



Department of
Youth Services

Message from DYS Director Harvey Reed

Roberta's Law

March 22, 2013

Dear Staff:

One of the many services provided by the Office of Victim Services (OVS) at DYS is to provide crime victims with written notification of potential or actual status changes of youth. If a crime victim has "opted in," they are notified when a youth will potentially be released from DYS and when it has been confirmed that a youth will be released.

Senate Bill 160, known as "Roberta's Law," takes effect today. Roberta's Law expands victim notification rights specified in Ohio Revised Code section 2930.16. The law requires that all victims of juvenile offenders admitted for offenses of violence must be automatically "opted in" to receive notification. This is important because not all victims remember to "opt in" for notification. In addition, the law increases the length of release and discharge review notices from 30 days to 60 days. Victims of youth admitted with felony 4 and 5 level offenses will still be provided notification services upon the victims' request to be "opted in."

DYS encourages all victims affected by Roberta's Law to contact the Office of Victim Services (OVS) using the contact information listed below, to either provide information regarding the preferred method of notification or to opt-out of notification. Information regarding the victim's ability to participate in applicable proceedings will be included within the notice as required.

To read Roberta's Law in its entirety, please visit:

http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=129_SB_160. To call OVS, please call Bruce Adams, OVS Administrator, or Kate Foulke, Victim Services Coordinator, at (800) 872-3132. Staff can be reached by email at Victim.Services@dys.ohio.gov.

Sincerely,

Harvey J. Reed, Director
Department of Youth Services