

# VICTIM SERVICES DIVISION FISCAL YEAR 2013 ANNUAL REPORT





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# *Mission and History*

*The mission of the Victim Services Division is to provide a central mechanism for crime victims to participate in the Criminal Justice System.*

The Victim Services Division (VSD) was first established as a section in the Parole Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) in 1993. The creation of the Victim Services Section was a result of crime victims requesting services, the foresight of staff and the passage of crime victims' rights by the Texas Legislature.

The initial responsibility of the section was to notify crime victims, whose offenders were incarcerated within the TDCJ Correctional Institutions Division, of the offender's status. The number and types of notifications, some of which are legislatively mandated, have grown throughout the years to over 80 notifications for crime victims, surviving family members, witnesses who testified at trial and concerned citizens. In addition to the written notification services, a toll-free hotline and automated telephone services are also provided by the VSD.

The Victim Offender Mediation/ Dialogue (VOM/D) program was formed within the section in 1993 after a crime victim requested this service. In 2001, the 77th Legislature passed legislation providing victims of violent crime the right to request victim-offender mediation through this program.

The Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse (TxCVC) was transferred from the Office of the Governor to the Victim Services Section in 1996. The TxCVC serves as a central source of information for crime victims, victim advocates and criminal justice professionals and is tasked by legislative mandates regarding the Victim Impact Statement (VIS) and other services. The TxCVC also provides execution accompaniment, victim impact panel and training services.

In November 1997, the Victim Services Section was elevated to division status, allowing the new

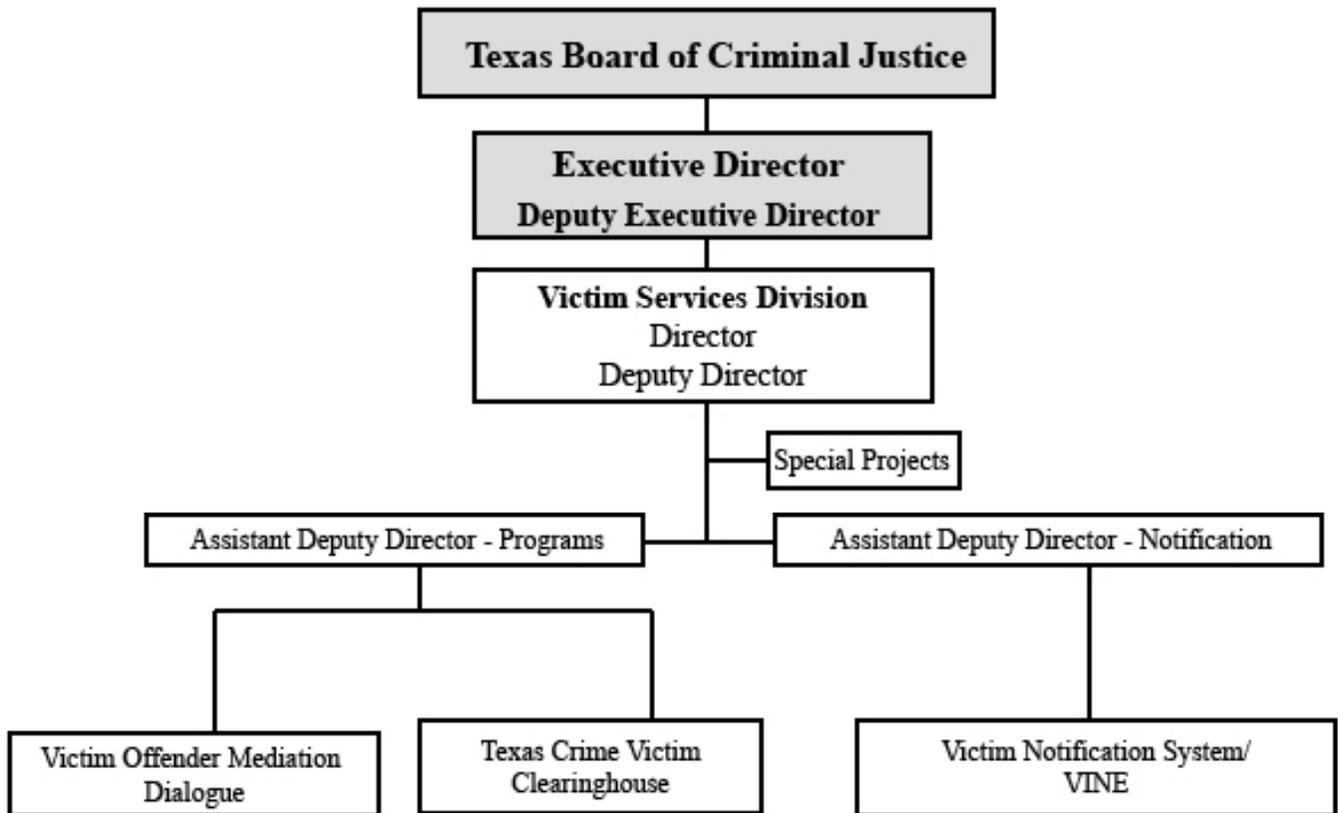
division to more efficiently provide services.

In 2009, the Special Projects position was established to increase awareness, evaluate and enhance the VSD's services and programs through research and collaboration with internal and external entities. This Special Projects position also serves as a point of contact for criminal justice professionals and victim advocates, and provides direct support and services to crime victims.

As of August 31, 2013, the VSD consisted of 36 full-time employees.

The VSD continues to support the mission of the TDCJ to provide public safety, promote positive change in offender behavior, reintegrate offenders into society, and assist victims of crime.

# Organizational Chart



# Summary of Services

- Confidential Victim Notification System (VNS) that allows the VSD to communicate information to VNS registrants, including automated and manually generated notifications by letter, email or both
- Toll-free hotline (800-848-4284) - notification staff are available Monday through Friday to provide offender information and referrals
- Automated toll-free telephone number (877-894-8463) that allows VNS registrants to obtain limited offender information in English and Spanish 24 hours a day
- Automated telephone call notifying a VNS registrant, upon their request, that the offender is being processed for release from incarceration
- Assistance with processing Victim Impact Statements (VIS), protest letters and other information submitted by crime victims, surviving family members, witnesses who testified at trial and concerned citizens for review by the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP)
- Assistance for crime victims who request a meeting with the BPP regarding an offender's parole review
- Provide the BPP with new information from crime victims requesting that the BPP reconsider their favorable vote to release an offender or consider imposing special conditions on an offender's supervision.
- Explanation of offender's status to include parole and mandatory supervision procedures
- Assistance for crime victims who request a current photo of the offender responsible for their victimization
- Assistance for crime victims who request that the offender be prohibited from contacting them
- Assistance for crime victims who report unauthorized or prohibited contact by the offender responsible for their victimization
- Assistance for crime victims who report an offender may have violated TDCJ policy or state law
- Facilitation of the mediation/dialogue process for crime victims who request a mediation/dialogue with the offender(s) responsible for their victimization
- Distribution of the revised VIS after each legislative session
- Collect, compile and report VIS statistics from Texas counties
- Training provided in workshops, webinars and online for criminal justice professionals and victim advocates regarding crime victims' rights, victim sensitivity and the VIS
- Assistance in preparing crime victims witnessing an execution, along with support during and after the execution for the witnesses and their support persons
- Online Victim Assistance Resource Directory that provides resources in each Texas county
- Production and distribution of quarterly online newsletter regarding new and innovative victim services
- Production and distribution of publications regarding crime victims' rights and TDCJ VSD services
- Information and referral for restitution inquiries

# Statutory Mandates

*The VSD provides constitutionally and statutorily mandated services to crime victims, which enables them to exercise their rights regarding information, notification, participation and protection.*

<b>The Texas Constitution</b>	<b>Texas Code of Criminal Procedure (continued)</b>	<b>Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code</b>
Art. 1. Section 30	Art. 56.12	Section 154.023 (c)
<b>Texas Code of Criminal Procedure</b>	Art. 56.13	<b>Texas Family Code</b>
Art. 56.01	Art. 56.14	Section 85.025 (c)
Art. 56.02(a)(6)	Art. 56.15	<b>Texas Penal Code</b>
Art. 56.02(a)(7)	Art. 56.32(a)(9)(J)	Section 38.111
Art. 56.02(a)(12)	<b>Texas Government Code</b>	<b>Texas Health and Safety Code</b>
Art. 56.02 (a)(13)	Section 498.0042	Section 841.002(a)(2)
Art. 7A.07(c)	Section 508.117	<b>Texas Administrative Code</b>
Art. 42.09(8)(a)(4)	Section 508.153	Rule 152.51
Art. 42.21	Section 508.1531	
Art. 42.24	Section 508.190	
Art. 56.03	Section 508.191	
Art. 56.05	Section 508.313	
Art. 56.08(c)(2)	Section 508.324	
Art. 56.11	Section 552.1325	

# *Highlights from Fiscal Year 2013*

## **Increasing Training Opportunities**

The Texas Victim Assistance Training (TVAT) Online is a web-based state-wide foundational victim assistance training focused on victim-centered delivery and professional development that complements other victim services initiatives and enables new advocates to acquire baseline professional skills and competence.

The TxCVC expanded the services offered by the TVAT Online with the addition of the TVAT Calendar. The TVAT Calendar was developed to enable criminal justice and victim services professionals to easily access information regarding trainings and events held in Texas. The TVAT Calendar allows individuals to submit, search, and view trainings and other events.

## **Enhancing Direct Services to Crime Victims**

The VOM/D program was enhanced in FY 2013 with the addition of two grant-funded mediator positions, increasing the number of full time mediators to five. This enhancement has enabled the VOM/D program to reduce the average amount of time a crime victim waits for case assignment. With this enhancement the VOM/D program has also seen an increase in case initiations, cases resolved in mediation-dialogue, and the number of victims served in FY 2013.

## **Enhancing Victim Notification**

Through grant funds, the VSD Notification Section enhanced the effectiveness of mandated service provisions to crime victims by providing staff with more efficient operating systems and advanced technology. Notification staff now have the capability to access information simultaneously while responding to victims' requests for offender information and mandated services. This enables staff to address crime victims' needs in a timelier manner. This enhancement allows staff to process Victim Impact Statements, protest materials, and other information more efficiently, thus allowing staff more time to focus on the additional needs of crime victims.

# Collaboration

*The VSD maintains a collaborative working relationship with TDCJ divisions, the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles and other entities when providing services to crime victims. Below is a brief description of the TDCJ divisions and other entities the VSD collaborates with on a routine basis and the BPP. This list is not all-inclusive.\**

The TDCJ Correctional Institutions Division (CID) is responsible for managing and operating the state's prison system for the confinement of adult felony offenders.

The TDCJ CID Classification and Records Office (CRO) schedules, receives and processes offenders for intake, release and internal transfers. The CRO maintains offender records and serves as the principal storehouse for incarcerated and prison-sentenced offender records for the TDCJ.

The TDCJ Parole Division is responsible for the supervision of adult felony offenders released from prison on parole/mandatory supervision to complete their sentences in Texas communities.

The TDCJ Interstate Compact Office facilitates the transfer of adult offenders placed on probation and parole whose supervision needs to be transferred to a state or territory other than the state or territory of conviction, based on public safety concerns and Interstate Compact Rules.

The TDCJ Community Justice Assistance Division (CJAD) administers community supervision (adult probation) in Texas. The CJAD does not work directly with offenders, but with the Community Supervision and Corrections Departments (CSCDs) that supervise the offenders.

The Reentry and Integration Division combines the TDCJ Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI), and an expanded reentry initiative, to better focus state resources to reduce recidivism and address the needs of juvenile and adult offenders.

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) reports directly to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice and oversees the agency's Investigations Department, and the OIG Administrative Support and Programs Department. This includes investigating a variety of allegations of criminal violations occurring on TDCJ property or authorized interests, including prohibited contact with victims.

The Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles is a seven-member board with constitutional and statutory authority to approve or deny a parole release, to determine the rules and conditions of release, to revoke an offender's parole or mandatory supervision and to make executive clemency recommendations.

Special Prosecution Unit (SPU) - Criminal Division works in coordination with the OIG in presenting and prosecuting investigations conducted by the OIG.

Special Prosecution Unit (SPU) - Civil Division handles the civil commitment proceedings for offenders. Civil commitment laws, provided under Title 11, Chapter 841 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, allow a judge or jury to determine if a sex offender meets the definition of a sexually violent predator and if so, to place the sex offender in a residential facility for control, care and treatment after being released from prison. The intent of the law is to provide intensive outpatient rehabilitation and treatment to a sexually violent predator.

*\*The VSD maintains a collaborative working relationship with many state agencies, non-profit organizations, associations and county or region-based organizations to provide services to crime victims.*

# Notification Section

*Written notifications (letter, email or both), automated telephone services, toll-free hotline, and processing of victim impact statements and parole protest materials.*

The TDCJ VSD Victim Notification System (VNS) utilizes a confidential database to provide individuals registered on the VNS with notifications regarding the status of an offender. VNS registrants can elect to receive notifications by letter, email or both.

The system provides over 80 types of notifications regarding several phases of an offender's incarceration and supervision, including the parole review process. Most notifications are automatically generated; however some are manually created by VSD staff. Since each case is unique and the types of notifications are typically driven by the status of the offender, it may not be necessary for VNS registrants to receive each type of notification.

Crime victims, surviving family members, witnesses who testified at trial and concerned citizens are eligible to register on the VNS. Registrants are added to the system upon their request. This request is either indicated by: a victim's completed VIS; the registrant contacting the VSD directly; or a weekly Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) Transfer report, which includes a list of offenders who have been transferred from Texas county custody to TDCJ CID along with requests from individuals to be registered on the VNS.

In addition, the VSD provides an automated telephone service through the VINE system. Upon request, a VNS registrant can elect to receive a telephone notification when an offender is being processed for release from TDCJ custody, either by direct discharge or to supervision.

VNS registrants are also provided an automated telephone service through the VINE System, which they can call to receive limited offender status information 24-hours a day, seven days a week, in English or Spanish. This information includes the offender's current unit of assignment and parole eligibility date.

The VSD notification staff process received VISs. If requested on the VIS, the victim is registered on the VNS. Crime victims may also request on the VIS if they want the offender to be prohibited from contacting them while the offender is incarcerated. If indicated on the VIS, the VSD notification staff will forward this request to TDCJ CID, who will add the crime victim to the offender's negative mailing list. All VISs received are processed for review by the BPP. A victim may also contact the VSD notification staff directly to register on the VNS and request to be placed on an offender's negative mailing list.

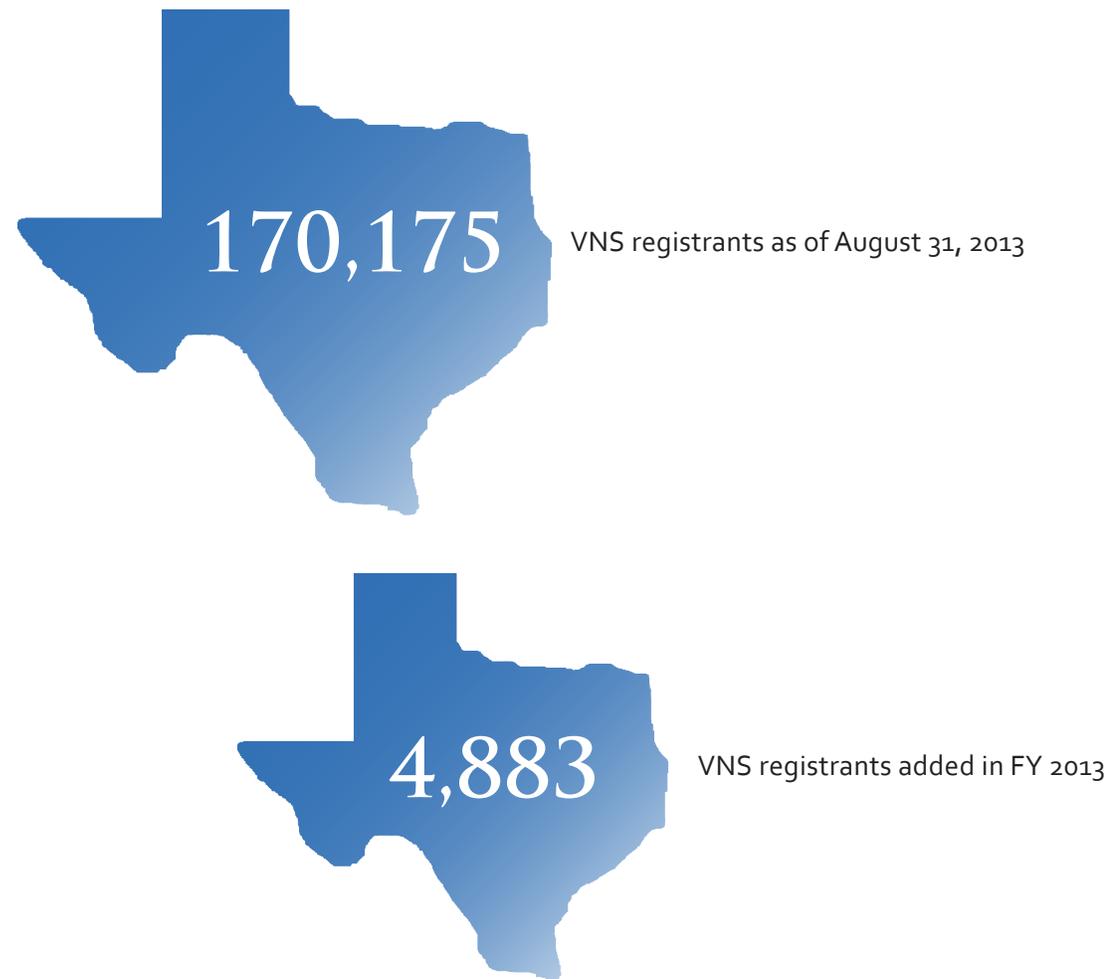
The VSD notification staff are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM on the toll-free hotline (800-848-4284) to assist with inquiries regarding an offender's status (location, parole eligibility, the parole review process), crime victims' rights, referrals, and other services and general information offered by the VSD.

The VSD notification analysts assist crime victims during the parole review process and provides certain notifications. This includes notifying and assisting crime victims who wish to submit protest information when an offender is being reviewed for Medically Recommended Intensive Supervision (MRIS) or if the BPP will be considering withdrawing parole conditions, such as the Super Intensive Supervision Program (SISP).

The VSD also provides crime victims with: death notifications - when an offender dies while in TDCJ custody; photos of offenders incarcerated, upon request from the crime victim; along with a variety of other notifications and services.

# *Victim Notification System Registrants*

*Crime victims, surviving family members, witnesses who testified at trial and concerned citizens*



# Written Notifications

*There are over 80 types of notifications, some of which are legislatively mandated.*



## 109,698

Correspondence\* sent in FY 2013.

The confidential VNS provides automated notifications to VNS registrants. These notifications are automatically generated after an action for an offender has been recorded on the TDCJ mainframe server. For example:

- when an offender is placed in the parole review process;
- when a registrant has been scheduled for a meeting with the BPP;
- after an offender's parole review process is complete and he/she has received a tentative favorable action (vote) for release;
- after an offender's parole review process is complete and release to parole/mandatory supervision was denied;
- when an offender's release certificate is issued for release to parole/mandatory supervision;
- when the offender is released to the custody of a law enforcement agency on bench warrant; and
- when an offender has returned to TDCJ custody from bench warrant.

Notifications are manually generated by VSD staff either because the notification cannot be linked to an action recorded on the TDCJ mainframe server or the notification is deemed urgent. When they are deemed urgent, telephone and email notifications precede the manually created notification. For example:

- when an offender escapes from TDCJ CID custody;
- when an escapee is captured;
- after the VSD staff has forwarded new information from crime victims requesting that the BPP reconsider their favorable vote to release an offender to supervision, and a decision has been made
- after the VSD staff has forwarded new information from crime victims requesting that the BPP to consider imposing special conditions on an offender's supervision, and a decision has been made; and
- when an offender dies while incarcerated or on parole/mandatory supervision.

*\* This reflects correspondence sent, including emails, by the VSD for notification and program sections. Since VNS registrants can elect to receive notifications by letter and email, both pieces of correspondence are counted in the total figure.*

# Spotlight on Notifications

*Release notifications, including release to supervision or direct discharge and withdrawal of electronic monitoring notification*

Arts. 56.11 and 56.12, Code of Criminal Procedure mandate certain notifications to crime victims, upon their request. These notifications include when an offender: completes his/her sentence and is released; escapes; ceases to be electronically monitored as a condition of release; is transferred from TDCJ to the custody of a peace officer under a writ of attachment or on bench warrant; and returns to the custody of TDCJ from a writ of attachment or bench warrant.

 6,224

Release notifications  
sent in FY 2013

VNS registrants will receive notification when an offender is released from TDCJ custody, either to parole/mandatory supervision or when an offender directly discharges his/her sentence.

The BPP can impose an electronic monitoring condition as part of an offender's parole/mandatory supervision. If this condition is imposed, VNS registrants will receive notice of the imposition and withdrawal of the condition.

 1,800

Release notifications  
included notice of the  
electronic monitoring  
condition

# Spotlight on Notifications, continued

*Release on bench warrant, return from bench warrant and same day bench warrant notifications*

Texas Code of Criminal Procedure arts. 56.11-.12 mandate certain notifications to crime victims, upon their request. These notifications include when an offender: completes his/her sentence and is released; escapes; ceases to be electronically monitored as a condition of release; is transferred from TDCJ to the custody of a peace officer under a writ of attachment or on bench warrant; and returns to the custody of TDCJ from a writ of attachment or bench warrant.

 879

Released on bench warrant\* notifications were sent in FY 2013

When an offender is released to the custody of a peace officer under a writ of attachment or on bench warrant, VNS registrants will receive a notification including the name, address and telephone number of the peace officer receiving the defendant into custody. This also includes federal and out-of-state bench warrants.

 778

Returned from bench warrant\* notifications were sent in FY 2013

VNS registrants will receive a notification when an offender is returned from bench warrant to the custody of TDCJ. This also includes federal and out-of-state bench warrants.

 447

Same day bench warrant notifications were sent in FY 2013

VNS registrants will receive a same day bench warrant notification when an offender is released to the custody of a peace officer under a writ of attachment or a bench warrant and returned to the custody of the TDCJ the same day. This also includes federal bench warrants.

*\* An offender may be released to the custody of a peace officer one fiscal year, but not returned to TDCJ until a later fiscal year.*

# Collaboration with the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles

*Assist crime victims in exercising their rights in the parole review process.*

## The VSD collaboration with the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) includes:

- processing VISs, protest letters and other information submitted on behalf of crime victims to the BPP;
- notifying the BPP of crime victims who are requesting a meeting with a board member or parole commissioner;
- upon request, provide accompaniment services to crime victims meeting in-person with the BPP;
- providing information and explanation of parole and mandatory supervision procedures;
- provide the BPP with new information from crime victims requesting that the BPP reconsider their favorable vote to release an offender or consider imposing special conditions on an offender's supervision; and
- notifying crime victims of the BPP's decision regarding their requests for special conditions.

 **1,675** Confirmations sent to a VNS registrants upon their request to meet with the BPP in FY 2013

 **3,803** Board meeting notifications were sent to VNS registrants in FY 2013

 **372** Transmittals processed for the BPP's review in FY 2013

# Collaboration with the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles, continued

*Assist crime victims in exercising their rights in the parole review process.*

## Additional BPP reviews and notifications

 90

MRIS notifications made  
in FY 2013

Medically Recommended Intensive Supervision (MRIS) allows for the early parole review and release of certain categories of offenders. All MRIS applicants are carefully screened by the Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI) and, prior to MRIS approval, the parole panel must determine that the offender is no longer a threat to public safety and poses no risk of committing future offenses due to his or her medical and/or psychiatric condition.

The VSD staff assist crime victims in submitting information for the BPP to consider during the offender's review.

The Super Intensive Supervision Program (SISP) is the highest level of supervision provided by TDCJ - Parole Division. The SISP offender is monitored with Global Positioning System (GPS) technology, which allows for the tracking of the offender's movement throughout the community. The offender is required to comply with 24 hour-a-day schedules, which must be pre-approved in writing by their parole officer. In the event the Parole Division determines the offender is suitable for withdrawal of the condition, the information is forwarded to the BPP for consideration. The offender remains on SISP until the BPP withdraws the condition or the offender discharges the sentence.

The VSD notifies VNS registrants if the BPP will be considering the withdrawal of the SISP condition imposed on the parolee's supervision.

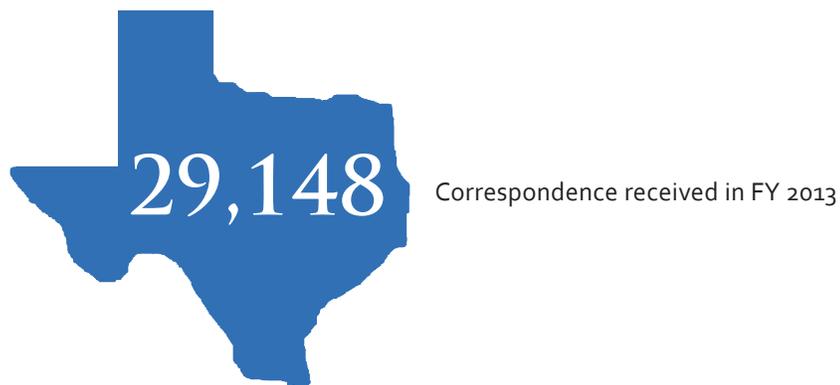
 570

SISP Withdrawal  
Consideration  
notifications made in FY  
2013

# Correspondence Received

*Letters, email, faxes, victim impact statements, and parole protest materials*

The VSD staff receives and processes protest letters and other information submitted by crime victims and concerned citizens for review by the BPP during an offender's parole review. In addition, the VSD staff receives other inquiries regarding the VSD programs and services.



 13,020 Protest or other information submitted for the BPP to review during an offender's parole review was received and processed

 2,301 VISs received and processed

 13,827 Correspondence relating to VSD services received and processed

# Telephone Services

*Toll-free hotline, VINE/Call-In, VINE/Call-Out, and calls made or received by VSD staff*

 **15,537** Total hotline calls received

## **The VINE/Call-In Feature:**

VNS registrants can obtain limited offender information in English and Spanish 24-hours a day, seven days a week with the VINE/Call-In service. Limited information includes the offender's location and parole eligibility date.

 **8,020**

Telephone calls received by the automated telephone service in FY 2013

## **The VINE/Call-Out Feature:**

VNS registrants can register to receive the Call-Out feature, which places a call to the VNS registrant when the offender is being processed for release from TDCJ custody, either on parole/mandatory supervision or direct discharge.

 **1,492**

Call-out notifications sent in FY 2013

## **Toll-free Hotline:**

The VSD notification staff are available Monday - Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM thru the toll-free hotline to provide offender status information and to assist crime victims, surviving family members, and concerned citizens. VSD staff can add registrants to the VNS for notifications, provide public information, explain parole/mandatory supervision procedures and provide appropriate referrals.

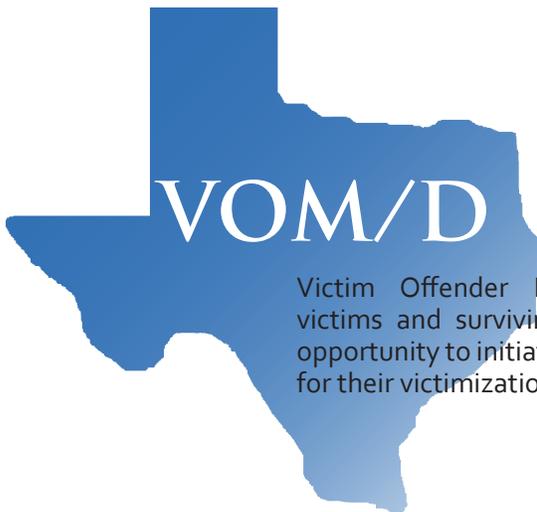
 **23,449**

Telephone calls\* made or received in FY 2013

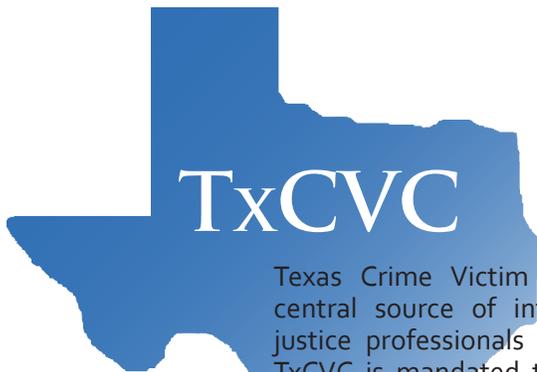
*\* This reflects all telephone calls, including hotline calls, made or received by the VSD for notification and program staff.*

# Programs Section

*Each TDCJ VSD Program is unique and offers a variety of services, some of which are legislatively mandated, for crime victims, victim service professionals and criminal justice professionals.*



Victim Offender Mediation/Dialogue (VOM/D): provides victims and surviving family members of violent crime an opportunity to initiate a meeting with the offender responsible for their victimization.



Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse (TxCVC): serves as a central source of information for crime victims, criminal justice professionals and victim service professionals. The TxCVC is mandated to revise the Victim Impact Statement (VIS) after every legislative session, collect VIS statistics from each district and county attorney's office, and develop crime victim assistance standards. In addition, the TxCVC provides training for criminal justice and victim service professionals as well as direct services to crime victims, including execution accompaniment.

# Victim Offender Mediation/Dialogue

*Assists crime victims who have requested to meet with the offender responsible for their victimization.*

The VOM/D program provides an opportunity for victims or surviving family members of violent crime to initiate an in-person meeting with the offender responsible for their victimization. Crime victims have expressed a sense of taking back control once they meet directly with the offender to describe the impact of their victimization and to receive answers to questions regarding the offense.

 108 VOM/D cases were initiated\* in FY 2013

VOM/D cases can only be initiated by crime victims. The offender must be incarcerated or on parole/mandatory supervision. The process is voluntary for both crime victims and offenders.

 120 VOM/D cases were assigned in FY 2013

This program is not intended to have any bearing on the participating offender's status in the judicial, appellate or corrections systems. The mediator assigned the VOM/D case will meet with the crime victim and offender separately during the preparation phase. The mediation is scheduled when both participants and the mediator agree that they are ready to meet in-person.

Mediations are typically conducted at the facility where the offender is incarcerated or at the offender's parole or probation office. Creative alternatives to mediation are also an option, and typically include a letter written by the victim.

 43 VOM/D mediations conducted\*\* in FY 2013

*\* Victims of violent crime can initiate a VOM/D case by contacting the VSD. Some VOM/D cases are initiated in one fiscal year, but are not conducted until a later fiscal year due to the waiting list for assignment and VOM/D's preparation phase.*

*\*\* This includes 25 person-to-person mediations and 18 creative alternative mediations.*

# Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse

*Serves as a central source of information, revises the Victim Impact Statement, collects statistics from district and county attorneys' offices, publishes brochures and a quarterly online newsletter, and conducts training.*

## List of Brochures and Informational Material:

*Your Rights, Your Voice, Your Participation:* provides information on TDCJVSD programs and services

*It's Your Voice:* provides information on the Victim Impact Statement and how it is used in the criminal justice system

*Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse:* lists the crime victims' rights and referral information for national and Texas-based organizations

*Do You Know Your Additional Rights?:* provides a summary of additional crime victims' rights

*Crime Victim Assistance Standards:* a publication developed to aid law enforcement officers and attorneys representing the State of Texas in performing duties imposed by the Code of Criminal Procedure Title 1. Chapter 56. Rights of Crime Victims (available online only)

*Victims' Rights and Services for TDCJ Staff:* provides information on crime victims' rights and services available to TDCJ staff members who have been victimized while on duty

## Publications:

*The Victim's Informer:* a quarterly newsletter aimed at providing information on new and innovative services for victims and victim services professionals (available online only)

## Victim Assistance Resource Directory:

An online resource directory that provides national, state and local resources (categorized by Texas county) for crime victims, victim service professionals and criminal justice professionals

## Training:

Texas Victim Assistance Training (TVAT) Online: web-based state-wide foundational victim assistance training focused on victim-centered service delivery and professional development

Texas Victim Assistance Training (TVAT) Calendar: provides additional information and opportunities for training and events held in Texas

# Victim Impact Statement

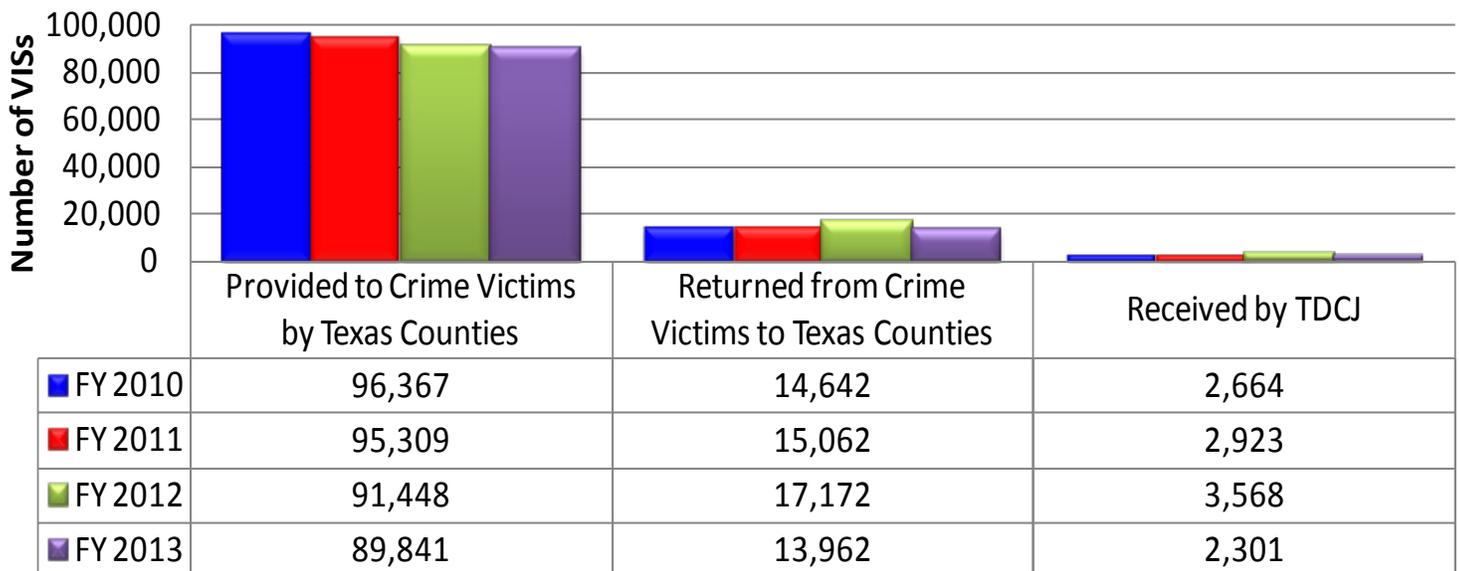
*The VIS is a form used by a crime victim to record the emotional and psychological impact, physical injury and economic loss a crime has on a victim and his or her family members.*

The TxCVC is mandated by the Code of Criminal Procedure art. 56.05 to develop a survey plan to maintain statistics on the numbers and types of persons who are provided VISs each year. A report is required from all district and county attorneys who represent the 254 counties in Texas and is submitted by the respective office's Victim Assistance Coordinator or the person assigned to those duties.

The following chart (first two columns) reflects the statistics reported on the VIS Activity Report for all reporting Texas counties. The VSD may have received a report from the district or county attorney's office or both referencing how many VISs were provided to a crime victim by the district or county attorney's office and how many VISs were completed and returned to the district or county attorney's office. Refer to Appendix A for a breakdown of each Texas county.

The last column reflects the number of VISs received by the TDCJ during FY 2013. This includes VISs forwarded from TDCJ CID or received directly into the VSD office from a district or county attorney's office or both.

## VIS Statistics



# Training

*Workshops, webinars and online training.*

The TxCVC provides training to victim service and criminal justice professionals. Training topics include:

- Victimology and Crime Victims' Rights;
- Victim Sensitivity;
- and Victim Impact Statements.



Law enforcement, criminal justice and victim service professionals attended a training in FY 2013

## Texas Victim Assistance Training Online

The Texas Victim Assistance Training (TVAT) Online was created and made available in FY 2013. TVAT Online is a web-based state-wide foundational victim assistance training focused on victim-centered service delivery and professional development that complements other victim services initiatives and enables new advocates to acquire baseline professional skills and competence.

The training is broken down into four distinct modules :

- Ethics
- Crime Victims' Rights
- Role of the Victim Services Professional, and
- Safety Planning

The training is available free of charge and students can access TVAT Online at any internet-accessible location. TVAT Online is designed to be taken as the student's schedule permits. Students may log into and out of the training to review the modules at their convenience.

The TVAT Online provides individuals who may not have been able to attend training due to lack of funding or time constraints access to a comprehensive training.

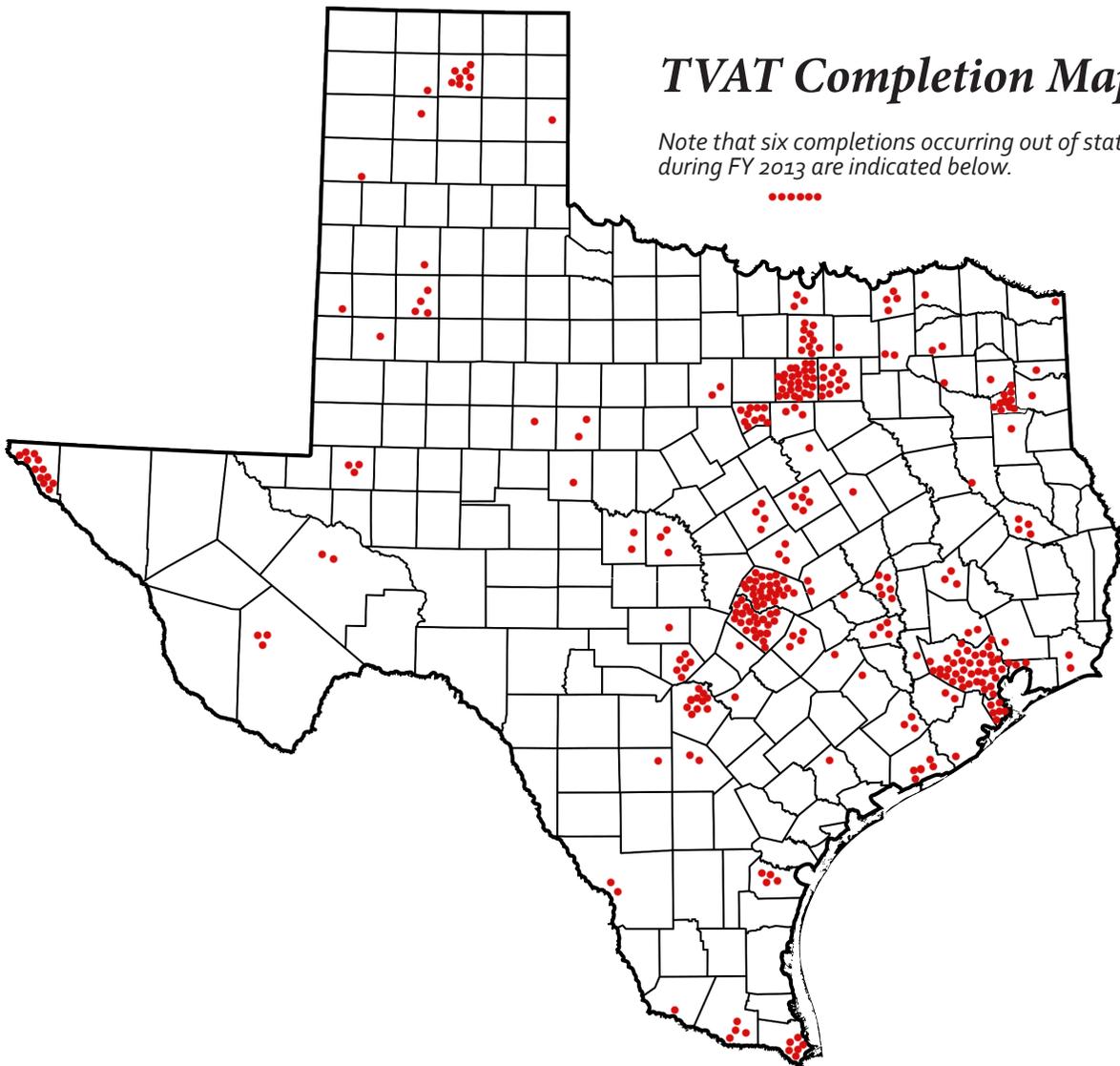
# Texas Victim Assistance Training Online

T★V★A★T



349

students completed the TVAT Online coursework in FY 2013

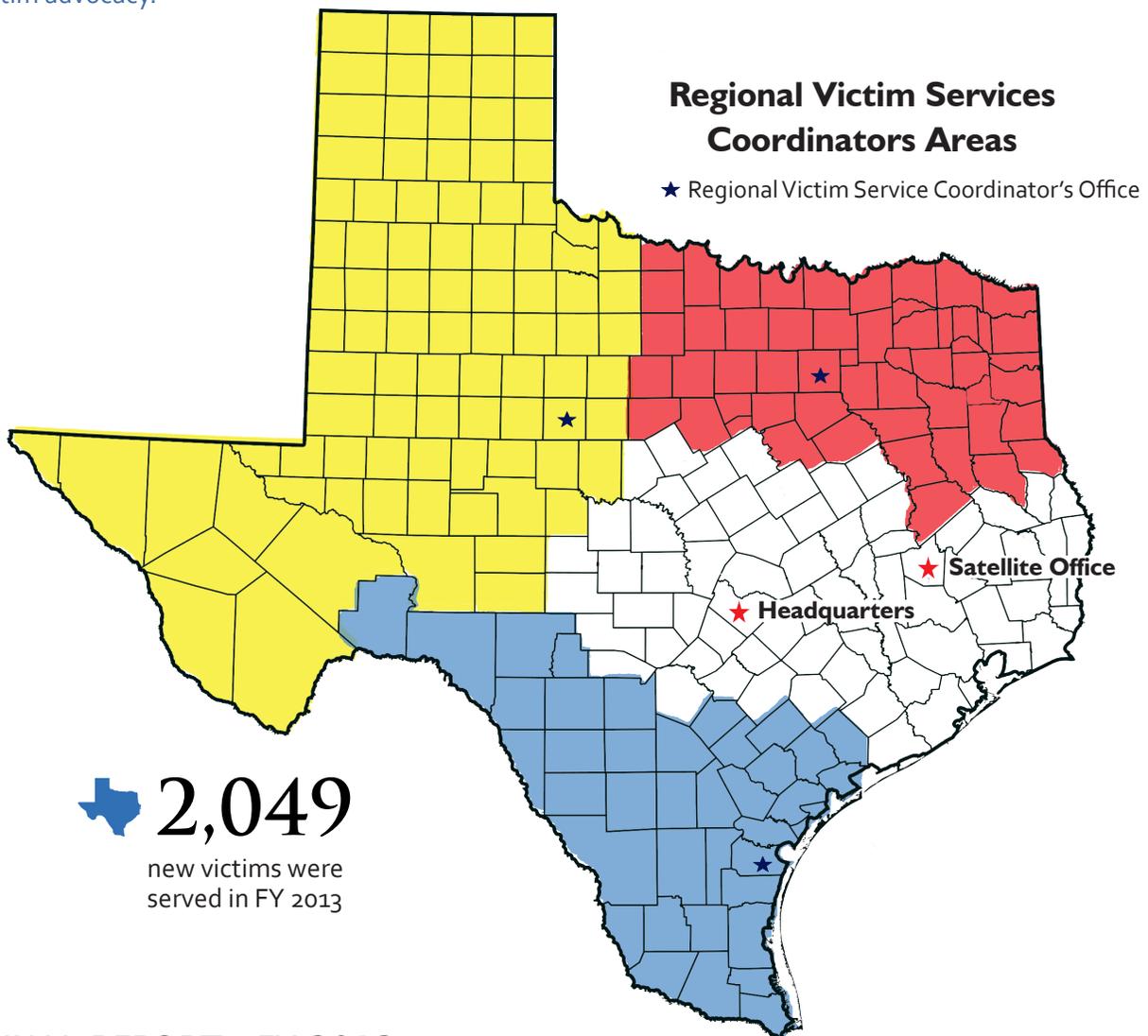


# Regional Victim Services Coordinators

*TxCVC has strategically-placed regional positions to provide direct victim services or training.*

The TxCVC strategically-placed Regional Victim Service Coordinators provide direct services to crime victims and training to criminal justice and victim services professionals within their respective region. Training topics include the Victim Impact Statement, services offered by the Victim Services Division, and post-conviction crime victims' rights. The services provided to victims include, but not limited to:

- assistance with crime victims' compensation;
- criminal justice and law enforcement accompaniment;
- assistance with Statewide Automated Victim Notification System/Victim Information and Notification Everyday (SAVNS/VINE);
- assistance with victim impact statements; and
- victim advocacy.



# Assistance and Support During Executions

*Provides assistance and support for victims' families during the execution process.*

The VSD works with the victims' families during the execution process, regardless if they choose to view the execution or not. As many as five relatives, plus a spiritual advisor, can witness the offender's execution. Witnesses may also include law enforcement personnel and trial officials. Victim witnesses are prepared for and accompanied to the execution by VSD staff member(s). Victims may bring support persons who will not view the execution, but will provide support to those victim witnesses. VSD staff also provides follow-up support and referrals as needed.



67

Victims witnessed the execution of the offender in FY 2013



28

Support persons accompanied victim witnesses in FY 2013



19

Executions were attended by victim witnesses, their support persons and VSD staff in FY 2013

# *VIS Statistics - Appendix A*

The TxCVC is mandated by the Code of Criminal Procedure art. 56.05 to develop a survey plan to maintain statistics on the numbers and types of persons who are provided a VIS during each year.

The following spreadsheet reflects the statistics reported on the VIS Activity Report for each Texas county for the FY 2013. The VSD may have received a report from the district or county attorney's office or both.

## *Definitions for the VIS Activity Report Spreadsheet:*

**Victim Impact Statement (VIS):** is a form used by a crime victim to record the emotional and psychological impact, physical injury and economic loss a crime has had on a victim and his or her family members. The form is also used to collect contact information for crime victims for notification purposes. This form provides information to personnel in many stages of the criminal justice system, including the court system and the parole review process.

The VISs are provided to victims as defined in the Code of Criminal Procedure art. 56.01.

**Victim Impact Statement Activity Report:** is a statistical report used to collect information on the VIS and is required to be reported to the TxCVC under art. 56.05, Code of Criminal Procedure. This report is required from all district and county attorneys who represent the 254 counties in Texas and is submitted by the respective office's Victim Assistance Coordinator or the person assigned to those duties. The reports are collected on a quarterly basis to track VIS activity.

## *Explanation of VIS Activity Report Spreadsheet:*

**Column A:** represents all 254 counties in Texas. The VSD may have received a VIS Activity Report from the county attorney's office, district attorney's office or both.

**Column B:** represents the number of VISs provided to crime victims by the county attorney's office, district attorney's office or both during the fiscal year as reported on the VIS Activity Report.

**Column C:** represents the number of completed VISs returned by the crime victim to the county attorney's office, district attorney's office or both during the FY 2013 as reported on the VIS Activity Report.

**Column D:** represents the rate of return for each county. This rate is calculated by comparing the VISs provided and returned during FY 2013. It is important to note that a VISs may be provided in one fiscal year and returned in another.

**Non-Reported (NR):** is a code used to designate no VIS Activity Reports were received from the county attorney's office or district attorney's office during the fiscal year.

# VIS Statistics: Anderson - Cameron

County	Number of VISs Provided to Victims by County	Number of VISs Returned to County	% Rate of Return to County
Anderson	55	27	49.09%
Andrews	51	19	37.25%
Angelina	173	24	13.87%
Aransas	40	0	0.00%
Archer	NR	NR	NR
Armstrong	0	0	0.00%
Atascosa	84	18	21.43%
Austin	14	1	7.14%
Bailey	5	1	20.00%
Bandera	66	20	30.30%
Bastrop	169	41	24.26%
Baylor	17	3	17.65%
Bee	NR	NR	NR
Bell	1,514	175	11.56%
Bexar	8,896	1,036	11.65%
Blanco	11	2	18.18%
Borden	0	0	0.00%
Bosque	40	16	40.00%
Bowie	NR	NR	NR
Brazoria	974	131	13.45%
Brazos	690	348	50.43%
Brewster	3	2	66.67%
Briscoe	0	0	0.00%
Brooks	0	0	0.00%
Brown	55	11	20.00%
Burleson	NR	NR	NR
Burnet	136	26	19.12%
Caldwell	388	87	22.42%
Calhoun	17	4	23.53%
Callahan	22	1	4.55%
Cameron	824	48	5.83%

# VIS Statistics: Camp - Dickens

County	Number of VISs Provided to Victims by County	Number of VISs Returned to County	% Rate of Return to County
Camp	0	0	0.00%
Carson	13	0	0.00%
Cass	84	11	13.10%
Castro	NR	NR	NR
Chambers	74	19	25.68%
Cherokee	26	9	34.62%
Childress	10	4	40.00%
Clay	NR	NR	NR
Cochran	0	0	0.00%
Coke	4	0	0.00%
Coleman	14	2	14.29%
Collin	897	138	15.38%
Collingsworth	19	6	31.58%
Colorado	85	13	15.29%
Comal	239	82	34.31%
Comanche	28	8	28.57%
Concho	3	1	33.33%
Cooke	85	14	16.47%
Coryell	175	18	10.29%
Cottle	0	0	0.00%
Crane	14	2	14.29%
Crockett	21	2	9.52%
Crosby	2	0	0.00%
Culberson	0	0	0.00%
Dallam	NR	NR	NR
Dallas	5,423	598	11.03%
Dawson	6	0	0.00%
Deaf Smith	80	17	21.25%
Delta	9	1	11.11%
Denton	1,844	377	20.44%
DeWitt	35	6	17.14%
Dickens	NR	NR	NR

# VIS Statistics: Dimmitt - Hale

County	Number of VISs Provided to Victims by County	Number of VISs Returned to County	% Rate of Return to County
Dimmitt	53	4	7.55%
Donley	8	0	0.00%
Duval	16	4	25.00%
Eastland	47	5	10.64%
Ector	1,062	143	13.47%
Edwards	9	7	77.78%
El Paso	11,522	1,494	12.97%
Ellis	205	72	35.12%
Erath	69	11	15.94%
Falls	13	1	7.69%
Fannin	77	49	63.64%
Fayette	5	0	0.00%
Fisher	10	5	50.00%
Floyd	0	0	0.00%
Foard	3	2	66.67%
Fort Bend	2,062	430	20.85%
Franklin	745	159	21.34%
Freestone	NR	NR	NR
Frio	16	3	18.75%
Gaines	NR	NR	NR
Galveston	1,590	243	15.28%
Garza	NR	NR	NR
Gillespie	25	15	60.00%
Glasscock	3	0	0.00%
Goliad	25	7	28.00%
Gonzales	137	84	61.31%
Gray	30	7	23.33%
Grayson	212	44	20.75%
Gregg	156	47	30.13%
Grimes	7	3	42.86%
Guadalupe	728	313	42.99%
Hale	128	9	7.03%

# VIS Statistics: Hall - Jones

County	Number of VISs Provided to Victims by County	Number of VISs Returned to County	% Rate of Return to County
Hall	12	3	25.00%
Hamilton	9	6	66.67%
Hansford	1	0	0.00%
Hardeman	4	1	25.00%
Hardin	37	12	32.43%
Harris	13,696	1,634	11.93%
Harrison	142	2	1.41%
Hartley	2	2	100.00%
Haskell	16	4	25.00%
Hays	23	4	17.39%
Hemphill	10	2	20.00%
Henderson	12	8	66.67%
Hidalgo	NR	NR	NR
Hill	230	46	20.00%
Hockley	13	0	0.00%
Hood	89	17	19.10%
Hopkins	84	5	5.95%
Houston	140	17	12.14%
Howard	24	3	12.50%
Hudspeth	0	0	0.00%
Hunt	270	50	18.52%
Hutchinson	59	12	20.34%
Irion	3	0	0.00%
Jack	30	7	23.33%
Jackson	34	1	2.94%
Jasper	130	82	63.08%
Jeff Davis	1	0	0.00%
Jefferson	NR	NR	NR
Jim Hogg	NR	NR	NR
Jim Wells	9	3	33.33%
Johnson	118	27	22.88%
Jones	60	40	66.67%

# VIS Statistics: Karnes - Maverick

County	Number of VISs Provided to Victims by County	Number of VISs Returned to County	% Rate of Return to County
Karnes	21	7	33.33%
Kaufman	388	64	16.49%
Kendall	122	44	36.07%
Kenedy	0	0	0.00%
Kent	2	2	100.00%
Kerr	171	130	76.02%
Kimble	13	7	53.85%
King	0	0	0.00%
Kinney	0	0	0.00%
Kleberg	561	49	8.73%
Knox	4	0	0.00%
La Salle	7	1	14.29%
Lamar	NR	NR	NR
Lamb	50	21	42.00%
Lampasas	11	6	54.55%
Lavaca	88	40	45.45%
Lee	NR	NR	NR
Leon	23	4	17.39%
Liberty	263	45	17.11%
Limestone	129	18	13.95%
Lipscomb	2	2	100.00%
Live Oak	NR	NR	NR
Llano	129	7	5.43%
Loving	NR	NR	NR
Lubbock	2,298	500	21.76%
Lynn	NR	NR	NR
Madison	24	8	33.33%
Marion	8	2	25.00%
Martin	8	1	12.50%
Mason	2	2	100.00%
Matagorda	NR	NR	NR
Maverick	9	2	22.22%

# VIS Statistics: McCulloch - Randall

County	Number of VISs Provided to Victims by County	Number of VISs Returned to County	% Rate of Return to County
McCulloch	42	10	23.81%
McLennan	569	48	8.44%
McMullen	NR	NR	NR
Medina	80	18	22.50%
Menard	0	0	0.00%
Midland	1,171	280	23.91%
Milam	19	10	52.63%
Mills	5	3	60.00%
Mitchell	12	4	33.33%
Montague	14	1	7.14%
Montgomery	1,311	135	10.30%
Moore	27	0	0.00%
Morris	NR	NR	NR
Motley	0	0	0.00%
Nacogdoches	143	34	23.78%
Navarro	156	65	41.67%
Newton	35	7	20.00%
Nolan	41	13	31.71%
Nueces	1,533	165	10.76%
Ochiltree	NR	NR	NR
Oldham	1	0	0.00%
Orange	38	12	31.58%
Palo Pinto	47	12	25.53%
Panola	NR	NR	NR
Parker	210	36	17.14%
Parmer	5	1	20.00%
Pecos	187	22	11.76%
Polk	51	14	27.45%
Potter	1,081	331	30.62%
Presidio	3	1	33.33%
Rains	12	4	33.33%
Randall	1,179	293	24.85%

# VIS Statistics: Reagan - Terry

County	Number of VISs Provided to Victims by County	Number of VISs Returned to County	% Rate of Return to County
Reagan	6	1	16.67%
Real	8	0	0.00%
Red River	NR	NR	NR
Reeves	14	0	0.00%
Refugio	9	2	22.22%
Roberts	6	0	0.00%
Robertson	69	17	24.64%
Rockwall	80	20	25.00%
Runnels	23	2	8.70%
Rusk	NR	NR	NR
Sabine	22	5	22.73%
San Augustine	19	4	21.05%
San Jacinto	25	5	20.00%
San Patricio	59	10	16.95%
San Saba	6	1	16.67%
Schleicher	3	0	0.00%
Scurry	15	0	0.00%
Shackelford*	0	1	--
Shelby	NR	NR	NR
Sherman	NR	NR	NR
Smith	359	59	16.43%
Somervell	17	5	29.41%
Starr	44	13	29.55%
Stephens	11	1	9.09%
Sterling	3	1	33.33%
Stonewall	3	1	33.33%
Sutton	13	3	23.08%
Swisher	0	0	0.00%
Tarrant	8,400	1,525	18.15%
Taylor	442	64	14.48%
Terrell	0	0	0.00%
Terry	29	7	24.14%

\* Note: A VIS may be provided in one fiscal year and not returned until the following fiscal year.

# VIS Statistics: Throckmorton - Zavala

County	Number of VISs Provided to Victims by County	Number of VISs Returned to County	% Rate of Return to County
Throckmorton	1	0	0.00%
Titus	NR	NR	NR
Tom Green	441	73	16.55%
Travis	6,827	583	8.54%
Trinity	0	0	0.00%
Tyler	NR	NR	NR
Upshur	217	37	17.05%
Upton	10	1	10.00%
Uvalde	63	3	4.76%
Val Verde	0	0	0.00%
Van Zandt	143	66	46.15%
Victoria	103	20	19.42%
Walker	NR	NR	NR
Waller	100	15	15.00%
Ward	0	0	0.00%
Washington	80	6	7.50%
Webb	243	57	23.46%
Wharton	53	1	1.89%
Wheeler	22	8	36.36%
Wichita	695	126	18.13%
Wilbarger	17	4	23.53%
Willacy	34	7	20.59%
Williamson	685	84	12.26%
Wilson	22	15	68.18%
Winkler	9	4	44.44%
Wise	270	58	21.48%
Wood	112	38	33.93%
Yoakum	14	5	35.71%
Young	22	4	18.18%
Zapata	NR	NR	NR
Zavala	13	1	7.69%
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>89,841</b>	<b>13,962</b>	<b>15.54%</b>

**Texas Department of Criminal Justice  
Victim Services Division**

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[www.tdcj.state.tx.us](http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us)**

The mission of Victim Services Division is to provide a central mechanism for crime victims to participate in the criminal justice system.