

another way for you to be heard without attending the hearing. If you do not wish to write out a statement, you have the right to be present and speak to the judge at the time of the sentencing hearing. **Please be advised that the defendant will be present during the hearing at the time when you address the Court.

Who Should the Victim Contact at the District Court Office for Assistance?

You should contact the victim/witness advocate Kristin Maki, at (603)-427-1500 Extension 464. Please be sure to provide the defendant's name in order for us to promptly assist you. Our office recommends notifying your victim/witness advocate of your choice on how you would like to present your statement, either written or verbally and whether or not you would like to attend the hearing. Additionally, your advocate can notify you when and how to present your statement to the Court during a sentencing hearing, if you do choose to attend. An advocate is available to accompany you and others close to you to this hearing and can remain with you throughout the entire hearing. Feel free to contact your advocate at any time throughout the Court process with any questions you may have.

PORTSMOUTH, NH
VICTIM/WITNESS
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Kristin Maki
Victim/Witness Advocate
(603)-610-7464

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COMPLETING YOUR VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT



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What is a Victim Impact Statement and How is it Used?

As a victim of crime, you have the opportunity to address the Court in the form of a Victim Impact Statement. This statement describes how the crime has affected you and others close to you. It is a statement prepared by you **after** the accused individual has pleaded guilty or been found guilty. You can address the physical, emotional, and financial effects of this crime, as well as any other changes in your life you may have experienced. Your impact statement will help the judge understand how this crime has affected you. If your child is the victim in the case, you may prepare a statement on behalf of your child.

Making a Statement is Voluntary

You do not have to provide a victim impact statement. However, it may be helpful to the judge when determining what sentence the defendant should receive and/or any money the defendant may have to pay you for expenses you have paid or owe because of this crime. You should be aware that the defendant and the defendant's attorney will have the

opportunity to review your statement. Your statement will become part of the official record for the case and will likely become part of the defendant's permanent file. Those of us involved in your case encourage you to complete a statement and believe that it is very important for you to help the sentencing judge understand all of the ways this crime has affected you and those near you. **No one knows better than you do how this crime may have changed your life.** Thank you for taking the time to provide us with this information.

Suggestions for Completing Your Impact Statement

The following suggestions are offered only as a guide in completing your statement. In your own words:

You do not:

- need to address the specific facts of the crime. The judge will already be advised of this information.

You should detail:

- the emotional impact of this crime;
- the physical effects of this crime;
- any injuries you may have received;

- and the effect of the crime on your ability to work or do any of the things you normally perform or enjoy.

You may also include what you believe the defendant's sentence should be in your case. Examples of appropriate requests include that the defendant be ordered to complete counseling, be incarcerated, or ordered to have no contact with you. Although the judge will decide the defendant's sentence, the judge may consider your opinion before making this decision. You can send this statement into our office and we will provide it to the Court. You should also include any documentation that you may have in your possession for purposes of assisting the judge in determining an accurate amount of restitution, if any, owed to you.

In some cases, a judge may order a presentence investigative report to be completed by a member from the Probation Department. This person may contact you to ask you for your input regarding the case so that they may provide the Court with a complete report. Our office requests that you notify your advocate if you send in information to the Probation Department. This may prevent you from having to complete two impact statements. This is