

4.1.5 Duty of Police in Regards to the Crime Victims Act

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Johnstown Police Department to comply with the Pennsylvania Crime Victims Act [18 P.S. 11.101 et seq.] in regards to the responsibility of state and local law enforcement.

II. PURPOSE

To provide police personnel with guidelines on the Pennsylvania Crime Victims Act. This will assist in the dissemination of relevant information to victims of a crime.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

A. Training

The Johnstown Police Department shall insure that all of its officers and employees are familiar with crime victims' compensation, as provided in the Pennsylvania Crime Victims Act. Instruction concerning crime victims' compensation shall be made part of the training curriculum for all trainee officers.

B. Written Notification of Benefits

The Johnstown Police Department shall, within 48 hours of reporting, give notice to the victim or, if appropriate, a member of the victim's family of the availability of crime victims' compensation. The notice required shall be in writing. The written notification provided for shall be accompanied by one copy of the application form for crime victims' compensation. The Johnstown Police Department works in consort with the Cambria County Women's Help Center who maintains the record of all notifications.

C. Information

The Johnstown Police Department is responsible for providing basic information on services available for crime victims. The information shall be in writing and provided to the victim within 24 hours of the first contact with the victim.

4.1.5 continued

D. Notice

In personal injury crimes, the Johnstown Police Department shall make reasonable efforts to notify the victim of the arrest of the suspect as soon as possible. Unless the victim cannot be located, notice of arrest shall be provided not more than 24 hours after the preliminary arraignment. When known the victim shall be notified of an inmate's escape from custody of any holding facility.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Standards

1. Officers who come in contact with a serious crime victim[s] that was injured or suffered a loss are required to provide the victim[s] with information on victims' compensation and available services. Both notifications shall be in writing. The victims' compensation notification will be provided within 48 hours of contact with the victim. The available services notification will be provided within 24 hours of contact with the victim.
 - a. Ex: sexual assault, simple & aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, harassment, stalking, hate crimes, attempted homicide, DUI accident victim.
2. The Johnstown Police Department shall accomplish this notification in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. Officers shall use the pamphlet provided by the PCCD. This pamphlet will meet the criteria for both notifications. The form will direct victims to the centers, who in turn, will provide free assistance in filing victim compensation claim forms and provide information on available services.
3. Officers shall give the victim one copy of the pamphlet and return the back page, signed by the victim. If the victim wants the police department to make the notification to the Victims' Center, the representative from that center takes the signed forms along with the appropriate police reports in order to follow up on that incident.
4. Incident reports shall document the fact that the victim was provided with the proper notification paperwork, along with other pertinent information.

4.1.5 continued

5. In personal injury crimes, officers shall make reasonable efforts to notify the victim when an arrest is made, results of the arraignment, including bail conditions and status, i.e. released or committed. When known by the officer, the victim shall be notified of any escape by the suspect or release from a holding facility. This will be documented in the incident report.

Effective Date:

Date: October 1, 2010

By Order Of:

Craig Foust
Chief Of Police