

**Volunteer Victim Impact Speaker  
Montana Department of Corrections**

I would like to discuss the possibility of speaking on a Victim Impact Panel. I am submitting this form with the understanding that I may decide at any time not to participate.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever participated on a victim impact panel? If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Crime: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Court case (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Offender's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the offender convicted? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sentenced? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is the offender now? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form to:

Montana Department of Corrections  
Victim Programs Manager  
P.O. Box 201301  
Helena, MT 59620

**WHERE IS YOUR OFFENDER?**

Register for our free, confidential, automated VINE service to track the current whereabouts of your offender.

If your offender is under Montana Department of Corrections supervision, VINE (Victim Information & Notification Everyday) will contact you by telephone, email or text message with custody status and location updates, such as facility transfers, release into the community, or sentence expiration. VINE will notify you of upcoming parole and sentence review hearings, and tell you if the offender dies in custody or escapes.

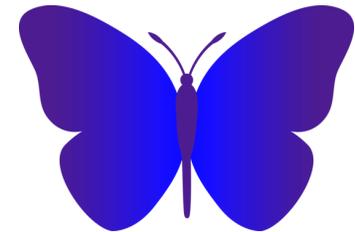
Call VINE toll-free at (800) 456-3076 or register online at [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com). You may also download a free mobile app for your iPod or smart phone at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/vinemobile/id625472495?mt=8> or <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.appriss.vinemobile>.



**Montana Department of Corrections  
Victim Programs**

Toll-free: (888) 223-6332  
Email: JRogers4@mt.gov

*Victim  
Impact  
Panels*



**Montana Department of  
Corrections  
Victim Programs**



(406) 444-7461; (888) 223-6332

## *The Department of Corrections... Helping Victims Heal*

### **What is a Victim Impact Panel?**

Victim Impact Panels (VIPs) under the Montana Department of Corrections consist of two to four victims of felony crimes who volunteer to talk with a group of convicted adult offenders about how crimes have harmed them, their loved ones and their communities. Each volunteer speaks for a designated amount of time and then offenders may be invited to ask questions.

### **Why would a victim want to participate on a VIP?**

VIPs provide victims an opportunity to express their feelings about the crimes committed against them. This typically helps victims in the healing process. Those who have participated on VIPs report that they feel empowered by telling their stories to a listening audience. Some appreciate an opportunity to make a difference by holding offenders accountable.

### **Where do VIPs occur?**

VIPs are conducted at community corrections programs, such as prerelease centers, drug and alcohol treatment facilities, a boot camp at Montana State

Prison, and Montana Women's Prison. Offenders attend VIPs as part of a victim impact curriculum.

Victim volunteers are not expected to travel long distances.

### **Will my offender be there?**

No. The Department of Corrections will ensure that your offender is not part of the group attending the VIP on which you are speaking. The VIP is not an appropriate forum for victims to face their actual offenders. If you would like to meet directly with your offender, call the MDOC victim programs manager at (888) 223-6332 to discuss a Victim-Offender Dialogue with a trained facilitator.

### **Will I be safe during the VIP?**

The personal safety and security of victim volunteers and all other parties involved is the most important consideration in the preparation process for a VIP. All parties learn in advance about appropriate behavior at a VIP. We work with our victim volunteers to be sure the environment is safe. In most situations, security staff is nearby. A VIP should not be frightening for anyone.

### **Do offenders benefit from attending a VIP?**

VIPs force offenders to confront the personal harm they caused their victims, families, friends and communities. Some offenders view themselves as victims because they were caught. If no one was physically injured during the crime,

offenders might believe the crime had no victims. Most offenders report that the VIP was an important factor in their decisions to take responsibility for their criminal actions, participate in treatment, and change their lives.

### **How do you find volunteers for VIPs?**

Victim advocates, prosecutors, Department of Corrections staff, and other victim volunteers spread the word about VIPs. If you are interested in participating on a VIP, the victim programs manager will help you decide if this is the right decision for you. You can change your mind at any time.

### **Will I be paid for speaking on a victim impact panel?**

Most facilities reimburse victims for their travel expenses and meals, and some also offer volunteers a stipend.

### **THE BUTTERFLY**

The butterfly was a symbol of healing for crime victim Anita Richards. She founded the VIP program at Treasure State Correctional Training Center (boot camp) after her son Jim was murdered in 1992. Mrs. Richards spoke to thousands of offenders before she passed away in 2008.

