

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Attention to:

Community-based Victim Services
Police-based Victim Services
Provincial Associations

Subject: Bill S-12 and Changes to Victim Impact Statement Forms

Federal Bill S-12, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Sex Offender Information Registration Act and the International Transfer of Offenders Act*, received Royal Assent and came into force on October 26, 2023. Within, a series of changes were made to the prescribed form in the *Criminal Code* for the Victim Impact Statement (VIS) form and the Victim Impact Statement – Not Criminally Responsible (VIS-NCR) form that goes to every victim automatically.

On the VIS form, the red text is new:

- I would like to present my statement in court.** (This sentence is not new, but the check box is)
- I would like to receive information respecting the sentence imposed on the offender and its administration.** (This is new and appears to have been added in light of the new section 726.3)

On the VIS-NCR form, on the last page, the red text is new:

- I would like to read or present my statement (in court or before the Review Board).** (This sentence is not new, but the check box is)
- I would like to receive information respecting any hearings held to make or review a disposition in respect of the accused.**
- I would like to receive information respecting any disposition made in respect of the accused.**
- If the accused is discharged absolutely or conditionally, I would like to receive notice of that discharge and of the accused's intended place of residence.**

These forms are available online and should be used immediately:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bc-prosecution-service/victim-impact-statements>.

There have also been minor changes to the Statement on Restitution form and the Community Impact form, to change *Regina* to *Rex*, reflecting the change in monarch.

The original forms, last updated with the coming of the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights, were translated into nine additional languages. The updated forms will be translated and available online shortly.

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Bill S-12 came into force on the date of Royal Assent, with the exception of section 35, which comes into force on a day to be fixed by order of the Governor in Council. Section 35 would require a court that sentences a person to a penitentiary to forward the name of and contact information of a victim who wishes to receive information about the case to the Correctional Service of Canada.

Please also note that in situations where a victim is deceased, the name that should be entered at the top of a VIS form beside “victim” is the person who has suffered physical or emotional harm, property damage or economic loss as a result of the offence, and *not* the name of a deceased person. This is not a change due to Bill S-12, but rather a common error that requires clarification.

Further communications regarding other Bill S-12 amendments are coming soon.

Any further questions can be directed to Karen Spears at Karen.Spears@gov.bc.ca.