



CAP TIPs is a series of periodic messages to assist in the planning and implementation of NCVRW Community Awareness Projects. Please feel free to send your individual questions or requests for assistance to Anne Seymour at annesey@atlantech.net

CAP TIP #6

To Improve Public Awareness

Sample Proclamation to Commemorate 2013 National Crime Victims' Rights Week

Introduction

An important way to promote 2013 National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) to the public is to seek proclamations related to the 2013 NCVRW theme, and to victims' rights and needs in your jurisdiction. The 2013 NCVRW *Resource Guide* will include a sample proclamation, and the information included in this CAP TIP offer you additional resources to draft and seek proclamations from state and community leaders.

Proclamation Outreach

Who can issue proclamations?

There are a number of entities that can issue official proclamations for 2013 NCVRW:

- State level:
 - Governors
 - Attorneys General
 - Legislature (House/Assembly and Senate)
- Local level:
 - Board of Supervisors
 - City Councils
 - City Mayors

Each of these entities receive many requests for proclamations, so it's important to make a strong case for proclaiming the week of April 21 – 27, 2013 to be (*state/ municipality/city*) Crime Victims' Rights Week. It's a good idea to submit your request with as many co-signatories as possible, including:

- Crime victims and survivors

- Directors of system-based victim assistance programs
- Directors of community-based victim assistance programs
- Leadership within your criminal and juvenile justice systems (Chief of Police, County/Parish Sheriff, Prosecutor, Probation or Parole Director, Department of Corrections Director or Commissioner, etc.)

Here is sample language you can include in a letter or email request for a NCVRW proclamation:

Dear ():

National Crime Victims’ Rights Week (NCVRW) is a time-honored tradition observed annually each April. Since 1981, when President Ronald Reagan declared the first NCVRW, crime victims and survivors and those who serve them join together in April to promote victims’ rights and services, and efforts to prevent crime and work together to make our communities safer.

The theme of 2013 NCVRW is “New Challenges. New Solutions.” This theme provides us with the opportunity to discuss the many challenges that survivors and their advocates face, along with solutions to meet such challenges.

We would be honored if you would issue a formal (*Governor’s/Legislative/Attorney General’s/Board of Supervisors/City Council/Mayoral*) proclamation to commemorate 2013 Crime Victims’ Rights Week in our (*jurisdiction*). We have *enclosed/attached* sample language for your consideration in drafting a proclamation.

This year, (*your program*) received a Community Awareness Project award from the Office for Victims of Crime within the U.S. Department of Justice to increase public awareness about victims’ rights and services in our (*jurisdiction*). Your proclamation is an important component of these efforts to educate crime victims, survivors and the public about resources for victim assistance and community safety.

We appreciate your consideration of our request, and know that a (*Governor’s/Legislative/Attorney General’s/Board of Supervisors/City Council/Mayoral*) proclamation will enhance our efforts to promote National Crime Victims’ Rights Week in April.

Sincerely,

(*SIGNATORIES*)

ENCLOSURE/ATTACHMENT: Sample Proclamation Language

Personalizing the Sample Proclamation to your Jurisdiction

The sample proclamation at the end of this CAP TIP provides a good “starting point” for you. However, it’s a good idea to personalize the language to your jurisdiction, your challenges and your

solutions. The “general challenges” and “general solutions” from CAP TIP 3, “Tips to Promote the NCVRW Theme” – which has been updated for your review – offers you possibilities for personalizing your proclamation:

GENERAL CHALLENGES

- National increase in violent crime (check to be sure your state/local trends show any increase, and why)
- Encouraging victims and survivors to report crimes
- Encouraging victims and survivors (reporting and non-reporting) to seek supportive services
- Lack of collaboration among criminal and juvenile justice agencies
- Lack of policies and protocols for effective victim assistance
- Lack of evidence-based practices in crime victim services
- Impact of technology on crime and victimization
- Lack of victim awareness about victim services
- Lack of public awareness about the availability of victim services
- Need for more cultural sensitivity and diversity in victim service provision
- Need for more public funding for victim services
- Need for more private funding for victim services
- Also consider using state/local crime and victim assistance statistics!
- Other

TYPES OF VICTIMIZATION THAT MAY POSE CHALLENGES

- Mass violence and victimization
- Domestic violence
- Technology-related crimes (identity theft, child pornography, stalking, etc.)
- Elder abuse and neglect
- Child abuse and neglect
- Crimes against LGBTQI persons
- Hate crimes
- Other

Sample Proclamation

This sample proclamation is provided in the standard proclamation format.

Whereas, for the first time in nearly two decades, violent crime in America has increased – 17 percent from 2010 to 2011; *and*

Whereas, victims and survivors of crime across America *need* and *deserve* support and assistance to help them cope with the often devastating consequences of crime; *and*

Whereas, National Crime Victims’ Rights Week – April 21 to 27, 2013 – encourages us to define and address “New Challenges and New Solutions” that face the fields of crime victim assistance, criminal justice and public safety; *and*

- Whereas,** Individual victims and survivors are still challenged by fears of being blamed for what happened to them; concerns about their personal safety and security; and a desire to hold offenders accountable for the harm they caused; *and*
- Whereas,** *(personalize “challenges” in your jurisdiction here)* Victim assistance organizations and communities are challenged by an increase in violent crime; a lack of funding and resources to adequately meet the diverse needs of victims who need help; and a lack of understanding about how crime not only impacts victims but also neighborhoods, schools, businesses, communities, and our Nation as a whole; *and*
- Whereas,** *(personalize “solutions” in your jurisdiction here)* There are many solutions to these challenges that emerge from efforts that identify and address victims’ most important needs; collaborate among community- and system-based organizations and the private sector; and make crime victim assistance a *priority* in our Nation; *and*
- Whereas,** the most important solution to address crime and victimization in America is a collective understanding of the devastating emotional, physical, financial, spiritual and social impact of crime on crime survivors, and a collective commitment to provide support and services to victims in need of help; *and*
- Whereas,** Victims and survivors of crime can gain strength from the wide range of supportive services offered by over 10,000 community- and justice system-based programs, and the more than 32,000 Federal and state statutes that define and protect their rights; *and*
- Whereas,** We must remain united in our commitment to a nationwide solution that ensures that *all* crime victims and survivors are treated with compassion and respect, recognized as key participants within our systems of justice, and afforded services that provide help and hope to them; **therefore, be it**
- Resolved,** that *(individual or entity)* proclaims the week of April 21 to 27, 2013 to be *(city/county/parish/state)* Crime Victims’ Rights Week, and honors crime victims and those who serve them during this week and throughout the year; **and be it further**
- Resolved,** that for every “challenge” to effective victim assistance and services, we stand united in our commitment to develop solutions which ensure that victims and survivors of crime receive the support and services they need and deserve; **and be it further**
- Resolved,** that a suitably prepared copy of this proclamation be presented to *(your organization)* on *(date)*.

For More Information

Please contact National Crime Victims’ Rights Week Community Awareness Project Consultant Anne Seymour via email at anneseey@atlantech.net; or by telephone at 202.547.1732.