement. Not all questions apply to every case. For example, some questions apply only if the victim is deceased, as in a murder case. Obviously, those questions do not apply in a theft case, etc. Other questions will only apply to children or adults, etc.

Suggested use:

Read through the list and select the questions that apply to your case and which you want to or feel you can answer. Then answer the questions as best as you are able. These questions are meant to help you get your thoughts on paper. Once you have the thoughts on paper, you can group them into a logical order and compile your Victim Impact Statement. Remember, the Victim/Witness Unit is always available and willing to help you compile your Victim Impact Statement. Contact us at victims@co.grant.wa.us or (509) 754-2011 ext. 462 for assistance.

How were your normal habits of eating and sleeping affected?

Do you feel a sense of shame? If so, in what way and how?

Do you feel “dirty” since the crime occurred?

Has your self-worth diminished since the crime occurred?

Is this the culmination of many crimes or abusive things that have been perpetrated against you by the defendant?

Do you recognize the defendant as being manipulative?

Have you or has anyone in your family been threatened not to testify?

Are you worried that the defendant will try to manipulate or “work” the system?

Are you aware of the defendant’s attitude toward the criminal justice system? If so, what is it?

How has your relationship with the defendant changed since the crime occurred?

Do you believe the defendant can be rehabilitated?

Do you want the defendant to be able to contact you or other family members/the victim in the future?

How has the crime affected your children or other members of your household/family/friends?

Have you experienced reoccurring dreams or intrusive thoughts about the crime?

Has your ability to work changed? If so, how?

Have you had to move or change jobs because of the crime? If so, how did that make you feel?

What do you want to happen to the defendant?

How long do you think your initial period of shock lasted?

Do you or did you have a feeling of numbness?

Did you have to personally “investigate” the crime committed against you? If so, how many hours has that taken?

Have you had difficulty using your checks or other personal information?

Have you had difficulty obtaining credit because of the crime?

Did you lose any property that could not be replaced (photos, etc.)?

Have you changed things in your life (avoid certain places, activities, etc.) that would otherwise cause you painful memories?

Are you dealing with anger because of the crime? If so, how are you dealing with it?

Has your level of trust in others changed?

Do you believe justice is being done?

If the hearing dates repeatedly changed or your case was repeatedly delayed, how did that make you feel?

Did the defendant or his/her family or friends continue to contact and/or harass you after the crime was committed?

Did anyone try to convince you to change your testimony or not to testify?

Do you have a sense that control in your life has been taken away from you?

Have you experienced what you could identify as depression?

Outside the court proceedings, do you think a lot about the circumstances of the victim's death?

Where is the victim now (i.e. do you believe in an afterlife?)

How have your relationships with friends been affected?

How have your relationships with family members been affected?

How have your views with regard to violence and death changed?

How have your views regarding your safety changed?

How has the victim's death been different for you and the non-violent death of others that you have experienced?

Does the victim's death still reside somewhat outside of reality?

How have your views about your own future been changed?

How have you been impacted financially?

How is your "new" normal different than your "old" normal?

Have you engaged in any "self soothing" behaviors?

Have you tried to avoid thinking about your pain and grief?

Have others tried to "minimize" your losses thinking that that would be helpful to you?

Have you developed any chronic physical conditions?

Has it been difficult to experience joy and fun in your life without feeling guilt?

Have you had difficulty with concentration at school, home, work or elsewhere?

Has your sense of priorities changed?

Is it hard to get motivated?

Is it difficult to not think about the victim?

How have your views of law enforcement changed?

How have your views of the criminal justice system changed?

How have your views of prosecutors changed?

How have your views of defense attorneys changed?

Has the criminal justice system treated you fairly and with respect?

Have your spiritual beliefs changed? If so, in what ways?

What old beliefs have gone away? What new beliefs do you have?

What new frustrations do you have?

Do you feel less tolerant of certain behaviors now? What behaviors?

Have there been any positive changes in your life?

How do you feel about some people saying you need to get on with your life?

Do you have some emotional places that are too painful to visit?

Are there some physical locations that are too painful for you to visit?

How has your relationship with your co-workers been affected?

Are there some family traditions that are affected by the victim's death?

Are there now some new rituals that are helpful to you or other family members?

What feelings do you have on the victim's birthday?

What feelings do you experience on the anniversary date of the victim's death?

Are there songs for music to affect you differently now?

Have you been overcome with emotion for reasons of which you are unaware?

How have holidays changed for you and your family since the crime occurred?

Do you have conflicted feelings about the victim?

Do you have conflicted feelings about the defendant?

Have you found yourself over reacting to certain situations?

What kinds of things have you or other family members done to help memorialize the victim?

How long do you believe that your grief/fear/insecurity will last?

Have you had or still sometimes have moments when you need to remind yourself to breathe?

Have you experienced the "if onlys"?

Are there things you wanted to tell the victim but never had the opportunity?

Is it frustrating to not have friends who truly "understand" what you are feeling?

Have you experienced pain that you did not know if you could survive?

Do you have a fear of losing memories of the victim?

How much of "who you are" is based on "who the victim is"?

Do you have a sense of "why" The victim died?

What are the most troubling questions that remain with regard to how and why the victim died?

Are friends uncomfortable with you expressing your true feelings?

Was your memory transfixed for a period of time on the victim's body rather than memories of the victim's life?

Have you had fantasies about how you would deal with the defendant?

Are some people afraid to mention the victim's name?

What do you miss the most about the victim?

What is the hardest thing for you to deal with right now?

What is the one question that you would like the defendant to answer?

Are there certain items of the victim's belongings that are comforting to you?

Are you able to dream about the victim? If so, what are the dreams?

How does it feel for your personal life to have become so public?

Do you have periods of overwhelming sadness?

Do you see people that remind you of the victim?

Has the victim's death changed your perspective of your own childhood?

How has your sense of humor changed?

Do you have a sense of how the victim would want you to move forward with your own life?

Do you now have a different reaction to hearing news of another homicide/theft/assault/rape, etc?

What kinds of complications have been added to your life that are difficult to deal with?

Do you wonder what the victim was feeling at the time of the crime?

Do you hear things from others that surprise you because you had forgotten them?

Do you have a new frame of reference for time which is now measured as before and after the crime?

What were some of the victim's unique characteristics?

What were some of the victim's "firsts" that you can remember?

How did the victim interact with other children/adults as the victim began to develop friendships?

How did the victim like school and the whole notion of learning?

How did the victim like work or contributing to society?

Who were some of the victim's favorite people?

How did the victim show you the victim's different emotions?

What were some of the victim's favorite things such as food games etc.?

What were some of the victim's fears?

What were some of the goals that the victim achieved and what did the victim want to do or become in the future?

What were your first feelings when you knew something terrible had happened to the victim?