



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Office for Victims of Crime

Washington, D.C. 20531

Dear Colleague,

We are pleased to present the *2016 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource Guide*, developed by the Office for Victims of Crime in partnership with the National Center for Victims of Crime.

This year's theme—*Serving Victims. Building Trust. Restoring Hope.*—underscores the importance of establishing trust with victims. Trust is of particular concern in communities that feel isolated from or invisible to mainstream service providers and the criminal justice system, including boys and young men of color, victims of human trafficking, victims in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities, individuals who are geographically isolated or who live in economically deprived areas, older adults, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ community, and others. By meeting victims where they are, and by listening to and understanding their specific needs, we can help restore victims' hope for healing and recovery.

The significant increase in the Fiscal Year 2015 Crime Victims Fund allocation provides a tremendous opportunity—and responsibility—to ensure that those who need support the most receive it. All victims must have the ability to access services when they need them. To provide this access, we must reach victims as early as possible to expedite those first steps toward help, empowerment, and recovery.

Our outreach and responses must evolve to ensure that services are culturally relevant and that we collaborate across agencies and organizations to lessen the burden on victims. It is critical that we are flexible and open to new approaches to reach those most in need and to embrace new technologies and partnerships, understanding that the most vulnerable communicate, access, and receive information in a variety of ways.

If victims are to trust that the system will work for them, we must meet them where they are—physically, culturally, and emotionally. By serving victims, building trust, and restoring hope, the field can more effectively help victims as they rebuild their lives.

The Office for Victims of Crime appreciates your unwavering commitment and tireless dedication to victims of crime throughout the Nation. We trust that the materials provided in this guide will support and enhance your efforts to raise awareness, build new partnerships, and reach additional victims during National Crime Victims' Rights Week and throughout the year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marilyn M. Roberts".

Marilyn McCoy Roberts
Acting Director

Office for Victims of Crime