

APPROVED FOURTH DISTRICT VICTIMS' RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETING JUNE 1, 2026	
Committee	Fourth District Victims' Rights Committee Meeting
Date Time Location	June 1, 2026 1:00-2:45 pm Virtual: https://utah-gov.zoom.us/j/88233404467?pwd=QMglbXmAOrHyyWB3WWObLBdONJPb2d.1
Members Present	<u>Virtual Attendance:</u> Sandi Johnson, Scott Sweat, Amy Taylor, Sheriff Mike Smith, Kevin Thurman, Jake Romero, Chief BJ Robinson
Staff & Visitors	<u>Staff:</u> Katie Fox <u>Visitors:</u> Christopher Ballard, Chris Buckley, Sarah Varner, Ryan McBride, Kristin Guthrie, Brian Miller, N.H.
Agenda Item	Welcome & Introductions/Establish Quorum
Notes	Sandi Johnson welcomed the Committee. Sandi Johnson established that a quorum was present.
Agenda Item	Approve Minutes from May 4, 2026 Meeting
Notes	Sandi Johnson inquired if everyone had a chance to review the minutes from the previous meeting. Motion: Kevin Thurman made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 4, 2026 meeting. Sheriff Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
Agenda Item	Review of Complaints
Notes	<p>1. N.H.. Complaint</p> <p>The Committee discussed N.H.'s complaint. N.H. was present in the meeting. The Wasatch County Attorney's Office had staff present and submitted a written response as well. N.H. addressed their complaint regarding their rights during the prosecution of the defendant who is a combat veteran that suffers with a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). The committee's focus is whether the Wasatch County Attorney's Office or the court failed to uphold the victim's statutory right to be heard.</p> <p>N.H. felt their written statements to the court was ignored. N.H. pointed out that being named by the state as the victim but yet every time they asked to be heard it felt like they were being ignored. N.H. reported zero communication from the victim advocate's office immediately following their injury which required nine staples. N.H. feels the system treated a mental health/TBI crisis as a criminal matter rather than a medical one, leading to further incidents, including a high-speed chase. Emails from the victim advocate informing them of court dates but stating "you don't have to be present" were perceived by N.H. as a directive to stay away rather than an optional notification.</p> <p>Kristin Guthrie from the Wasatch County Attorney's Office clarified that the statement "you are not required to attend" is a standard notification intended to reduce pressure and fear for victims, not to discourage participation.</p> <p>The committee noted that being "heard" does not require the prosecutor or judge to agree with the victim's suggestions. Review of a court transcript and recording showed N.H. spoke for approximately seven minutes during the Sentencing Hearing. The judge, having heard N.H.'s concerns regarding mental health, released the defendant to a treatment center in California.</p> <p>Motion: Kevin Thurman made a motion to find that there was no violation of N.H.'s right to be heard by the Wasatch County Attorney's Office. Sheriff Smith seconded the motion. Scott Sweat abstained from the vote. The motion passed.</p> <p>Action Items: Sandi Johnson will draft formal letters to N.H. and the Wasatch County Attorney's Office informing them of the committee's decisions.. Katie Fox will send the letters.</p>

	<p>2. E.W. Complaint The Committee discussed E.W.'s complaint. Representatives from the Utah County Attorney's Office were present and a written response from their office was provided. E.W. sent a written response to the committee. This complaint involved a theft case where E.W. requested to be notified of all important criminal justice hearings and sought restitution. E.W. reported they were not notified of the specific date for the plea and sentencing hearing. While the Utah County Attorney's Office ensured restitution was ordered, a written victim impact statement provided by E.W. was never filed with the court. Ryan McBride told the committee their office could not prove or disprove that E.W. was notified of the specific Sentencing Hearing date, though they were informed of the general plea deal terms.</p> <p>Motion: Sandi Johnson made a motion to find that there was no violation of E.W.'s right to be notified of the plea resolution. Sandi further motioned to find a violation of the victim's right to be notified of important criminal justice hearings and the right to be present and heard by the Court at sentencing. Kevin Thurman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Action Items: Sandi Johnson will draft formal letters to E.W. and the Utah County Attorney's Office informing them of the committee's decisions. Katie Fox will send the letters.</p> <p>3. J.M. Complaint The Committee discussed J.M.'s complaint. J.M. alleged multiple failures regarding notification and protection after the defendant was released following a domestic violence arrest. The case involved Class B misdemeanors. The committee noted that under Utah Code Chapter 38, certain rights regarding notification apply specifically to felonies, but the other rights still apply to misdemeanors. Many of J.M.'s concerns, such as legal fees for custody evaluations and alimony, fall outside the committee's jurisdiction as they are not related to criminal victim rights violations. The committee noted that initial release from jail after an arrest is not typically classified as an important criminal justice hearing requiring notification.</p> <p>The central concern for the Committee was that the case moved to a Plea in Abeyance and was ultimately dismissed after one year without J.M. being notified of the resolution. J.M. was left unaware of the case status until seeking information months later.</p> <p>Motion: Scott Sweat made a motion to find the complaint alleged a violation of the victim's rights by the Saratoga Springs Attorney's Office. Sheriff Smith seconded the motion. Kevin Thurman abstained from the vote. The motion passed.</p> <p>Action Items: Sandi Johnson will prepare letters to the Saratoga Springs Attorney's Office and J.M. inviting them to the next meeting. Katie Fox will send the letters and coordinate their attendance.</p>
Agenda Item	Public Comment
	Public Comment was given during the discussion of the complaints.
Agenda Item	Schedule Next Meeting and Adjourn
Notes	<p>Scott Sweat made a motion to adjourn. Sheriff Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The committee adjourned.</p> <p>Next Meeting: July 6, 2026, 1:00 pm- 2:00 pm</p>

Zoom link:

<https://utah-gov.zoom.us/j/88233404467?pwd=QMqlbXmAOrHyyWB3WWObLBdONJPb2d.1>