



## Montana Board of Pardons and Parole

1002 Hollenbeck Road, Deer Lodge, MT 59722 || 406-846-1404

**Greg Gianforte, Governor**  
**Steven K. Hurd, Board Chair**

### **Victim Impact statements for Parole Board hearings**

You may be curious as to why this inmate is eligible for parole and how you can participate in the parole hearing. Per Montana statute, inmates are eligible to appear before the Montana Board of Pardons and Parole (BOPP) after serving  $\frac{1}{4}$  of their Court ordered sentence. You can participate in parole hearings by listening to the hearing, by speaking at the hearing (either confidentially or non-confidentially), or by writing a letter to the BOPP. These letters are referred to as Victim Impact Statements.

Victim impact statements give you the chance to tell your story. A statement is a tool to help the BOPP further understand how this crime has affected you, your family, and those close to you. Many victims find it helpful to voice how their lives have been impacted by the crime committed against them; physically, financially, emotionally, and even spiritually. Without your input, many offenders may never know the true impact of their actions.

This is meant to be used as a guideline to assist you in creating your own statement, you are free to compose your statement any way you wish. Write simply and descriptively. While nobody can truly understand what you are feeling or have experienced; you can help others identify with your trauma by using feeling evoking words and phrases. Using descriptive words can help people form an image of what you are saying.

When completing a Victim Impact Statement, please feel free to save this document and write under the sections should you find that more convenient. If you'd like, you can complete the questions and save it as your Victim Impact Statement. Otherwise, you can create your own statement. Please send all statement(s) to [Tanya.Brackenbury@mt.gov](mailto:Tanya.Brackenbury@mt.gov) or [DZent@mt.gov](mailto:DZent@mt.gov)

#### **Please include the following Information:**

- Victim(s) name(s):
- Inmate name:
- Crime in which the Inmate was convicted of against you:
- Do you share any family members, children, property or items with the inmate? Are there any unresolved civil matters such as parenting plans, estates, Youth in Need of Care hearings, etc.
- Are you requesting a county restriction? If so, where and can you please provide a brief description as to why you are requesting this specific county.
- When was the last time you had any contact with this inmate

**Frequently, victims feel they have not been able to adequately share their story. In addition to the above information, you may wish to include:**

- Additional information regarding the crime you feel would assist BOPP in making an informed decision.
- Your perspective on what occurred during the crime.
- Emphasis on the portion of the crime that was and is most traumatizing to you.
- Any previous history with the defendant that supports a pattern of behavior.

**If you would like to share the emotional and mental impact, you may consider:**

- How life has changed for you and those close to you as a result of the crime.
- How your ability to relate to others has changed as a result of the crime.
- Any counseling or other support you have needed as a result of the crime.

**If you or your family members were injured, you may wish to describe:**

- The specific physical injuries you or members of your family suffered as a result of the crime.
- Details of the crime and the offender's actions you especially want the BOPP board to be aware of.

**What should I include in my statement?**

Only you know how best to describe the effects this crime has had on you, those close to you and your community. We realize it may be difficult to describe in words how the crime has affected you. To assist you with your thoughts and feelings, we recommend you write an impact statement.

Please remember you are addressing the BOPP and writing the statement to the BOPP for consideration and not directly addressing the inmate. The above guidelines do not cover the totality of the impact of crime but may be used as a starting point. Victim Impact statements are unique to you and people have various ways of expressing how crime has affected them.

**If I have additional questions or further assistance, please contact:**

**Darren Zent**  
**406-559-0874 cell**  
[DZent@mt.gov](mailto:DZent@mt.gov)

**Tanya Brackenbury**  
**406-459-7027 cell or 406-415-6135 office**  
[Tanya.Brackenbury@mt.gov](mailto:Tanya.Brackenbury@mt.gov)