

**From the Director of Victim Services**

Since the approval of the federal Victims of Crime Act in 1984, the voices of crime victims have become an increasingly important part of criminal proceedings. Many states, including Tennessee, also have laws regarding services for crime victims. The Tennessee Department of Correction provides services related to post-conviction (corrections) to crime victims who are navigating the process. It's important that crime victims in the Volunteer State know they have the legal right to

notification about release dates and movement (to lower security level facilities) involving the offender (s) in their case. By registering with the department, crime victims can be notified when important status changes occur.

Crime has a tremendous impact on victims, family and friends of victims, as well as the community as a whole. By assisting crime victims in navigating the correctios process, the Department of Correction's Victim Services Division provides resources that can make the journey a little less confusing. The positive outcome of assisting crime victims in understanding the process is preventing them from being re-victimized by it.

The vision for crime victims served by the department is that their voices are heard, valued, and included in a collective effort to hold offenders accountable, prevent future harm, and enhance public safety.

Stay Safe!

*Tamika Dobbins*

**August 2022**

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**Victim Services Mission**

*To support victims, their families, and the laws that protect their rights, while utilizing recognized principles of offender behavioral change to help reduce the risk of repeat criminal behavior.*

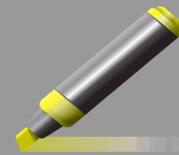
**Victim Services Provides:**

- Information regarding the status of offenders in prison with felony convictions
- Registration for victim notification
- Assistance with threats, unwanted calls/correspondence from an offender

**Victim Services Activities:**

- Community education programs
- Coordination with the Board of Parole, Attorney General's Office, and the Tennessee District Attorney General's Office to respond to victims' concerns
- Education to TDOC staff to increase awareness of victims' issues
- Collaboration with other victim advocates

## Victim Services Highlights....Let's get to know



**Amy McCullough** began working with crime victims in 1996 when she was hired as an Assistant Victim/Witness Coordinator at the Shelby County District Attorney's Office.

Throughout her career in the District Attorney's office, she has served victims in both General Sessions and Criminal Court. She was assigned to the Violent Crimes Prosecution Unit, and for many years, she worked on the First Degree Murder cases in Shelby County. Additionally, while assisting those families and witnesses affected by First Degree Murder cases, Amy was also serving as the Assistant Director of the Victim/Witness Unit.

In 2013, Amy was named the Director of the Victim/Witness Unit for the Shelby County District Attorney's Office. In this role, she supervises the largest Victim/Witness Unit in the State of Tennessee with 24 Victim/Witness Coordinators assisting victims and witnesses in Shelby County General Sessions and Criminal Court. While serving as Director, Amy still continues to assist victims and witnesses in criminal court cases.

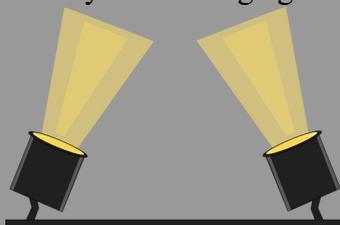
In 2017, Amy was part of the Shelby County prosecution team that received the President's Award for their work on the Holly Bobo murder trial. This annual award is presented by the Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference as voted on by Tennessee's 31 elected District Attorneys.

During the national Crime Victims' Rights Week in April of 2018, Amy was presented with the Voice for Victims Award by the Tennessee Board of Parole and Tennessee Department of Correction for outstanding service on behalf of crime victims.

Since 2011, Amy, along with other members of the Shelby County Victim/Witness Unit, have planned and organized the annual Shelby County Season of Remembrance holiday event honoring Shelby County homicide victims.

In addition to her duties in the DA's office, Amy also serves as a member of the Tennessee District Attorney's Conference Victim Services Committee and the Shelby County Domestic Violence Task Force Steering Committee.

Amy McCullough graduated from University of Memphis with a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. Outside of work, Amy enjoys spending time with her family, watching her children play sports and taking road trips.



## VOICE (Victim Offender Information Caller Emissary) to be Decommissioned

The Tennessee Department of Correction (TDOC) currently provides a toll-free hotline service for victims/victim family members to receive offender information. This service is provided through a system known as VOICE (Victim Offender Information Caller Emissary) which retrieves offender data details (current location, sentence expiration date, sentence effective date, parole hearing information, etc.). **This service has been replaced with VINE and will be disabled in the near future.**

The same data will be available through VINE, and we highly encourage all current users of VOICE to transition over to VINE at [VINELink - Tennessee \(vineapps.com\)](https://vineapps.com) or by phone at 888-868-4631.

Offender information may also be found on our website at [FOIL - Offender Search \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov/foil).

Please contact Victim Services if you have any questions at [victim.notification@tn.gov](mailto:victim.notification@tn.gov).

## Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Coach App

PTSD Coach is a free and publicly available mobile app for people with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and those interested in learning more about PTSD.

PTSD Coach app can help you learn about and manage symptoms that often occur after trauma. Features include:

- Reliable information on PTSD and treatments that work
- Tools for screening and tracking your symptoms
- Convenient, easy-to-use tools to help you handle stress symptoms
- Direct links to support and help
- Always with you when you need it



Together with professional medical treatment, PTSD Coach provides you with resources you can trust. If you have, or think you might have PTSD, this app is for you. Family and friends can also learn about PTSD and coping from this app.

The questionnaire used in PTSD Coach, the PTSD Checklist (PCL), is a reliable and valid self-report measure used across VA, DoD, and in the community, but it is not intended to replace professional evaluation.

PTSD Coach was created by the VA's National Center for PTSD and the Department of Defense's DHA Connected Health.

## How Crime Victims React to Trauma

Many crimes involve the use of force or violence against victims. Crime victims of all types of crime may experience trauma - physical damage to their bodies or emotional wounds or shock caused by the violence against them. Reactions to trauma vary from person to person and can last for hours, days, weeks, months, or years. Physical trauma: Crime victims may experience physical trauma—serious injury or shock to the body, as from a major accident. Victims may have cuts, bruises, fractured arms or legs, or internal injuries. They may have intense stress reactions: their breathing, blood pressure, and heart rate may increase, and their muscles may tighten. They may feel exhausted but unable to sleep, and they may have headaches, increased or decreased appetites, or digestive problems. Emotional trauma: Victims may experience emotional trauma—emotional wounds or shocks that may have long-lasting effects. Emotional trauma may take many different forms:

**Shock or numbness:** Victims may feel “frozen” and cut off from their own emotions. Some victims say they feel as if they are “watching a movie” rather than having their own experiences. Victims may not be able to make decisions or conduct their lives as they did before the crime.

**Denial, Disbelief, and Anger:** Victims may experience “denial,” an unconscious defense against painful or unbearable memories and feelings about the crime. Or they may experience disbelief, telling themselves, “this just could not have happened to me!” They may feel intense anger and a desire to get even with the offender.

**Acute Stress Disorder:** Some crime victims may experience trouble sleeping, flash-backs, extreme tension or anxiety, outbursts of anger, memory problems, trouble concentrating, and other symptoms of distress for days or weeks following a trauma. A person may be diagnosed as having acute stress disorder (ASD) if these or other mental disorders continue for a minimum of two days to up to four weeks within a month of the trauma. If these symptoms persist after a month, the diagnosis becomes posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

# Victim Services Monthly Statistics

## Central Office Phone Calls

| Telephone Calls   | July |
|---|------|
| Phone calls Received/Returned                               | 175  |
| Parties Registered for Notifications (phone/mail/fax/email) | 111  |
| Harassment/Threats/No Contact                               | 3    |
| Referrals   | 42   |
| Release/Parole Inquiry                                      | 49   |
| Other   | 90   |

## Central Office Mailed Notifications

| Notifications Mailed | July |
|----------------------|------|
| Registrations/Voice  | 148  |
| Movement             | 124  |
| Advance Release      | 230  |
| Final Release *      | 35   |
| Death                | 11   |
| Other                | 3    |



## Notification Statistics By Delivery Method Report 7-01-2022 to 7-31-2022

| Agency                      | Month                 | Email        | TTY      | SMS           | Phone        | InApp      | Letter     | Total         |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| TN Department of Correction | July 2022             | 9,092        | 4        | 19,845        | 3,812        | 625        | n/a        | <b>33,378</b> |
|                             | <b>AGENCY TOTALS</b>  | 9,092        | 4        | 19,845        | 3,812        | 625        | n/a        | <b>33,378</b> |
|                             | <b>OVERALL TOTALS</b> | <b>9,092</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>19,845</b> | <b>3,812</b> | <b>625</b> | <b>n/a</b> | <b>33,378</b> |

## New Registration Statistics By Registrant Classification 7-01-2022 to 7-31-2022

|                             |                       | Anonymous  | Concerned citizen | Family member of offender | Family member of victim | Law enforcement | Not Reported | Other      | Victim    | Victim coordinator/advocate | Total        |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| TN Department of Correction | July 2022             | 138        | 112               | 550                       | 130                     | 330             | 1,893        | 200        | 49        | 4                           | <b>3,406</b> |
|                             | <b>AGENCY TOTALS</b>  | 138        | 112               | 550                       | 130                     | 330             | 1,893        | 200        | 49        | 4                           | <b>3,406</b> |
|                             | <b>OVERALL TOTALS</b> | <b>138</b> | <b>112</b>        | <b>550</b>                | <b>130</b>              | <b>330</b>      | <b>1,893</b> | <b>200</b> | <b>49</b> | <b>4</b>                    | <b>3,406</b> |

# Announcements



## CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION

Training for Victim Advocates

The Criminal Injuries Compensation (CIC) Program will offer four training opportunities this fall to give victim advocates necessary resources and information. The training will be similar to the spring sessions held earlier this year. If you attended that training, you will not need to attend again. We encourage someone from your agency to attend advocate training every two to three years, and to feel empowered to train others within your agency.

Individuals may participate through Webex with a computer internet connection or by phone. The webinar will be one and a half hours in length.

Who should attend: Victim advocates who directly serve victims of crime on a daily basis; agency staff who will use what they learn to train their staff; and law enforcement staff who work with victims of crime.

Topics to be addressed include:

Benefits and guidelines of the program

Application process

Appeal process

Procedures regarding the appropriate documentation of a claim application

Attendance certificates will be provided to those attendees who sign in to WebEx via email and complete the session.

Please register for one of the four webinar sessions:

### **TUESDAY**

**August 23, 2022**

Webinar via WebEx

Workshop: 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., CT

### **WEDNESDAY**

**September 14, 2022**

Webinar via WebEx

Workshop: 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., CT

### **THURSDAY**

**October 20, 2022**

Webinar via WebEx

Workshop: 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., CT

### **WEDNESDAY**

**November 9, 2022**

Webinar via WebEx

Workshop: 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., CT

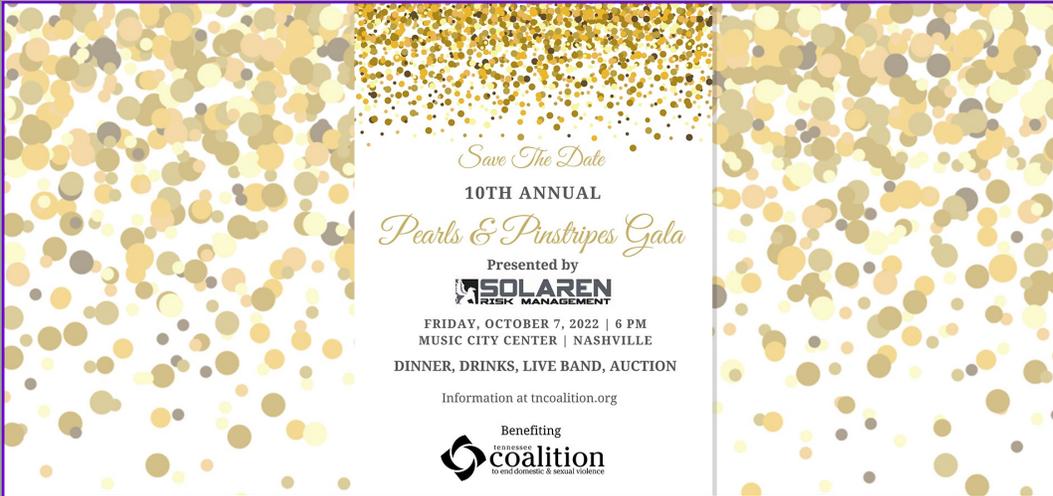


If you have any questions, you may reach us at [Criminal.Injury@tn.gov](mailto:Criminal.Injury@tn.gov). You can also find additional resources for victim advocates at [Criminal Injuries Compensation](#)

# Announcements



Stay Connected  
With #TeamTDOC!  
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## 2023 National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW)

SAVE THE DATE

April 23-29, 2023

The weeklong initiative promotes victims' rights and honors crime victims and those who advocate on their behalf.



## Tennessee Department of Correc-

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Nashville, TN 37243  
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Fax: 615-741-1055  
Email: [Victim.Notification@tn.gov](mailto:Victim.Notification@tn.gov)

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**Betsy Fletcher**

Executive Secretary  
[Betsy.Fletcher@tn.gov](mailto:Betsy.Fletcher@tn.gov)



Tennessee Domestic Violence Hotline - 800-356-6767

National Domestic Violence Hotline - 800.799.SAFE

Battered Women's Justice Project - 800.903.0111

Mothers Against Drunk Driving - 877.MADD.HELP

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children - 800.843.5678

Tennessee Human Trafficking Hotline—1-855-558-6484

National Human Trafficking Hotline - 888.373.7888

Sexual Assault Center 24 Hour Crisis & Support: 1-866-811-RISE (7473)

Corvel Corporation (Victim Compensation): 866-960-6039