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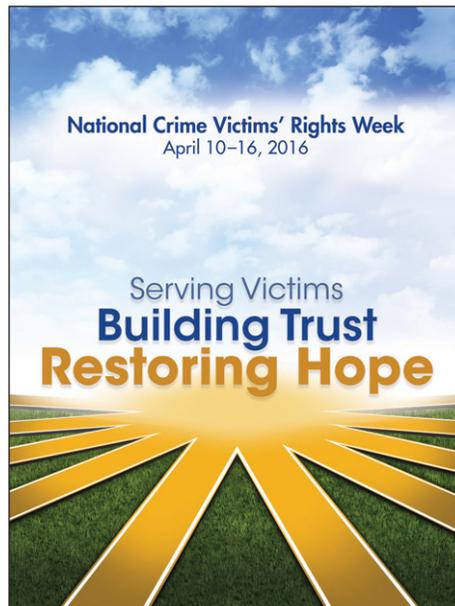
Agency News

National Crime Victims' Rights Week is April 10 to 16

During the 2016 National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which runs from April 10 to 16, crime victims and their advocates across the nation will be recognized for their work in support of crime victims' rights. This year's theme of "Serving Victims. Building Trust. Restoring Hope." highlights the role early and effective victim services intervention plays in establishing trust which, in turn, restores hope for healing.

"National Crime Victims' Rights Week gives us an opportunity to honor crime victims for the progress they've made toward recovery, as well as those who provide critical victim support services," said Victim Services Director Angie McCown. "Though their work is officially recognized for one week in April, every day of the year, all year long, victims and their advocates work to overcome the damage done by criminal violence. The criminal justice professionals in TDCJ's Victim Services Division are proud of their work in fulfillment of the agency's mission to assist victims of crime."

The first crime victims' rights week was organized in 1975 by the Philadelphia district attorney's office. Six years later, President Reagan established National Crime Victims'



Rights Week as an annual event. Since its inception, NCVRW organizers have worked to protect and improve the rights and resources crime victims need to rebuild their lives. In 1984 the Victims of Crime Act was signed into law, helping to establish a funding source for victims' compensation through criminal fines, penalties and forfeitures, and VOCA funding for victim assistance programs has helped provide critical services to those who have suffered the effects of violent crime.

In May 1993, TDCJ established a Victim Services section in the Parole Division in

order to notify crime victims about their offender's status in regards to the parole process. In 1997, the agency's mission statement was amended to include "to assist victims of crime" and the Victim Services section was elevated to divisional status.

This year's NCVRW Theme Video highlights how serving victims and building trust restores hope and strengthens communities. Visit the online Texas Victim Assistance training calendar to submit an NCVRW event in your area, and check back in April when county-submitted events will be posted. You can also contact the victim assistance coordinator at your local prosecutor's office for information about NCVRW activities, which typically include recognition ceremonies, community walks and runs, education programs and art displays. The National Crime Victims' Service Awards Ceremony will be held on April 12 in Washington, DC.

For more information, go to the NCVRW resource guide, or contact the Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse by calling 800-848-4284 or writing to tdcj.clearinghouse@tdcj.texas.gov.