



MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS



# PRESS RELEASE

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**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS - DIVISION OF VICTIM SERVICES  
RECEIVES CONTINUATION FUNDING FROM PUBLIC SAFETY PLANNING**

**Jackson** - The Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) division of victim services (DVS) has received a continuation grant from the Mississippi Division of Public Safety Planning (PSP). The \$99,666.00 continuation funding ensures program operation through June 30, 2010 for crime victim services in Mississippi. The DVS is funded through the *Victims of Crime Act* (VOCA) by the United States Department of Justice. The fund has been supported not by tax dollars but by fines, penalty assessments, and bond forfeitures collected from convicted federal offenders.

The DVS began operation in 2000 and its primary function is to register crime victims with MDOC regarding notification of inmate releases. Additionally, the office provides referral services including crisis intervention, information regarding the Crime Victim Compensation Program, enforcement of crime victims' rights, preparation and escort during executions, prevention from intimidation and harassment by offenders, and a mechanism for victim/offender dialogue opportunities. The DVS currently has over 4,480 crime victims and survivors of homicide victims registered with the program.

"The Mississippi Department of Corrections is pleased to receive the continuation of funding for our division of victim services," said MDOC Commissioner Christopher B. Epps. "Without this funding, crime victims would lose this vital service. We are delighted PSP views corrections-based victim services as significantly as we do."

Melinda Box, DVS Director said, "This funding ensures crime victims' rights will continue to be enforced within corrections. Each year, this division provides services to victims that would otherwise not be provided without this funding. I am thankful we again have the funding necessary to continue the services offered by the DVS."

For information on MDOC DVS, please contact: Mississippi Department of Corrections - Division of Victim Services, 723 North President Street, Jackson, MS 39202 or call (601) 359-5628. Toll free 1-866-522-4087. E-mail DVS at [victimservices@mdoc.state.ms.us](mailto:victimservices@mdoc.state.ms.us). Or go online at [www.mdoc.state.ms.us](http://www.mdoc.state.ms.us) and click on *Victim Services*.

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