
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1681 (Ramos) - Victim's and witness' rights

Version: May 18, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: PUB. S. 6 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Bob Franzoia

Bill Summary: AB 1681 would require district attorneys and other prosecuting agencies to ensure that victim and victim next of kin contact information is provided to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) at the time of sentencing to state prison. By increasing the burden on local prosecuting agencies, this bill would impose a state mandated local program.

Fiscal Impact: Estimated costs of \$750,00 in FY 2026-27 to \$2 million to \$3 million annually thereafter with approximately half of the costs to CDCR to support increased victim registration, verification, outreach, notification and restitution processing workload. Primary cost drivers include additional staffing to process and verify victim information, expended outreach and notification activities and potential one time and ongoing information technology and accounting system enhancements.

Current victim registration error rates are approximately 25 percent which this bill intends to significantly increase by providing contact information directly to CDCR. By improving access to victim contact information, CDCR expects increased registration rates and participation in notification and restitution processes, thereby increasing administrative workload. CDCR estimates additional staffing resources will be required and that system enhancements may be necessary to support these expanded activities.

One time cost in the hundreds of thousands of dollars for information technology system upgrades to case management systems and related administrative processes to handle forms prescribed by CDCR. (General Fund)

Unknown, potentially significant reimbursable costs to district attorneys to ensure that a victim's contact information and next of kin is provided to CDCR at the time of sentencing if a defendant is sentenced to state prison, Costs will depend on whether and how often district attorneys must use investigators or other staff to locate victims or their families in order to collect contact information and whether this bill creates a reimbursable state mandate, as determined by the Commission on State Mandates. (General Fund)

Background: In 2008, voters approved Proposition 9, known as Marsy's Law, which amended the California Constitution to provide a victim's Bill of Rights. In order to preserve a victims' right to due process and justice, the victim is, among other things, entitled to: reasonable notice of all public proceedings which the defendant and the prosecutor are entitled to be present at and of all parole or other post-conviction release proceedings, as well as to be present at these proceedings; be heard, upon request, at any proceeding, including sentencing, a post-conviction release decision, or any

proceeding in which a right of the victim is at issue; and be informed of all parole procedures, to participate in the parole process, and to provide information to the parole authority to be considered before the person is paroled.

Once a defendant is sentenced, the victim is not entitled to automatic notice of possible release when the defendant is sentenced to a determinate term. Instead, victims must submit paperwork to request notification. CDCR's Office of Victim and Survivor Rights and Services is responsible for providing victim services and information to victims and their families.

Proponents assert that many victims or next of kin are unaware of the CDCR process for requesting victim notification or find the process of requesting notice overwhelming.

Proposed Law: This bill requires, in cases that result in a state prison sentence, the prosecutor to ensure that the contact information of the victim and the victim's next of kin is provided to CDCR at the time of sentencing, to the extent that contact information is reasonably available.

This bill provides that the failure of a victim to submit a separate request for services or notification does not relieve the state of its duty to provide the information that it is required to provide to victims under existing law.