

JAN 12 2009

JAMES P. LARSEN, CLERK
JPL DEPUTY
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

IN RE:)
CRIME VICTIM NOTIFICATION) GENERAL ORDER NO. 109-09-1
)
)
)
)
)

Title 18 U.S.C. § 3771 places on the federal courts a duty to ensure that crime victims are afforded certain rights. Among the rights given to victims are the right to be present at public court proceedings involving the crime, section 3771(a)(2) and (3), and the right to be "reasonably heard at any public proceeding in the district court involving release, plea, sentencing, or any parole proceeding," section 3771(a)(4).¹

The statute directs Department of Justice personnel (and personnel of other agencies, as appropriate) to "make their best efforts to see that crime victims are notified of, and accorded, the rights described in subsection (a)." Section 3771(c)(1). Under section 3771(d)(1), crime victims are now authorized to assert those rights independently. In addition, the federal district courts

¹The Crime Victims' Rights Act of 2004 and the Federal Courts, Federal Judicial Center, March 4, 2008 (CVRA and Fed Courts, FJC 3/4/2008).

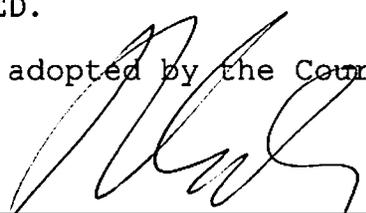
1 themselves are now directed, "[i]n any court proceeding involving an
2 offense against a crime victim, [to] ensure that the crime victim is
3 afforded the rights described in subsection (a)." 18 U.S.C. §
4 3771(b)(1). *CVRA and Fed Courts*, FJC 3/4/2008.

5 The Victim Notification System (VNS) is an automated system used
6 by the Department of Justice to notify crime victims of developments
7 in their cases and on court events. Court event information from the
8 court's Case Management/Electronic Case Filing system (CM/ECF) such
9 as notices of hearings, sentences, etc. are currently entered into
10 VNS by the U.S. Attorney's Office and will soon be extracted from
11 CM/ECF and electronically passed to VNS. The VNS notifies victims by
12 automated letter, e-mail, or a toll-free telephone call center as
13 well as providing Internet access to victim information.

14 The court's information from CM/ECF provides notification to
15 crime victims through the Department of Justice VNS, thus fulfilling
16 the court's statutory obligation to notify victims.

17 IT IS SO ORDERED.

18 This order was adopted by the Court on January 12, 2009.

19
20 
21 _____
22 FOR THE COURT
23 ROBERT H. WHALEY
24 CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
25
26
27
28