

# **Administrative Complaint Process and Procedures to Promote Compliance with Crime Victims' Rights Obligations**

## **(See 28 C.F.R. §45.10)**

1. (a) Definitions. The following definitions shall apply with respect to this section, which implements the provisions of the Justice for All Act that relate to protection of the rights of crime victims. See 18 U.S.C. 3771 (Justice for All Act of 2004).

Crime victim means a person directly and proximately harmed as a result of the commission of a Federal offense or an offense in the District of Columbia. In the case of a crime victim who is under 18 years of age, incompetent, incapacitated, or deceased, the legal guardians of the crime victim or the representatives of the crime victim's estate, family members, or any other persons appointed as suitable by the court, may assume the crime victim's rights, but in no event shall the defendant be named as such guardian or representative.

Crime victims' rights means those rights provided in 18 U.S.C. 3771 (Justice for All Act of 2004).

Employee of the Department of Justice means an attorney, investigator, law enforcement officer, or other personnel employed by any division or office of the Department of Justice whose regular course of duties includes direct interaction with crime victims, not including a contractor.

Office of the Department of Justice means a component of the Department of Justice whose employees directly interact with crime victims in the regular course of their duties.

(b) The Attorney General shall designate an official within the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA) to receive and investigate complaints alleging the failure of Department of Justice employees to provide rights to crime victims under 18 U.S.C. 3771. The official shall be called the Department of Justice Victims' Rights Ombudsman (VRO). The VRO shall then designate, in consultation with each office of the Department of Justice, an official in each office to serve as the initial point of contact (POC) for complainants.

(c) Complaint process. (1) Complaints must be submitted in writing to the POC of the relevant office or offices of the Department of Justice (Administrative Complaint Form). If a complaint alleges a violation that would create a conflict of interest for the POC to investigate, the complaint shall be forwarded by the POC immediately to the VRO. See below for the POC for the United States Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Michigan.

(2) Complaints shall contain, to the extent known to, or reasonably available to, the victim, the following information:

(i) The name and personal contact information of the crime victim who allegedly was denied one or more crime victims' rights;

(ii) The name and contact information of the Department of Justice employee who is the subject of the complaint, or other identifying information if the complainant is not able to provide the name and contact information;

(iii) The district court case number;

(iv) The name of the defendant in the case;

(v) The right or rights listed in 18 U.S.C. 3771 that the Department of Justice employee is alleged to have violated; and

(vi) Specific information regarding the circumstances of the alleged violation sufficient to enable the POC to conduct an investigation, including, but not limited to: The date of the alleged violation; an explanation of how the alleged violation occurred; whether the complainant notified the Department of Justice employee of the alleged violation; how and when such notification was provided to the Department of Justice employee; and actions taken by the Department of Justice employee in response to the notification.

(3) Complaints must be submitted within 60 days of the victim's knowledge of a violation, but not more than one year after the actual violation

(4)(I) In response to a complaint that provides the information required under paragraph (c)(2) of this section and that contains specific and credible information that demonstrates that one or more crime victims' rights listed in 18 U.S.C. 3771 may have been violated by a Department of Justice employee or office, the POC shall investigate the allegation(s) in the complaint within a reasonable period of time.

(ii) The POC shall report the results of the investigation to the VRO.

(5) Upon receipt of the POC's report of the investigation, the VRO shall determine whether to close the complaint without further action, whether further investigation is warranted, or whether action in accordance with paragraphs (d) or (e) of this section is necessary.

(6) Where the VRO concludes that further investigation is warranted, he may conduct such further investigation. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the VRO may close the complaint if he determines that no further action is warranted or may take action under paragraph (d) or (e) of this section.

(7) The VRO shall be the final arbiter of the complaint.

(8) A complainant may not seek judicial review of the VRO's determination regarding the complaint.

(9) To the extent permissible in accordance with the Privacy Act and other relevant statutes and regulations regarding release of information by the Federal government, the VRO, in his discretion, may notify the complainant of the result of the investigation.

(10) The POC and the VRO shall refer to the Office of the Inspector General and to the Office of Professional Responsibility any matters that fall under those offices' respective jurisdictions that

come to light in an investigation.

(d) If the VRO finds that an employee or office of the Department of Justice has failed to provide a victim with a right to which the victim is entitled under 18 U.S.C. 3771, but not in a willful or wanton manner, he shall require such employee or office of the Department of Justice to undergo training on victims' rights.

(e) Disciplinary procedures. (1) If, based on the investigation, the VRO determines that a Department of Justice employee has wantonly or willfully failed to provide the complainant with a right listed in 18 U.S.C. 3771, the VRO shall recommend, in conformity with laws and regulations regarding employee discipline, a range of disciplinary sanctions to the head of the office of the Department of Justice in which the employee is located, or to the official who has been designated by Department of Justice regulations and procedures to take action on disciplinary matters for that office. The head of that office of the Department of Justice, or the other official designated by Department of Justice regulations and procedures to take action on disciplinary matters for that office, shall be the final decision-maker regarding the disciplinary sanction to be imposed, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

(2) Disciplinary sanctions available under paragraph (e)(1) of this section include all sanctions provided under the Department of Justice Human Resources Order, 1200.1.

**Point of Contact (POC) for the United States Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Michigan:**

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This document and the standard Administrative Complaint Form are available in hard copy from the POC and on the U. S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Michigan website at [www.usdoj.gov/usao/mie/](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mie/). To file a complaint, the Administrative Complaint Form must be completed, signed and mailed, hand-delivered or faxed to the POC named above.