



Charleston County Sheriff's Office Policy and Procedures Manual

Sheriff Carl Ritchie

14-01 CRIME VICTIM NOTIFICATION

- NEW
- REVISED
- REVIEWED

ACA Standards Reference: 5-ALDF-7F-02
CALEA Standards Reference: 55.1.1, 55.2.1, 55.2.5
NCCHC Standards Reference:
SC Minimum Standards: SC MIN. 1042(o)
PREA Standards: 115.73e

This policy dated 1/29/2025 replaces prior policies cited above and supersedes all previously issued directives.

I. Purpose:

To establish procedures for providing specific victim identification information to other criminal justice system components in a uniform and timely manner.

II. Policy:

Pursuant to §16-3-1525, of the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, as amended, it is the policy of the Charleston County Sheriff's Office to promptly notify victims of the arrest, detention, appropriate bond or other pretrial release hearings or procedures involving their respective cases.

The Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center (SACDC) uses the Victim/Witness Program to contact victims promptly of the release, transfer, escape, or death of an inmate housed in the facility, upon the request of the victim.

(Ref: SC MIN. 1042(o); 5-ALDF-7F-02)

III. Definitions:

A. For purposes of this procedure, the word "deputy" applies to all agency employees with a certification classification of Class I, Class II, Class III, or Reserve Deputy, as defined by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy.

The following terms are used interchangeably; however, they carry guidance to specific employees based on usage of the term:

1. Deputy, deputy sheriff, detention deputy, sworn employee, uniformed sworn employee, sworn administrative employee, and
2. civilian, non-sworn employee.

B. *Employee*: When used without further clarification, the term employee is inclusive of all agency members (sworn and non-sworn).

C. *Victim*: An individual who suffers direct or threatened physical, psychological or financial harm as the result of the commission or attempted commission of a criminal offense. Please note that all victims are witnesses. Victim also includes the individual's spouse, parent, child, or the lawful representative of a victim who is:

1. deceased;
2. a minor;

3. incompetent; or
4. physically or psychologically incapacitated.

Victim does not include:

1. any individual who is the subject of an investigation for, who is charged with, or who has been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo contendere to the offense in question;
 2. any individual, including a spouse, parent, child, or lawful representative who is acting on behalf of the suspect, juvenile offender, or defendant unless their actions are required by law; or
 3. any individual who was imprisoned or engaged in an illegal act at the time of the offense.
- D. *Witness*: A person who was, or is expected to be, summoned to testify for either the prosecution or the defense, or who by reason of having relevant information is subject to call or likely to be called as a witness for the prosecution or defense, whether or not any action or proceeding has yet commenced.
- E. *Criminal offense*: An offense against the person of an individual when physical or psychological harm occurs or the property of an individual when the value of the property stolen or destroyed or the cost of the damage to the property is in excess of \$1000.
- F. *Summary Court*: Refers to a Magistrate or Municipal Court.
- G. *Victim Information Notification Everyday (VINE)*: An automated computer system that is offered to crime victims in order to provide continuous access to vital inmate information. Crime victims can determine the status of the inmate by whom they were victimized. Victims may be registered with the VINE system to be automatically notified of the release, escape, transfer, or death of a specific inmate.
- H. *Notification*: The act of notifying a victim either electronically by the VINE system, by telephone, and/or in person to advise of the escape, death, transfer or pending release of an inmate.
- I. *PIN*: Personal Identification Number assigned to victims registered with the VINE System.

IV. Procedure:

- A. Pursuant to §16-3-1525, upon effecting the arrest or detention of a person accused of committing an offense involving one or more victims, the arresting deputy sheriff will facilitate the following:
1. make a reasonable attempt to notify each victim of the arrest, detention, and bond hearing date and time;
 2. make a reasonable attempt to notify each victim before releasing a juvenile offender to their parent or guardian;
 3. provide the name, mailing address and telephone number of each victim to the jail, prison, or detention or holding facility having physical custody of the defendant;
 4. provide the name, mailing address and telephone number of each victim to the Department of Juvenile Justice subsequent to detaining a juvenile offender;
 5. provide, in writing, the name, mailing address and telephone number of each victim to the prosecuting agency for any offense triable in circuit court;
 6. provide, in writing, the name, mailing address and telephone number of each victim to the court for any offense triable in summary court;
 7. protect victims and witnesses by any measures necessary, including providing transportation to and from court and physical protection while attending court. (Ref: CALEA 55.1.1 item a, and 55.2.5)
- B. Victim Notification Information Confidentiality:
1. All information provided to the agency regarding a request for notification by a victim, or the family of a victim, is considered confidential.
 2. The release of such information to any person or organization, unless so ordered by the court, is prohibited.
 3. Under no circumstances will the inmate, an agent of the inmate, and/or the inmate's family members be advised that a victim notification request exists.

- C. Upon effecting the arrest or detention of a person accused of committing an offense involving one or more victims a [Crime Victim Information Form \(CCSO Form-147\)](#), will be completed by the arresting deputy sheriff and distributed as follows:
1. Adult Offenders:
 - a. The yellow “*Detention*” copy will be left at the detention center with a copy of the *Arrest & Booking Report*.
 - b. The pink “*Solicitor*” copy will be left at the detention center for General Sessions, Family, and Summary Court Offenses.
 - c. The white “*Family/Bond/Summary Court*” copy will be turned over to the Central Bond Hearing Court at the bond hearing. Central Bond Hearing Court clerks will relay copies to the summary courts when appropriate.
 - d. The gold “*Law Enforcement Agency*” copy will be turned into the Victim/Witness box located on top of the deputy’s mailboxes, in the Patrol Room, at the LEC, before the reporting deputy sheriff ends their tour of duty.
 - e. The green “*Victim*” copy will be left with the victim. Deputy sheriffs should ensure that victims understand their rights and responsibilities as described on the back of this copy. This form also contains pertinent community resource and law enforcement agency phone numbers to include the Sheriff’s Office direct line which is manned 24 hours a day.
(Ref: CALEA 55.2.1 items *a* and *b*)
 2. Juvenile Offenders:
 - a. The yellow “*Detention Center*” copy will be left at the juvenile detention center with a copy of the *Arrest & Booking Report*. If the juvenile is released on a *Custodial Promise*, this copy will be included in the juvenile case file to be turned over to the Criminal Investigations Division.
 - b. The pink “*Solicitor*” copy will be included in the juvenile case file to be turned over to the Criminal Investigations Division.
 - c. The white “*Family/Bond/Summary Court*” copy will be included in the juvenile case file to be turned over to the

Criminal Investigations Division.

- d. The gold "Law Enforcement Agency" copy will be included in the juvenile case file to be turned over to the Criminal Investigations Division.
 - e. The green "Victim" copy will be left with the victim. Deputy sheriffs should ensure victims understand their rights and responsibilities as described on the back of this copy. This form also contains pertinent law enforcement and community resource agency phone numbers to include the Sheriff's Office direct line which is manned 24 hours a day.
- D. If an arrest was not made, and criminal charges are pending, victim(s) will be provided with the green *Crime Victim Information* form containing victims' rights information and contact numbers by the reporting deputy sheriff.
(Ref: CALEA 55.2.1 items a and b)
- E. Reporting deputy sheriffs will inform each victim of [SAVIN \(Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification\)](#), an automated computer program offered for crime victims in Charleston County, by providing the victim:
1. a green copy of the Crime Victim Information Form which contains SAVIN contact information; or
 2. a victim assistance contact card; or
 3. the number for the Charleston County Sheriff's Office officer of the day, who has access to pertinent victim assistance numbers 24 hours a day.
(Ref: CALEA 55.2.5 & 55.2.1 item b)
- F. Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center Responsibilities:
1. Processing/Intake Duties:
 - a. Upon receipt of an inmate charged with a criminal offense, as defined in this directive, the Processing/Intake Detention Deputy will verify that a completed *Crime Victim Information Sheet* or other agencies form(s) accompanies the *Arrest and Booking Report* with the original charge notated on the report.
 - b. The Processing/Intake Detention Deputy will alert the arresting officer if the *Crime Victim Information Sheet* is

incomplete. In the event the arresting officer does not have the information necessary to complete the form at the time of processing, and the crime falls under "criminal offense", the Processing/Intake Detention Deputy will accept the incomplete form and advise the arresting officer to bring the completed information within four hours. The Processing/Intake Detention Deputy will notify their supervisor of the situation. When the completed information is received, the arresting officer will place it in the box for Victim/Witness.

- c. A *Crime Victim Information Sheet* is not required for inmates booked in on a "weekender" status.
 - d. When an individual is charged with a General Sessions Bench Warrant, a copy of the warrant must be attached to the *Arrest and Booking Report*, and it must be placed in the "Victim/Witness" box in lieu of a crime victim information sheet.
 - e. The Processing/Intake Detention Deputy will make a copy of any *Crime Victim Information Sheet* received and file it in the inmate's booking jacket.
 - f. The arresting officer will attach the yellow copy (SACDC's copy) and the pink copy (Solicitor's Office copy) of the *Crime Victim Information Sheet* to the *Arrest and Booking Report* and place them in the "Victim/Witness" box.
 - g. If the crime was against a business, abandoned house, state or city property, the Processing/Intake Detention Deputy will ensure that the arresting officer has legibly recorded the reason that there is not a *Crime Victim Information Sheet* by writing "business", "abandoned house", or "state or city property" on the *Arrest and Booking Report*, prior to the arresting officer leaving, and will place it in the "Victim/Witness" box.
 - h. The processing supervisor will sign the *Arrest and Booking Report* in the inmate's booking jacket and the folder will be given to active records for filing.
2. Victim Services Responsibilities:
 - a. Victim Services is responsible for victim notifications during

regular office hours. Active Records will assume those responsibilities after hours.

- b. Victim Services will periodically check their in-box in intake to pick up any copies of *Arrest and Booking Reports* and *Crime Victim Information Sheets*.
- c. Victim Services will maintain the following information for each victim notification.
 - i. the *Arrest and Booking Report*;
 - ii. the *Crime Victim Information Sheet* with the name and contact information of each victim to be notified; and
 - iii. a copy of the bench warrant, if applicable.
- d. Upon receiving the *Arrest and Booking Report* and the *Crime Victim Information Sheet*, Victim Services will enter the victim's data into the Jail Management System (JMS).
- e. The Victim Advocate will contact the victim to verify all information and to register the Victim in VINE, upon request.
 - i. If a victim declines being notified on the crime information sheet, the victim advocate must speak to the victim to confirm that the request to be notified was declined.
 - ii. Once a victim declines notification, the victim advocate will enter a warning note in the inmate's JMS file under tasks, stating the charge, the warrant number, if applicable, stating the victim declined notice, followed by the victim advocate's initials and date.
- f. If all reasonable attempts have been exhausted to contact a victim, and if the information is deemed invalid, the victim advocate will document this information in inmate's JMS file under tasks.
- g. SACDC staff receiving a request for victim notification will forward the request to the Victim Services Office.
- h. Victims are encouraged to register with the VINE system.

Inquiries on a lost or forgotten PIN, necessary to discontinue VINE system calls, will be transferred to the Victim Services Office.

3. Inmate Custody Status Change:
 - a. When information is received on an inmate's pending release or an inmate's death, Victim Services will, after giving notification to the victim, make an appropriate note in the JMS narrative and notify records and releasing that the inmate is cleared to be released.
 - b. When an inmate is being transferred to another facility, to include the Department of Corrections, Victim Services will notify the victim(s) after the inmate has been transferred.
 - c. If an inmate escapes from custody, the victim will be immediately notified and re-notified upon apprehension of the inmate.
 - d. When telephone contact is unsuccessful, or not an option, a Victim Advocate will contact the law enforcement agency in the victim's jurisdiction (within the state of South Carolina) and request that an officer be dispatched to the victim's address to attempt contact.
 - e. Victim Services will document in the JMS notification disposition the following:
 - i. agency contacted;
 - ii. agency operator number; and
 - iii. date and time. (PREA 115.73e)
4. Transfer of Notification Inmates:
 - a. If an inmate is transferred to another facility and charges are not disposed, Victim Services will make copies of the *Crime Victim Information Sheet* and complete the *Crime Victim Transfer Form (SACDC Form-463)* for the receiving facility. The copies will be sealed in an envelope stamped "confidential."
 - b. If an inmate returns from the South Carolina Department of

Corrections (SCDC), for a court appearance or post-conviction hearing, it is the responsibility of SCDC or the Solicitor's Office to notify the victim.

- c. If the inmate returns from SCDC and will not be returning to that facility, Victim Services will reopen the inmate victim's file and notify the victim.

5. Deaf and Hearing-Impaired Victim:

The Telecommunication Device (TDD) is available for the Victim Witness office to contact deaf or hearing-impaired victims and is located in the Housing Lieutenant's office.