

Victim Impact Statement Service FAQ's

What is a victim impact statement, and why is it so important to you as a crime victim?

A victim impact statement is normally read in open court, or given to the judge, during the sentencing phase of a criminal trial. Often it's the only time within a trial that a surviving victim can speak openly about the impact of the crime on their lives.

A victim impact statement is voluntary, it's not a requirement, but it's helpful for the judge to know the impact of the crime on your life and the lives of those around you when sentencing the perpetrator. You may be asked your opinion on sentencing and it may or may not be taken into consideration in the judge's decision.

Why should I use a professional service?

In some cases, the surviving victims may be too emotionally distraught, or may not have the ability to correctly express their feelings. A professional who has experience as a victim of crime, as well as assisting others through the criminal justice system, can help you put your thoughts into a professionally written statement, and coach you on your delivery in court.

Why should I hire Donna R. Gore to write my victim impact statement?

Donna R. Gore is a surviving victim of crime and has first hand experience in writing and delivering a victim impact statement when her father was murdered in 1981. 6 years after the murder, the defendant was convicted and sentenced. 34 years later, and much to the family's surprise, the perpetrator was up for parole.

Donna and her family attended the parole hearing and exercised their right to deliver individual victim impact statements anonymously to secure their identities and safety. These victim impact statements are a permanent record in the file of the convict and can be used in future reviews for parole. The Gore family was successful in keeping him in prison, but he is up for parole every 5 years.

Donna has been active in advocacy since her father's murder, a charter member of Survivors of Homicide, Inc. in Connecticut, engaged as a court escort in several high profile trials, and has written extensively about crime, the judicial system and victims' rights.

Who needs to have copies of my victim impact statement?

Your victim impact statement becomes part of the court record and part of the defendant's permanent file, therefore, copies may be provided to the judge, prosecutor, parole officers, probation officers, the defendant and the defendant's attorney. Depending on the jurisdiction, it's wise to check if you may refrain from entering your personal information on the statement.

Do I have to read in open court, or can someone do it for me.

If needed, a professional may read the statement for you if you feel you aren't able to do so, as an appointed representative of the family.

Donna Gore only accepts cases from families of homicide victims, as that is her area of expertise. She does not work in the field of intimate partner violence and cases concerning divorce or custody issues. **If your case involves intimate partner or family violence, please refer to DocumentTheAbuse.com*

About Donna R. Gore, M.A.

Donna Gore created the service program for crime victims and offers her assistance in creating a cohesive **victim impact statement** tailored to the individuals and their cases. She recognized that this could be of great value to not only the crime victim, but to the court system as well.

By using Gore's services, a crime victim can be coached on how to best present their **victim impact statement**. From her vast experience volunteering in the courtroom, she is able to act as a liaison with advocates who may not have the same experiences. Working with the court advocates, attorneys, and prosecutors, not only will the crime victims' voices be heard, they will be presented professionally, courteously, and effectively.

Donna R. Gore is the host of the internet radio show, [Shattered Lives](#) which broadcasts each week on the **Inside Lenz Network**.