

# Oklahoma State Bureau Of Investigation



## Victim Information Booklet



# Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation

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OSBI Headquarters  
6600 North Harvey Place  
Oklahoma City, OK

800-522-6724  
405-848-6724  
[www.osbi.ok.gov](http://www.osbi.ok.gov)

The information provided in this booklet is intended to help you and your family better understand the process during the aftermath of losing a loved one to an act of violence. The physical and emotional reaction you are experiencing may not be the same as the reaction you notice from another member of your family. This is normal; everyone reacts to tragedy in a unique manner.

The agent assigned to your loved one's case will do everything in their power to arrest the individual(s) responsible for the death of your loved one. However, there is no guarantee that an arrest will be made. If an arrest is made, that is not the end of the case. The ultimate goal remains for the offender to be convicted of the crime in court. Again, there is no guarantee that the individual arrested will be convicted.

Homicide cases are difficult to solve. According to the FBI, the national clearance rate for 2017 was **61.6%**. However, the 2017 OSBI clearance rate was much higher at **76.5%** for homicide cases solved\*. The information included in this packet will probably not answer all of your questions but it may provide you the resources necessary to help you find those answers. The agent assigned to your loved one's case needs you and the community's assistance. Countless hours of investigative work can and often does lead to the discovery of witnesses; however, "word on the street" can also lead the investigator in the right direction. Despite depictions in the media, forensic examination (DNA, fingerprints, video footage, etc.) is rarely the sole reason a case is solved.

The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation extends its condolences to you and your family. Your loved one deserves justice and OSBI Agents are committed to the legal process as law enforcement peace officers.

**OSBI Victim Services Coordinators:** Christy Penney (405)715-9579  
Email: [victims.support@osbi.ok.gov](mailto:victims.support@osbi.ok.gov) Steve Brookman (405)715-9505

Are available resources to further guide you through the information contained in this booklet with questions or concerns. They can be an integral part of the victim assistance process during all stages of the investigation and prosecution of the offender.

\* **OSBI Clearance Rates were based on the same conditions as the FBI.** \*

The resources available within this informational packet include.

(page 3)

- 
- **What is the OSBI and why are they investigating this case?**

(page 4)

- 
- **How to reach the OSBI in your area**, to provide/receive case information.
  - **Victim's Personal Property Release Procedure**— how to obtain personal effects from the loved one if possible within the case specifics.
  - **Anonymous Tip Line and Website** to provide an outlet for investigative case leads without the requirement of source identification.

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- **Common Questions** – funeral services and how to contact the medical examiner's office.

(page 6)

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- **Victim Rights Information Under State Law**, these are rights afforded to the victims of crimes through the Oklahoma legislature under state statutes Title 19 Section 215.33

(pages 7-8)

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- **Victim Assistance Information** to provide resources for the victim's loved ones and witnesses to crimes.
  - **Court Process in Criminal Trial- Steps Explained**

(pages 9-10)

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- **Courthouse Contact and Court Proceedings Information**, the contact phone number for the court prosecuting District Attorneys.

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- **Court Websites** to allow tracking of important court case event dates.
  - **Post-Conviction Legal Proceedings information website** that will allow the proper information sharing from the legal prison system to the public regarding the status of a prisoner within the Oklahoma Department of Corrections

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- **Crime Victim Compensation Act Information**
  - **Grief Information Resources** – where to find experts to assist with the processing of grief for the loss of a loved one. Support group information.

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- **What can you do as a surviving family member?**
  - **Crime scene cleanup information**

## What is the OSBI and how do they relate to the homicide investigation of your loved one?



The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) was initially established in 1925 as the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation. The need for a state wide law enforcement agency was determined by the state legislature to investigate some of the worst crimes within the state of Oklahoma.

In 1957, the legislature separated and renamed this investigative branch of the Department of Public safety to its current title- the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation. As in its infancy, the governor had direct control over the OSBI.

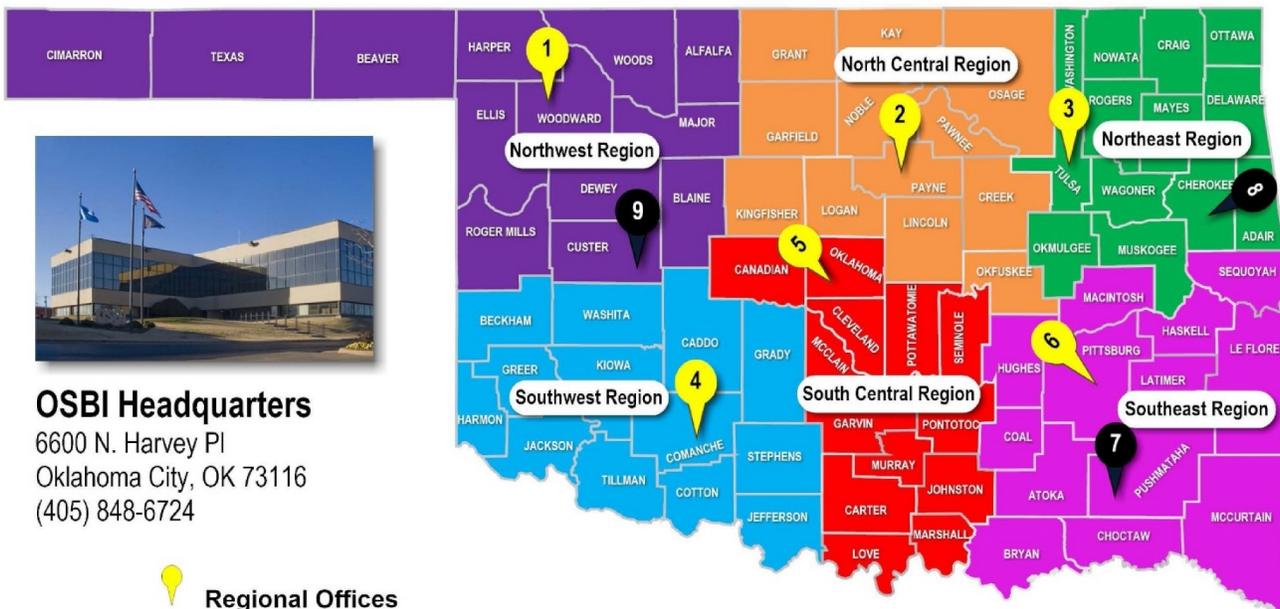
In 1976, lawmakers made another change and placed the OSBI under a seven member commission- the current set up of today. The governor appoints commission members every seven years. This independence from state government allows the OSBI to investigate crimes without political pressures.

Any law enforcement agency within the state, including police departments, sheriffs, and district attorneys can call upon the bureau to investigate a crime, process evidence, or provide investigative assistance. By design, through state statute, this is a necessary request for the OSBI to be called in by local law enforcement before OSBI investigators can provide any assistance on most crimes.

The OSBI crime scene agents use some of the most advanced tools to investigate and document the scene. Coupled with the most current laboratory techniques, OSBI Criminalists utilize today's knowledge of forensic science based methods of evidence examination to support the field investigators. OSBI experienced field agents have developed the skills of witness and suspect interview. This team effort allows the OSBI to be well suited to investigate major crimes in the state of Oklahoma.

# How to contact the OSBI:

## OKLAHOMA STATE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION INVESTIGATIVE REGIONS



**OSBI Headquarters**  
6600 N. Harvey Pl  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116  
(405) 848-6724

**Regional Offices**

	Region	Location	Telephone
1	Northwest	Woodward	580-256-1771
2	North Central	Stillwater	405-372-1516
3	Northeast	Tulsa	918-582-9075
4	Southwest	Lawton	580-248-4050
5	South Central	Oklahoma City (HQ)	405-879-2612
6	Southeast	McAlester	918-423-6672

**Satellite Offices**

	Location	Telephone
7	Antlers	580-298-5525
8	Tahlequah	918-456-0653
9	Weatherford	580-772-6724

**Your Assigned Case Agent can be reached through the respective regional office number above.**

## How to obtain personal effects from the deceased:

You can often request these items be released to the next of kin through the assigned case agent. Conditions to consider before personal effects are released:

- It must first be determined if the item has value as evidence in the case.
- Permission is needed from the district attorney's office.
- Ownership of the item must not be in dispute.

If anyone has case related information and wish to remain anonymous please contact the OSBI at

**OSBI TIP LINE 1-800-522-8017 or EMAIL to [tips@osbi.ok.gov](mailto:tips@osbi.ok.gov)**

## Medical Examiner Communication:



### CENTRAL OFFICE

Oklahoma City, OK

405-239-7141

### EASTERN OFFICE

Tulsa, OK

918-295-3400

OKLAHOMA OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER



<http://www.ok.gov/ocme/>

- **When is a body brought to the medical examiner's office?** Oklahoma Law requires certain deaths be investigated that include violent death, sudden or unexpected death, death of a decedent who is not followed by a physician, and/or when the cause of death or identity of the deceased needs to be established.
- **What is an autopsy?** A systematic examination of the body by a qualified pathologist. It is a medical procedure where the doctor examines the external surface and/or internal organs of the deceased. The doctor may take samples of the organs, tissues, and fluids for testing. There is no charge to the family for an autopsy and it does not interfere with having the body on view at the funeral home.
- **How to obtain a copy of the autopsy report?** Copies of reports are available upon request to the medical examiner's office; copies are free for family members of the deceased. Email your request to [recordstul@ocme.ok.gov](mailto:recordstul@ocme.ok.gov) or [recordsokc@ocme.ok.gov](mailto:recordsokc@ocme.ok.gov)
- **How and when will the body be released to the funeral home?** The person determined to be the next-of-kin (in this order: spouse, children of legal age, parents, siblings) must authorize their chosen funeral home to claim the deceased. Once identification and examination of the body are completed, the deceased will be released to this funeral home. The funeral director then obtains the necessary documents for burial, cremation, or out-of-state transport.
- **Where to obtain a copy of the Death Certificate?** Part of the Death Certificate is completed by the medical examiner and part by the funeral director. Once completed the funeral director submits the document to the local Bureau of Vital Statistics for official registration. Often the funeral director will obtain copies of the certificate for the family. Due to tissue or toxicological testing, the cause and manner may be listed as 'Pending' until all information is gathered to issue a final certificate. This process can take several weeks or longer, but every effort is made to minimize the delay. If you need a death certificate at a later date, you can contact **Oklahoma Vital Records at 405-271-4040** or

[https://www.ok.gov/health/Birth and Death Certificates/Death Certificates/index.html](https://www.ok.gov/health/Birth%20and%20Death%20Certificates/Death%20Certificates/index.html)

**Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) Family Assistance Coordinators** are available to assist families of victims in both division offices. They can assist families as to the status of the medical examiner's investigation and the role the OCME office plays in the death investigation of their loved one. The coordinators can guide the family with the processes described above and are there to ease families struggling with difficult decisions while dealing with the loss of their loved one.

# Oklahoma Crime Victim's Bill of Rights Information:

As a victim of violent crime , you have certain rights under Title 21, Oklahoma Statutes, section 142A-2 the rights are as follows:

- To be notified that a court proceeding to which a victim or witness has been subpoenaed will or will not go on as scheduled, in order to save the person an unnecessary trip to court;
- To receive protection from harm and threats of harm arising out of the cooperation of the person with law enforcement and prosecution efforts, and to be provided with information as to the level of protection available and how to access protection;
- To be informed of financial assistance and other social services available as a result of being a witness or a crime victim, including information on how to apply for the assistance and services;
- To be informed of procedure to be followed in order to apply for and receive any witness fee to which the victim or witness is entitled;
- To be informed of the procedure to be followed in order to apply for and receive any restitution to which the victim is entitled;
- To be provided, whenever possible, a secure waiting area during court proceedings that does not require close proximity to defendants and families and friends of defendants;
- To have any stolen or other personal property expeditiously returned by law enforcement agencies when no longer needed as evidence. If feasible, all such property, except weapons, currency, contraband, property subject to evidentiary analysis and property the ownership of which is disputed, shall be returned to the person;
- To be provided with appropriate employer intercession services to ensure that employers of the victims and witnesses will cooperate with the criminal justice process in order to minimize the loss of pay and other benefits of the employee resulting from court appearances;
- To have all family members of all homicide victims afforded the services under this section, whether or not the person is to be a witness to any criminal proceedings;
- To be informed of any plea bargaining negotiations;
- To have victim impact statements filed with the judgment and sentence;
- To be informed if a sentence is overturned, remanded for a new trial or otherwise modified by the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals;
- To be informed in writing of all statutory rights;
- To be informed when any family member is required to be a witness by subpoena from the defense, there must be a showing that the witness can provide relevant testimony as to the guilt or innocence of the defendant before the witness may be excluded from the proceeding by invoking the rule to remove potential witnesses;
- To be notified by the Pardon and Parole Board of Pardon and Parole actions if you request notification;
- To be informed of felony cases involving violent crime or sex offenses when pre-trial proceedings may substantially delay prosecution;
- To protect the identity of the victim in sexual assault cases;
- To request that the offender be tested for sexually transmitted diseases in sexual assault cases as ordered by the court;
- To be informed that any sentence, including Life Without Parole, may be commuted;
- To receive written notification of how to access victim rights information from the interviewing officer or investigating detective;
- To speedy disposition of the charges free from unwarranted delay caused by or at the behest of the defendant or minor.

## OSBI Victim Support Program:

To further assist victims, the OSBI has a Victims Support Program lead by the OSBI Victim Services Coordinators, Christy Penney & Steve Brookman. (see page 1 for contact info.) The responsibilities of the Victim Services Coordinators include:

- Interacting with victims, and/or family members of victims, in criminal cases handled by the OSBI
- Assisting OSBI Agents by communicating with victims and/or their families
- Educating victims about the investigative & criminal justice processes
- Informing victims about their rights and the Crime Victim Compensation Program
- Accompanying victims and/or family members of victims to various court hearings
- Helping victims restore a sense of safety & security, which includes informing them about resources available through state & community assistance programs

The OSBI Victims Support Program does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, those with limited English language proficiency, or military status, in the provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all victims and survivors of crime.

## Outline of Criminal Court Process:

### ➤ Crime Committed / Police Notified

### ➤ Police Investigate

Investigation may include interviewing victim, witnesses, suspects; collecting physical evidence; visiting, viewing, photographing, measuring crime scene

### ➤ Police Make an Arrest (or Request a Warrant)

### ➤ Warrant/Charging Request Reviewed by Prosecuting Attorney

Most cases begin with a warrant request. This is generally the first time that the Prosecuting Attorney's office is involved in a case, unless a prosecutor reviewed a search warrant or visited the crime scene. At this stage, the Prosecutor determines whether a person should be charged with a crime and, if so, what the crime should be. Occasionally, the reviewing Prosecutor sends the case back to the police to conduct additional investigation.

### ➤ Warrant Issued

The Prosecutor can issue a charge if he or she reasonably believes that probable cause exists that the suspect committed the offense. But, most reviewing Prosecutors apply a higher standard whether the charge can be proved beyond a reasonable doubt at trial with the information known at that time.

### ➤ Suspect Arrested (if not already in custody)

### ➤ District Court Arraignment

At a felony arraignment in District Court, the defendant does not plead guilty or not guilty. He is advised of his right to a preliminary examination. The arraignment judge may also consider a defendant's request for a court-appointed attorney at this time.

## ➤ Trial (Jury or Bench/Judge)

A trial is an adversary proceeding in which the Prosecutor must present evidence to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. The defendant is not required to prove his or her innocence or to present any evidence, but may challenge the accuracy of the Prosecutor's evidence. Both the defendant and the Prosecutor (representing the People of the State of Oklahoma) have the right to a trial by a jury. Sometimes, both sides agree to let a Judge listen to the evidence and decide the case without a jury; this is called a "bench trial". In a jury trial, the jury is the "trier of fact"; in a bench trial, the judge is. After the evidence is presented, the judge or a jury will determine whether the evidence proved that the defendant committed the crime.

### Here is a general outline of the steps in a jury trial:

1. Residents of the local county are randomly selected from a list of licensed drivers, and are summoned to the Court as potential jurors.
2. A blind draw selects twelve people from that group in felonies (six in District Court misdemeanors).
3. Voir Dire: the Judge, Prosecutor and defense attorney question the jurors about their backgrounds and beliefs.
4. The attorneys are permitted a limited number of "peremptory" challenges to various jurors (or an unlimited number of challenges for good cause).
5. After twelve (or six) acceptable jurors remain, the Judge administers an oath to the jury and reads basic instructions about the trial process, etc.
6. The Prosecutor gives an opening statement to outline the People's case and evidence to the jury.
7. The defense may give a similar opening statement, or wait until later in the trial.
8. The Prosecutor calls witnesses, which the defense may cross examine.
9. The People close their proofs.
10. The defense may call witnesses, if it wants, and the Prosecutor may cross-examine them.
11. The defense rests.
12. The Prosecutor may present "rebuttal" witnesses/evidence to challenge evidence presented by the defendant during his proofs.
13. The Prosecutor rests.
14. Occasionally, the trial judge will let the defense present "sur-rebuttal" witnesses to respond to the Prosecutor's rebuttal witnesses' testimony.
15. The Prosecutor presents a closing summary to the jury.
16. The defense attorney presents a closing summary to the jury.
17. The Prosecutor may present a rebuttal argument to the jury to respond to the defendant's attorney's closing summary.
18. The judge gives the jury detailed legal instructions about the charged crimes, the deliberation process, etc.
19. The jury deliberates and returns a verdict. **A criminal case jury verdict must be unanimous.**

## ➤ Pre-Sentence Investigation and Report

The court's probation department prepares a report for the judge summarizing the crime, and the defendant's personal and criminal backgrounds. Generally, the victim is contacted for a recommendation of sentence.

## ➤ Sentence

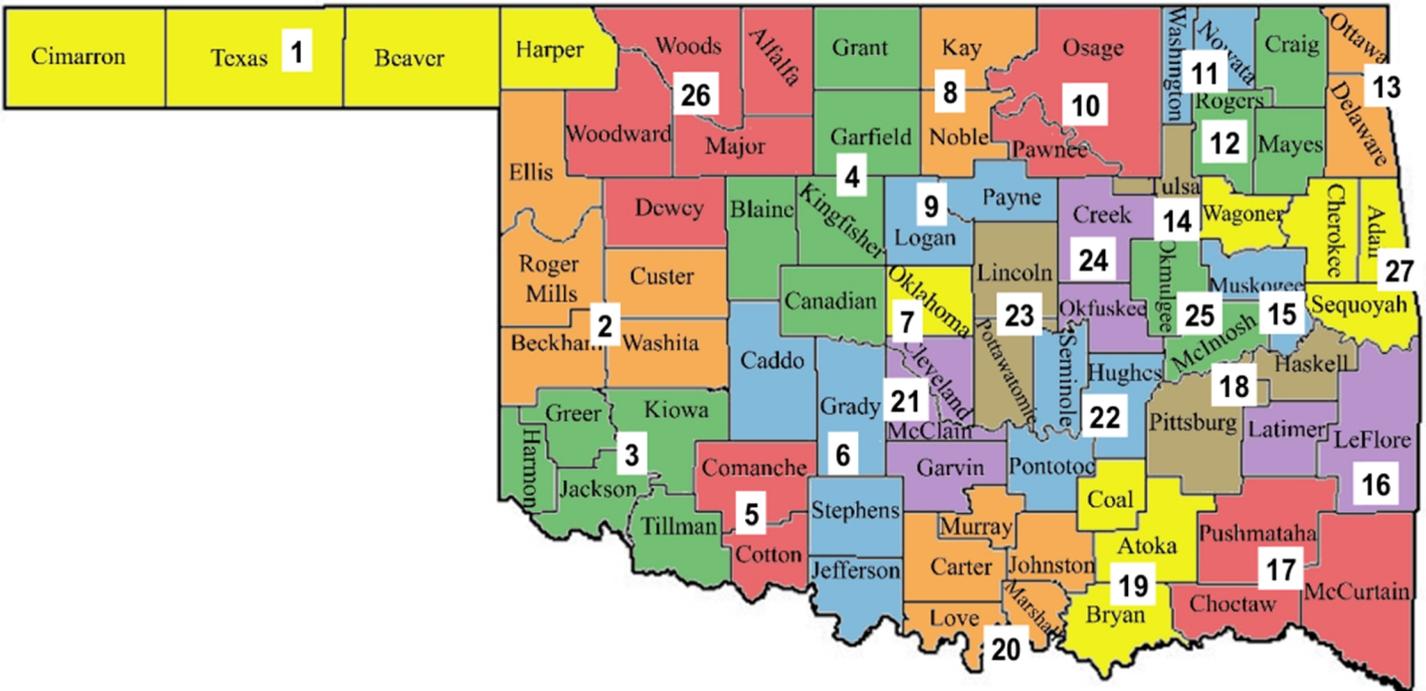
For felonies, the District Court judge will consult "sentencing guidelines" (applicable by "Truth in Sentencing" laws). The sentencing guidelines factor in aspects of the defendant's criminal conduct and his prior record, to determine the minimum jail/prison sentence.

## ➤ Appeals Process

# Where will court proceedings take place?

The courthouse location for the incident depends on the county location for the offense. What this means is that the jurisdiction for all court proceedings will take place inside the specific county courthouse related to where the crime occurred.

The state is divided into **27** District Attorney districts; this means that the same district attorney may cover several counties. Below is a map of the DA districts across the state and the counties served by each.



For a current list of the district attorneys and the addresses for each county courthouse please go to [https://www.ok.gov/dac/District Attorneys/index.html](https://www.ok.gov/dac/District_Attorneys/index.html) and click on the name of the District Attorney.

**Important Note:** When contacting your District Attorney’s Office below you will likely benefit from asking for a victim’s witness coordinator with the respective DA office that can guide you to the correct attorney specific to the case in question.

## District Attorney’s Office Contact Information:

District	Counties Served
1	Beaver (580) 625-3126, Cimarron (580) 544-3388, Harper (580) 735-2212, Texas (580) 338-3388
2	Beckham (580) 928-5555, Custer (580) 323-3232, Ellis (580) 885-7505, Roger Mills (580) 497-2431, Washita (580) 832-3144
3	Greer (580) 782-3653, Harmon (580) 688-9459, Jackson (580) 482-5334, Kiowa (580) 726-3335, Tillman (580) 335-2319

4	<b>Blaine</b> (580) 623-5949, <b>Canadian</b> (405) 262-0177, <b>Garfield</b> (580) 233-1311, <b>Grant</b> (580) 395-2156, <b>Kingfisher</b> (405) 375-3893
5	<b>Comanche</b> (580) 585-4444, <b>Cotton</b> (580) 875-6111
6	<b>Caddo</b> (405) 247-3372, <b>Grady</b> (405) 224-4770, <b>Jefferson</b> (580) 228-2707, <b>Stephens</b> (580) 255-8726
7	<b>Oklahoma</b> (405) 713-1600
8	<b>Kay</b> (580) 362-2571, <b>Noble</b> (580) 336-4044
9	<b>Logan</b> (405) 282-0655, <b>Payne</b> (405) 372-4883
10	<b>Osage</b> (918) 287-1510, <b>Pawnee</b> (918) 762-2555
11	<b>Nowata</b> (918) 273-3167, <b>Washington</b> (918) 337-2860
12	<b>Craig</b> (918) 256-3320, <b>Mayes</b> (918) 825-2171, <b>Rogers</b> (918) 923-4960
13	<b>Delaware</b> (918) 253-4217, <b>Ottawa</b> (918) 542-5547
14	<b>Tulsa</b> (918) 596-4915
15	<b>Muskogee</b> (918) 682-3374
16	<b>Latimer</b> (918) 465-3451, <b>LeFlore</b> (918) 647-2245
17	<b>Choctaw</b> (580)326-9606, <b>McCurtain</b> (580)286-7611, <b>Pushmataha</b> (580)298-2365
18	<b>Haskell</b> (918) 967-4648, <b>Pittsburg</b> (918) 423-1324
19	<b>Atoka</b> (580) 889-6624, <b>Bryan</b> (580) 924-4032, <b>Coal</b> (580) 927-2077
20	<b>Carter</b> (580) 223-9674, <b>Johnston</b> (580) 371-2379, <b>Love</b> (580) 276-9441, <b>Marshall</b> (580) 795-2169, <b>Murray</b> (580) 622-5417
21	<b>Cleveland</b> (405) 321-8268, <b>Garvin</b> (405) 238-7368, <b>McClain</b> (405) 527-6574
22	<b>Hughes</b> (405) 379-5450, <b>Pontotoc</b> (580) 332-0341, <b>Seminole</b> (405) 257-3368
23	<b>Lincoln</b> (405) 258-1674, <b>Pottawatomie</b> (405) 275-6800
24	<b>Creek</b> (918) 224-3921, <b>Okfuskee</b> (918) 623-1411
25	<b>Okmulgee</b> (918) 756-0794, <b>McIntosh</b> (918) 689-2566
26	<b>Alfalfa</b> (580) 596-3109, <b>Dewey</b> (580) 328-5541, <b>Major</b> (580) 227-4665, <b>Woods</b> (580) 327-2171, <b>Woodward</b> (580) 256-8616
27	<b>Adair</b> (918) 696-7150, <b>Cherokee</b> (918) 456-6173, <b>Sequoyah</b> (918) 775-9131, <b>Wagoner</b> (918) 485-2119

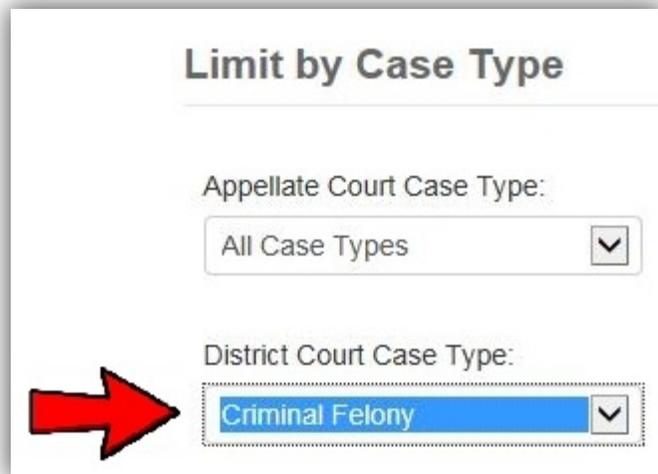
# Court Case Tracking:

After the suspect has been arrested go to the following website to obtain ongoing court dates for the case. <http://www.oscn.net/dockets/Search.aspx> The OKLAHOMA STATE COURT NETWORK website allows you to complete a search for court related event dates.

1. **Court Selection** Select the county of offense, if known.  
**Search by Party** Enter the name of the arrested suspect/defendant.



2. Once the county has been chosen and the defendant name is entered. Scroll down to **Limit by Case Type** section and select **Criminal Felony**.



Then select **Go**. Choose the case from the search results list.

# Post- Conviction Information:

If there is a conviction in your loved ones case, the suspect(s) may be sent to prison. In order to assist you with keeping track of the status involving inmate custody a program called **VINE Link** has been created. **VINE** (Victim Information Notification Everyday) for Oklahoma VINE Services: Notification for custody changes: release, transfer, escape, or death as well as protective order changes.

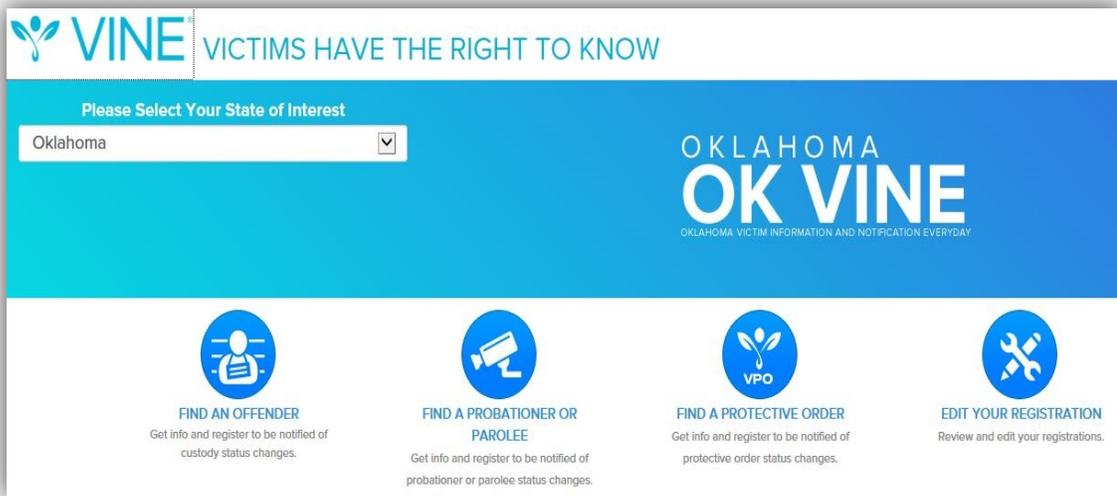
## Free. Anonymous. Confidential- Information & Notification for changes in Offender Custody Status or Protective Order Status

OK VINE is an automated service that lets you track the custody of an offender or a protective order over the phone or internet. You can register to be notified if the custody status of an offender or protective order changes.

1. To be notified when an offender is going to be released from prison go to

[www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com)

2. Then select the state of Oklahoma in the drop down.



3. Then complete a search **FIND AN OFFENDER** where you can search by name of the convicted party. This will then allow you to register and be notified of custody status changes for the inmate. Follow the website prompts.
4. After registration is completed you will create a 4 digit pin to acknowledge the notification call received for a custody status change. If you do not answer the notification call, OK VINE will leave a message and will continue calling back until you enter your PIN or until up to 24 hours have passed. You may get a call from OK VINE in the middle of the night.
5. You can register multiple phone numbers and email addresses for the notifications.
6. If you forget your PIN, you can call toll-free at (877)-654-8463 press "0" for a VINE assistance representative 24 hours a day.

**If you have questions or concerns please contact the Attorney General's office VINE Program Manager at 405-522-2294.**

# Crime Victim Financial Assistance Information:

## Oklahoma Crime Victims Compensation Act (OCVC)



Title 21, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 142 (Nov.1, 2008)

### What is Oklahoma Crime Victims Compensation?

Legislation that provides a method of compensation and assistance to persons who are victims of criminal acts and who suffer physical or psychological injury or death as a result. Funds are not tax dollars but penalty assessments from those that commit crimes and plead guilty or are found guilty in court.

#### ➤ Who can apply?

- a victim
- a dependent of a deceased victim
- or a person authorized to act on behalf of the victim or dependent.

#### ➤ What financial assistance is possibly available?

- Medical and dental care
- Prescriptions
- Reasonable counseling and rehabilitation expenses
- Work loss or loss of support
- Caregiver work income loss not to exceed \$3000
- Reasonable crime scene clean-up expenses not to exceed \$2000
- Reasonable funeral, cremation, or burial costs not to exceed \$7500
- Mileage for transport to and from medical treatments
- Reasonable cost of vehicle impound fees associated with the collection and security of crime scene evidence not to exceed \$750
- Many expenses for funeral associated with traditional American Indian culture

#### ➤ More Details:

- Property loss and pain and suffering are not covered
- No attorney is needed to file a claim
- No arrest or conviction is required
- You must cooperate fully with law enforcement
- The maximum award is \$20,000 except claims including work loss up to \$40,000

#### ➤ When to file a claim?

- Should be filed with OCVC within one year of incident
- All other sources of payment, such as insurance, should be used prior to OCVC funds

#### ➤ How to file a claim?

- Contact your nearest District Attorney's Office (phone list included in this packet) or at 405-264-5006 toll free 1-800-745-6098 [victimsservices@dac.state.ok.us](mailto:victimsservices@dac.state.ok.us)
- or the

Oklahoma Crime Victims Compensation Board  
Oklahoma District Attorneys Council  
421 NW 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 290  
Oklahoma City, OK 73106

For applications and more detailed information regarding the Oklahoma Crime Victims Compensation Act there are direct links to the act located on the District Attorneys council website under the CRIME VICTIMS COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE section [https://www.ok.gov/dac/Victims/Just\\_for\\_Victims/index.html](https://www.ok.gov/dac/Victims/Just_for_Victims/index.html)

# Grief Counseling Information Resources:

## *Victim Support Group Assistance Information*

The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation understands the importance of supporting and building relationships with victims and survivors of violent crime. Therefore, the OSBI Victims Support Program is available to meet these needs. The OSBI coordinators can direct family of victims in need to the available grief support counseling across the state of Oklahoma. The OSBI Victims Services Coordinators also assist with the OHSSG-Oklahoma Homicide Survivors Support Group.



- **Non-profit Organization.**
- **Members Meetings** to discuss new events and legislation directly affecting the group.
- At conclusion of meeting enjoy dinner together to share grief and support for members.
- **Open to all homicide victims.**

Email: [ohssgroup@gmail.com](mailto:ohssgroup@gmail.com)

Website: <https://ohssg.com/>

Meetings are held at the **OSBI Forensic Science Center**  
800 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Edmond, OK 73034

## *Mental Health Association of Oklahoma*

The Mental Health Association of Oklahoma has support groups for the family survivors of violent crimes. Support groups offer a place to share and develop coping skills. The group participants come together with others experiencing the same loss. Together participants can help one another through a difficult process.



- Groups are led by mental health professionals.
- No cost. Free of charge.
- Weekday evenings twice a month in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.
- Classes include:
  - Survivors of Suicide** – a family member or friend of the person who died by suicide – you may need help coming to terms with suicide.
  - Depression Management** – talk through your struggles with depression, or those of a loved one, and learn from others engaged in the recovery process.

For current information on times and locations for the groups go to website <https://mhaok.org/get-help/general/support-groups/> or for contact Business Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am- 5pm at 918-585-1213 and 405-943-3700 email [info@mhaok.org](mailto:info@mhaok.org)

# What can you do as a surviving family member?

## *Victim Impact Statement*

During the course of the trial, the family members of homicide victims often participate with their attendance in the courtroom with a feeling of helplessness for a process out of their control.

It may be appropriate to complete a Victim Impact Statement for the prosecution that may be introduced during the sentencing phase. This provides the opportunity to express how the death of the loved one has created a lasting effect on the relationships of those that were closest to the victim. No one knows better than you how this crime has changed your life. Only those who knew the victim during their life can best describe the effects the event has had on you and those close to you. It can be very important for you to help the court understand the emotional, physical, and often financial effects created by the death of their loved one.

It can help to describe the changes brought on by the loss of a loved one in several areas.

### *Emotional Impact:*

- Has the crime affected your lifestyle or those close to you?
- Have your feelings about yourself or your life changed since the crime?
- Has your ability to relate to others changed?

### *Physical Impact:*

- Describe the physical injuries you or members of your family have suffered.
- Describe how long these injuries lasted or how long they are expected to continue.
- Describe any medical treatment you have received or expect to receive in the future.

### *Financial Impact:*

- Many families are affected by the loss of an income from the death of a family member that was a principle financial supporter.
- Were there any lost wages associated with an injury related to the crime?
- Medical expenses incurred from the treatment of the homicide victim or a family member associated to the crime itself.

Although completion of a Victim Impact Statement is voluntary, it may help the Judge determine the appropriate sentence to impose including possibly any restitution to be ordered upon the defendant. Once completed, the impact statement becomes part of the permanent record. The Judge, prosecutor, defendant's attorney and the defendant will be able to read the statement.

The statement also provides you the opportunity to include your opinion on what sentence should be enforced. Many families affected by the act of homicide view the impact statement as their voice enabling them to confront the offender in a formal setting that can have a lasting effect on everyone involved in seeking justice for the victim. After sentencing, prison and parole officials may read the impact statement in further proceedings regarding parole/early release of the offender. To complete a Victim Impact Statement please contact your local District Attorney's Office prosecuting the case.

## ***Get Involved in Positive Change***

Progress in improving the treatment of crime victims is due largely to the efforts of thousands of individuals who have turned their victimization into a force for positive change.

Surviving members associated with victims of homicide have transformed their experiences into a passion for ensuring that others affected by the crime of homicide receive justice with meaningful and compassionate assistance. Many times survivors changed by the crime of homicide volunteer their time and resources to create programs, crisis hotlines, conduct legislature advocacy and speak on victim impact panels. This process can help others within the community by assisting with group participation for those suffering the effects of an act of homicide.

## **Crime Scene Cleanup**

Unfortunately, many homicides take place in the victim's place of residence. Once the scene is processed for evidence, it is released. The OSBI does not cleanup the crime scene nor does the OSBI pay for the cleanup expenses. However, in many cases, the homeowner's insurance policy will cover crime scene cleanup services. While the OSBI is not permitted to endorse specific cleanup service companies, there are many reputable cleaning companies that specialize in crime scene clean up. Often, they can be located by an internet search within the area of the crime scene. Assistance with the cleanup cost can be covered through the OCVC assistance. *(page 10)*

Listed below are some of the victim organizations available to assist you.

<b><i>National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA)</i></b> 1-800-897-6682 <a href="http://www.trynova.org/">www.trynova.org/</a>	<b><i>National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC)</i></b> 1-800-394-2255 <a href="http://www.ncvc.org">www.ncvc.org</a>
<b><i>Parents of Murdered Children (POMC)</i></b> 1-888-818-7662 <a href="http://www.pomc.org">www.pomc.org</a>	<b><i>National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)</i></b> 1-800-851-3420 <a href="http://www.ncjrs.gov">www.ncjrs.gov</a>
<b><i>Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)</i></b> 1-800-363-0441 <a href="http://www.ovc.gov/">www.ovc.gov/</a>	<b><i>Directory of Crime Victim Services OVC Search by State</i></b> <a href="https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/findvictimservices/">https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/findvictimservices/</a>

### **HELPFUL NOTE:**

**For a digital copy of this booklet with the active web links available.**

- Please go to the OSBI webpage at [www.osbi.ok.gov](http://www.osbi.ok.gov)
- Under the main menu choose **Services** from the dropdown
- Then select **Victim Support Services** where you will find a link to the **OSBI Victim Support Services Booklet** under Resources.

**In order to move directly to a webpage, move your cursor pointer over the blue colored link and left click the mouse button to open the internet page.**

**Also, from the document, you are welcome to print additional copies of the booklet if you choose.**

## Helpful Case Reference Details

<b>OSBI Assigned Case Agent:</b>  Name _____  Phone Number _____	<b>Assigned Prosecuting Attorney:</b>  Name _____  Phone Number _____
<b>OSBI Case Reference Number:</b>  _____	<b>Date of Incident:</b>  _____

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**Notes:**

# OSBI



OSBI TIP LINE 1-800-522-8017 or  
EMAIL to [tips@osbi.ok.gov](mailto:tips@osbi.ok.gov)