

## Victim Impact Letter to the Parole Board

You still have a voice! Marcy's Law gives victims and a victim's next of kin the opportunity to be heard at a parole hearing. This can be done in a few ways: in person, through Microsoft Teams, and by statements made in person or through written letters. If you choose to write a letter to the parole board, what can you include in your letter? Below, you will find a list of suggested areas that you may wish to cover in your Impact Statement. All the topics may not apply to your specific situation. Only you know the full impact of what this crime has had on you or your family. These suggested areas have been found to be compelling when presented to Parole Boards, which are tasked with deciding whether the inmate is suitable for parole.

### Areas of Discussion:

1. How your life and the lives of your family have been impacted physically, financially, and emotionally by the crime committed against you.
2. How your life and the lives of your family have been impacted physically, financially, and emotionally by the crime committed against your family member.
3. How life has changed for you and your family. What is life like for you now because you were a victim or because your family member was a victim.
4. Facts about the crime:
  - a. Injuries you suffered
  - b. How long those injuries lasted
  - c. Therapy required
  - d. Job loss or lost wages
  - e. Medical expenses
5. Negative contact from the inmate since his/her incarceration. Have you heard from the inmate or on behalf of the inmate that has impacted your life? (This is less common.)
6. Your recommendations – what do you want from this hearing.
7. Things to avoid:
  - a. Do not address the inmate directly in a parole hearing letter. Direct all communication to the board members. For example, "The inmate hurt me physically by\_\_\_\_."
  - b. Avoid all descriptive and derogatory language aimed towards the inmate. Avoid name calling and instead be descriptive about the acts.

For more direction or help, please contact the Division of Victim Services at the District Attorney's Office. Also, additional resources can be found at <https://www.ican-foundation.org/> and [Board of Parole Hearings - Board of Parole Hearings \(ca.gov\)](#)