



news

Colorado Judicial Branch
Mary J. Mullarkey, Chief Justice
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**Events across Colorado planned to mark 25th anniversary of funding
for crime victims and victims' rights**
2009 theme is "25 Years of Rebuilding Lives: Celebrating the Victims of Crime Act"

DENVER – Celebrating a quarter-century since the passage of the federal Victims of Crime Act and the establishment of the crime victims' fund, Colorado's trial courts and probation services have planned several events across the state to mark National Crime Victims' Rights Week, beginning Sunday, April 26.

In Denver, the Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance and other agencies will cosponsor a ceremony at noon Monday, April 27, in the atrium of the Wellington Webb Municipal Office Building at 201 West Colfax, to honor and remember victims of crime.

The celebrations are based on the theme "25 Years of Rebuilding Lives: Celebrating the Victims of Crime Act."

Colorado's statute on victims' rights was enacted in 1993. Like the federal law, it created a fund financed by fines and penalties paid by offenders to help victims of crimes recover not only financially but also, when appropriate, emotionally through counseling and guidance in navigating the criminal justice system.

Under Colorado law, the funds also can be used to provide services including early crisis intervention, referral to appropriate social service and victim-compensation programs, and help

in dealing with a victim's employers or creditors. Crime victims also may choose to be notified about the progress of an investigation, arrest of a suspect, bail determinations and the status of a case.

Victims of crime or their survivors also are guaranteed by the Colorado Constitution the right to be heard when relevant, the right to be informed and the right to be present at all critical stages of the criminal justice process.

Through educational and other efforts, the Colorado Judicial Branch has made significant strides in ensuring victims are treated with fairness, respect and dignity, said Chief Justice Mary Mullarkey.

"Because all of us are vulnerable to crime, victims' rights are everyone's rights," she said. "We within the court system work hard to ensure that we comply with the statutes providing victims with information about their cases and compensation for their losses."

In Fiscal Year 2008, the Probation Services Division of the Judicial Branch provided notification or referral services to more than 5,200 crime victims. For those who request the service, the division will notify crime victims of critical stages in offenders' probation such as probation revocation, sentence modification and sentence termination. The division also refers crime victims to support services in the community.

For more information on crime victims' rights and statewide and national activities for National Crime Victims' Rights Week, please visit <http://www.coloradocrimevictims.org> and <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/ncvrw>.