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Data on the Injured Convict: Following Results of the Investigation of Crimes Related to Intentional Infliction of Harm to Life and Health Committed in Places of Deprivation of Liberty



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Abstract

Introduction: the article presents data on the injured convict following investigation of crimes of intentional infliction of harm to life and health committed in places of deprivation of liberty. Purpose: based on analysis and generalization of theoretical and practical data, the attempt is made to form a typical portrait of the victim of intentional harm to life and health committed in places of deprivation of liberty. Methods: dialectical method of cognition, general scientific methods of analysis and generalization, empirical methods of description, interpretation, theoretical methods of formal and dialectical logic. Results: the article makes a brief historical digression in order to compare legal norms of the 1864 Statute of Criminal Proceedings, which regulated certain provisions constituting the legal status of the victim, with norms of modern legislation. The main attention is focused on crimes causing intentional harm to life and health committed in places of deprivation of liberty, their causes and commission conditions. The data of official statistics are given. The authors consider victimhood of victims, who are divided into three main groups depending on their behavior (negative, positive and neutral) during the period of serving the sentence. The specifics of each group are revealed. Conclusions: based on the available research, the authors present a typical portrait of the victim as a result of infliction of intentional harm to life and health committed in places of deprivation of liberty.

Keywords: intentional infliction of harm to life and health; investigation; victim; convict; place of imprisonment; causes; factors; data; forensic characteristics.

12.00.12 – Criminalistics; forensic examination activities; law enforcement intelligence-gathering activities.

5.1.4. Criminal legal sciences.

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Introduction

Crimes against life and health provided for in Chapter 16 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as CC RF) represent one of the serious threats to society and the state. The potential of their social danger is perhaps the highest, since they selectively claim the fundamental human rights and freedoms that are "inalienable and belong to everyone from birth" (Part 2 of Article 17 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation). Therefore, the state pursues the task of implementing various means, including criminal law and criminal procedure, to protect the individual from criminal encroachments. However, despite the efforts made by the state, its law enforcement, judicial and investigative bodies, 254.1 thousand crimes against the person were registered in 2021 (in 2016 - 347.3 thousand), including 7.3 thousand murders (in 2016 - 10.7 thousand), 17.9 thousand intentional infliction of serious harm to health (in 2016 -27.4 thousand); 38.2 thousand minor injuries to health (in 2016 – 45.8 thousand) [2; 3].

As a result of criminal encroachments, 23.3 thousand people died, 32.8 thousand people suffered serious harm to their health. Rural areas account for 38.0% of the dead (8.8 thousand people), cities and urban-type settlements - 67.8% of people who have suffered serious harm (22.3 thousand people) [2].

Comparing the legal statuses of the victim [12] and the accused, established by the legislation on criminal proceedings of pre-revolutionary Russia, it can be concluded that the former lost to the latter in terms of protected rights and legitimate interests. This approach is traditional: victims have to prove the crime commission, moreover with considerable risk to themselves, since in the situations when the accused was acquitted, he/she could demand satisfaction [7, p. 5]. However, it is worth mentioning that this legislative approach has gradually changed. If we turn to the 1864 Statute of Criminal Proceedings (hereinafter referred to as SCP), it can be noted that "announcements and complaints of private persons" (Article 297 of the SCP) were recognized as legitimate reasons for preliminary investigation, while it was explained that "announcements of persons who have suffered from a crime or misdemeanor are recognized

complaints" (Article 301 of the SCP). Article 303 of the SCP strengthened the legal role of complaints in criminal proceedings, indicating that they "are considered a sufficient reason to initiate an investigation. Neither a judicial investigator nor a prosecutor can refuse that to a person who has suffered from a crime or a misdemeanor". Not going into detail regarding the legal position of the victim under the 1864 Statute of Criminal Proceedings, let us mention that it was voluminous and specific. In support of our conclusion, we quote the wording of Article 304: "During the entire time of investigation, the person who has brought the complaint has the right to: 1) present their witnesses; 2) be present at all investigative actions and offer, with the permission of the investigator, questions to the accused and witnesses; 3) submit evidence in support of their claim and 4) demand the issuance of copies of all protocols and resolutions at their own expense". An important point was also reflected in Article 308 of the SCP, namely: "Filing an announcement or complaint does not impose an obligation to prove a criminal act, but exposes responsibility for any false testimony".

The modern Russian state gradually assumes the function of accusation and proof of the crime commission. In this regard, we should support one of the recent initiatives of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation. Its Resolution No. 3 of April 6, 2022 stipulated submission of a draft federal law on changing the type of criminal prosecution in relation to crimes provided for in Part 1 of Article 115, Article 116.1 and Part 1 of Article 128.1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation to the State Duma of the Russian Federation. We are talking about abolition of the powers of a private prosecutor (currently, criminal cases of the listed crimes are considered by magistrates in the order of private prosecution), and preservation of only public and private-public types of criminal prosecution in the Criminal Procedural Code of the Russian Federation.

Research

Crimes against life and health are quite common in such specific places as correctional facilities. Thus, in 2021, 1,271 crimes were committed by persons sentenced to deprivation of liberty in institutions of the penal system of the Russian Federation. Approximately 8% are crimes related to intentional harm to life and health: murder (Article 105 of the CC RF) – 15 cases, attempted murder (articles 30 and 105 of the CC RF) – 7, intentional infliction of serious harm to health (Article 111 of the CC RF) – 29, intentional infliction of moderate harm to health (Article 112 of the CC RF) – 31, intentional infliction of minor harm to health (Article 115 of the CC RF) – 20 [5]. This is due to objective, subjective and complex factors.

Objective factors include a limited territory and a large number of persons concentrated on it. They are forced to have regulated and initiative relations. They are deprived of personal space, endowed with the same legal status with a different factual situation among the convicted, established by unofficial norms of behavior. They differ in the level of education, knowledge, upbringing, physical strength, state of health, orientation of beliefs, attitude to religion. Persons deprived of their liberty have to contact regularly: live together, stay in the same room for a considerable time, have a meal, medical procedures, work, collectively stay in sanitary rooms. All this in an environment in which they do not feel sympathy for each other. Constant presence of the same persons becomes a common, monotonous, annoying circumstance and causes internal rejection.

Conditions of isolation necessary for the execution of a sentence in the form of deprivation of liberty are the reason for aggravated interpersonal relations that often lead to multidirectional conflicts of a protracted nature, in which other convicts are involved. In addition, deprivation of liberty is associated with strict regulation of all spheres of life; deviation from the established norms entails the use of a wide range of penalties (sometimes with even greater isolation and restrictions). There is a special social environment with its own specific value orientations [8; 9].

Convicts are subjected to stress due to a specific environment and a relatively small enclosed area, accompanied by sexual abstinence, prison traditions, constant selfcontrol. At the same time, those serving a sentence do not have the opportunity to calm down, relax psychologically and give the body a full rest. All this affects their mental state, provoke anger, irritability, inadequate emotional reactions, aggression, conflict, which develops into illegal acts associated with harming each other's life and health, even in situations that, it would seem, could be resolved without resorting to violence.

A long stay in conditions of limited space, monotony and uniformity of events, internal wary attitudes of convicts among themselves generate hostility, banal jokes, quarrels, demonstration of concretized gestures, use of phraseological expressions not cultivated among those deprived of freedom, and contact relationships lead to the spread of rumors that become motives of crimes, causing harm to health.

The group of subjective factors includes various general characterizing data and personality traits of convicts held in penal institutions:

 mental disorders (about 23% of those held in institutions providing isolation from society have mental anomalies of various genesis (Table 1));

Table 1

Ratio of the number of convicts with mental deviations and the total number of persons serving a sentence of imprisonment

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total number of convicts held in correctional facilities	519 491	495 016	460 923	423 825	378 668
Total number of convicts with mental disorders in these institutions	111 862	108 197	101 881	98 281	94 616
Share of convicts with mental disorders	21.5 %	21.9 %	22.1 %	23.2 %	25 %

 commission of (previous) serious crimes (as of the end of 2020, out of 482,832 persons held in penal institutions, 119,934 were convicted of committing serious crimes, and 213,201 – especially serious crimes); – commission of intentional illegal acts (the number of persons convicted of particularly dangerous recidivism of crimes was 28 162);

 presence of past criminal experience (according to the data of the FSIN-1 statistical reporting form for 2012–2021, 86,577 persons serving sentences in penal institutions were convicted twice, 153,277 – three times or more);

– duration of imprisonment terms (at the end of 2020, 72,345 convicts served a sentence of imprisonment from 1 to 3 years; 79,401 – from 3 to 5 years; 140,159 – from 5 to 10 years; 57,364 – from 10 to 15 years. In total, 72.3 % of the convicts served a sentence of imprisonment for 1–15 years) (In the specified period of time, 16,229 convicts served a sentence for up to 1 year inclusive; 18,469 – from 15 to 20 years; 5,789 – from 20 to 25 years; 404 – from 25 to 30 years; 2,013 served a life sentence. The total number of convicts was 482,832).

The prevalence of intentional harm to life and health in places of deprivation of liberty is also affected by a complex factor combining a number of diverse circumstances. This can include existence of unofficial norms of behavior and non-official differentiation of convicts [1, pp. 123–144; 14]. This determines the nature of both intergroup and personal relationships. Intentional infliction of minor harm to health, which has caused a short-term health disorder or a slight persistent loss of general working capacity, can also trigger commission of crimes against the person in places of deprivation of liberty (Part 1 of the Article 115 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation). A number of these crimes in correctional facilities (only those registered in the column "other crimes") is significant (Table 2). It is noted that basically such acts are either latent or hidden from accounting. Reasons for it are the following:

a) traditions of places of deprivation of liberty (convicts prefer to deal with their offenders on their own, rather than report the incident to the administration);

b) the private procedure for criminal prosecution established by the Criminal Procedural Code of the Russian Federation in relation to Part 1 of Article 115 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (it does not always work in penitentiary institutions);

c) concealment of crimes of minor gravity.

Table 2

Year	Total	Correctional facility, medical correctional institution, medical prevention institution	Detention facility	Educational facility
2021 2	20	part 1 – 1	-	_
		part 2 – 18	part 2 – 1	_
2020	20	part 1 – 1	-	-
		part 2 – 19	-	-
2019	22	part 1 – 1	-	part 1 – 1
		part 2 – 19	part 2 – 1	_
2018	16	part 1 – 2	part 1 – 1	_
		part 2 – 13	-	_
2017 14	14	part 1 – 1	-	_
		part 2 – 13	-	-

Number of registered intentional inflictions of minor harm to health (Article 115 of the CC RF) by prisoners in custody and sentenced to imprisonment

The listed factors provoke causing intentional harm to life and health of convicts in places of deprivation of liberty.

In 2016, 960 crimes were registered in correctional facilities, of which 14.5% were illegal acts related to intentional harm to life and health [4], in 2021 – 1,271 crimes, of which 8% were crimes related to intentional harm to life and health [5].

In 2016, the persons sentenced to imprisonment committed 16 murders (Article 105 of the CC RF), 8 attempted murders (Articles 30, 105 of the CC RF), 24 intentional inflictions of serious harm to health that caused death of the victim (Part 4 of Article 111 of the CC RF), 38 intentional inflictions of serious harm health (Parts 1–3 of Article 111 of the CC RF), 34 intentional inflictions of moderate harm (Article 112 of the CC RF), 19 intentional inflictions of minor harm to health; in 2021 – 15, 7, 7, 22, 32, 20 accordingly (the total number of victims – 102) (Table 3) [4; 5]. The crime rate per 1,000 convicts held in penal institutions in 2016 accounted for 1.50, in 2020 – 2.39.

Year		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total number of registered crimes among persons held in places of deprivation of liberty	960	974	1025	1171	1184	1271
Murder (Article 105 of the CC RF)		20	6	8	8	15
Attempted murder (articles 30, 105 of the CC RF)	8	12	5	7	4	7
Intentional infliction of serious harm to health that caused death of the victim (Part 4 of Article 111 of the CC RF)	24	9	18	9	7	7
ntentional infliction of serious harm to health (parts 1-3 of Article 111 of the CC RF)	38	23	18	25	17	22
Intentional infliction of moderate harm (Article 112 of the CC RF)	34	19	20	30	24	31
Intentional infliction of minor harm to health (Article 115 CC RF)	19	14	17	21	21	20
Total number of registered crimes under articles 105, 111, 112 and 115 of the CC RF among persons held in places of deprivation of liberty	139	97	84	100	81	102
Percentage ratio (%)	14.5 %	10 %	8.1 %	8.5 %	6.8 %	8 %

 Table 3

 Ratio of registered crimes against life and health to the total number of crimes among persons held in places of deprivation of liberty

When studying the issue, in the period from 2006 to 2020 we analyzed 102 criminal cases on crimes under Articles 105, 111, 112 and 115 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation committed by convicts in places of deprivation of liberty in 20 subjects of the Russian Federation (republics of Bashkortostan, Komi, and Udmurtia, Arkhangelsk, Belgorod, Vologda, Ivanovo, Kirov, Kostroma, Kurgan, Murmansk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Orenburg, Penza, Ryazan, Samara, Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk and Yaroslavl oblasts).

Analyzing the practice of investigating crimes against life and health committed by convicts serving sentences in places of deprivation of liberty, we determined their relationship. One illegal act can transform into another, the subject of the crime can become its victim, the crime itself can be characterized by special cruelty or a generally dangerous method used. It should also be said that the crimes mentioned are the most common in comparison with other socially dangerous acts committed by convicts held in penitentiary institutions and causing harm to life and health of citizens.

As for victims of intentional harm to life and health in places of deprivation of liberty, in 96.4% of cases it is convicts, in 3% – commanding staff and civilian employees of correctional institutions, 0.6% – citizens who arrived in the correctional institution due to work necessity and relatives – for extended visits. The overwhelming majority of crimes are caused by the objective factor – a limited territory with a large concentration of convicts

[13] who are forced to actively contact each other. The victims in 93% of cases are male, in 7% – female. These figures are logical, since, as of the end of 2021, approximately 92% of those serving a sentence of imprisonment were men.

Intentional harm to life and health in conditions of places of deprivation of liberty is most often caused to convicts of three age groups: from 18 to 29 years (47%), from 30 to 39 years (30%), from 40 to 49 years (17%). The age group of 50 years and older accounts for 6% of the considered unlawful assaults. This is due to the fact that older people have a diverse life experience, prefer not to engage in conflict situations, determine their nature, predict consequences, quickly calculate the options for d tente to satisfy psychological interests of the two sides and not to humiliate the honor and dignity of prisoners.

A significant number of victims had incomplete secondary (45%) or secondary (37%) education. A low level of education, as a rule, correlates with underdevelopment of human intelligence, which causes non-acceptance of the point of view of another convict, inability to analyze and use common sense, and rudeness in dealing with community members. Hence, the lower the educational level, the poorer the life experience, the more likely it is that a person will find himself in the situation that provokes conflict with subsequent harm to life and health.

For the most part, the convicted victims were not employed and did not engage in

socially useful work in penitentiary institutions (73%). The main part of these persons had various penalties from the administration of the institution (68%). The use of alcoholic beverages, narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances or their analogues is one of malicious violations of the established procedure for serving sentences by persons sentenced to imprisonment. During the commission of illegal acts, 14% of citizens whose health was harmed were in a state of alcoholic intoxication or under the influence of narcotic drugs.

It is worth noting that 55% of the victims had one criminal record, 45% – two or more. Of these, 40% were convicted of crimes against life and health, 26% – against property, 19% – against public health and public morality, 8% – against sexual inviolability and sexual freedom of the individual, 4% – against public safety, 3% – other criminally punishable acts.

In the mechanism of intentional infliction of harm to life and health, carried out in conditions of places of deprivation of liberty, a special role is devoted to the victim's behavior before the crime commission and directly at the time of unlawful encroachment. First of all, victimhood of the convicted person's behavior is significant, in which negative, immoral, and sometimes insignificant, but socially dangerous signs prevail [10; 11]. Provocativeness in this regard is dangerous, as it leads to the position of a victim. Victim behavior is an independent constituent of the conditions for committing an illegal act. Often convicted persons, whose life or health is harmed, themselves create the ground for committing illegal actions against them, provoking this with their defiant, immoral, and sometimes illegal behavior.

On the basis of empirical data obtained in the course of studying the practice of investigating crimes related to intentional harm to life and health in correctional institutions, we have grouped all the victims from among those convicted of the analyzed criminal acts into three main groups, depending on their behavior during the period of serving their sentence, in particular: those with 1) negative, 2) positive and 3) neutral behavior.

Representatives of the first group (42.3%) spread negative information, humiliated, insulted, caused physical suffering, abused other convicts, which served as a motive for causing intentional harm to their life or health. So, in one of the correctional facilities of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia in the Republic of Bashkortostan, convicted H. R. R. periodically ridiculed the convicted H. S. Ya. in the presence of other persons serving sentences. One day H. R. R. decided to make fun of his companion: when he was sleeping, he poured detergent into his mouth, explaining that he allegedly snored and did not let others sleep. Experiencing personal hostility to H. R. R., the convicted H. S. Ya. grabbed a stool and struck his abuser several blows on the head, thereby causing serious harm to health (Archive of the Salavatskii city court of the Republic of Bashkortostan. Criminal Case No. 1-68/2015 of April 23, 2015).

The second group includes convicts with positive behavior (35.4%). They defended themselves and others from verbal attacks and actions of offenders by making demands to stop illegal behavior and unlawful use of physical force, as well as apologize for rashness of their statements and actions. For example, during a meal in the canteen in one of the correctional facilities of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia in the Murmansk Oblast, the convict K. E. V. tried to pass out of turn to the food distribution window. Convicted B. R. A. stopped him and asked him to get in line. The convicted K. E. V. responded rudely. After the meal, while being on the platz of the residential area of the correctional facility, the above persons continued to argue, as a result of which K. E. V. stabbed the convict B. R. with the sharpened aluminum spoon, thereby causing bodily injuries (Archive of the Lovozerskii district court of the Murmansk Oblast. Criminal case No. 1-11/2017 of July 24, 2017).

The third group consists of convicts with neutral behavior (22.3%), that is, those who did not contribute to or hinder perpetrators' actions. The reasons for such behavior are very different, often it is associated with negative personality traits (cowardice, indecision, the habit of pleasing, being humiliated and not resisting). For instance, the convicted Shch. A. S., being in the sleeping quarters of one of the detachments of the correctional institution of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia in the Arkhangelsk Oblast, demonstrating his physical strength, deliberately struck several blows on the head and neck of the convicted O. N. N., thereby causing moderate harm to the latter's health. When striking, the convicted O. N. N. did not offer any resistance to the attacker, as he was frightened (Archive of the magistrate court of judicial sector No. 2 of the Pinezhskii district of the Archangesk Oblast. Criminal case No. 1-29/2013 of June 11, 2013).

The probability of becoming a victim in places of deprivation of liberty depends on the term for serving punishment by the person to whom the bodily injuries were inflicted, number of convictions, the time spent in a particular correctional institution. For convicts who are in penal institutions for the first time, the beginning of the sentence is particularly painful due to their adaptation to a new environment. Most crimes against life and health of a person are committed in relation to this group of convicts, as a new person provokes interest of others. They try to get information about him/her in various ways, check the newcomer and thereby determine the place he/she will occupy in the community of those deprived of freedom. Sometimes such checks are provocative and aimed at reducing the unofficial status of newcomer, which in some cases leads to a protracted interpersonal conflict that causes harm to life and health. However, in such a situation, it is not possible to identify the victim at an early stage.

The data characterizing victims' personal (internal) properties, as well as their connections, relationships with the environment are an integral part of the criminalistic characteristics of the designated group of crimes. When investigating specific cases, they give an opportunity to determine a subject of communication, identify persons with whom there were friendly and hostile relations, thereby delineating the circle of convicts involved in the commission of an illegal act. With their help, it is possible to identify persons who were eyewitnesses of the crime, have any information about it. The information that characterizes the victim and his/her relationships with close and distant surroundings allows investigators to put forward targeted versions about motives of the crime. The data on the victim of an illegal act, situation, circumstances, and

means used to cause harm to life and health can be very useful for conducting a thorough investigation of the situation at the scene of the incident and developing tactical interrogation techniques for both the victim himself and the suspect, the accused, as well as witnesses. Based on the data about the victim, inquiry officers and investigators can easily establish false information in his/her testimony, which is very common in the investigation of crimes committed by convicts serving sentences in penal institutions, assume presence of abnormalities in the psyche of the interrogated, make a decision on expediency and timeliness of a forensic psychological or forensic psychiatric examination.

The identification and study of criminalistically significant features in the personality of the victim and his/her behavior (before, at the time and after commission of the crime) helps to deeper understand many circumstances of the illegal act and characterize the originality. orientation and motives of the criminal's behavior. When committing crimes related to intentional harm to life and health, the criminal does not accidentally choose an individual as the object of his encroachment. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the analyzed criminal acts, as a rule, the identification of the criminal largely follows the "victim - offender" chain. It is especially important to determine and study this connection at the beginning of the investigation, at the preliminary stage [13].

At the same time, special attention should be paid to correlations that reveal the relationship of the criminalistic characteristics data: method – situation of the crime commission; victim – perpetrator; properties of the victim's personality –means of harming life and health; means of crime – properties of the offender's personality. We emphasize that correlations are particularly evident, when a serious, thoughtful analysis of the circumstances of intentional harm to life and health in penitentiary institutions is conducted.

Conclusion

The data obtained in the conducted empirical research allows us to draw up a brief portrait of the victim, whose life and health were intentionally harmed in the conditions of places of deprivation of liberty. This is a man (93%), convicted (serving a sentence of imprisonment) (96.4%), aged from 18 to 39 years (77%), with incomplete secondary or secondary education (82%), not employed and not engaged in socially useful work (73%), inclined to various violations of the regime of serving a sentence (68%), having appropriate penalties. The victims of the crimes in question in some cases (42.3%) themselves provoke illegal actions of the subject of the crime, and in others (35.4%) act as defenders of the honor and dignity of other convicts and their own.

According to the data provided, intentional infliction of harm to life and health by convicts serving sentences in places of deprivation of liberty is often associated with victimhood of the victim's behavior. Being realized through the orientation of the individual through a typical line of his behavior, victimhood acts as a significant factor in the analysis of the offender-victim interaction, evaluation of the testimony of participants in pre-trial proceedings and, first of all, of the victim himself. Testimony of the latter should be carefully checked, given that in some cases, at the first interrogation, the state of extreme mental stress, uncertainty of the behavior reproducing a stressful event, limits possibilities. The second interrogation is characterized by a more complete reproduction of the event (this should not be interpreted as deliberate concealment of information during the first interrogation), and correction of testimony due to understanding of their future serving a sentence of imprisonment, influence of other convicts, including the environment of the suspect, the accused.

The study of the victim's personality traits, psychological and physical characteristics, behavior (including victimhood), level of culture, value orientations, clarification of the presence of connections and relationships with others who have been deprived of liberty helps establish motives for committing a crime and more precisely outline the circle of persons – possible perpetrators of the illegal act [6]. In addition, it helps reveal crime scenarios, search for traces and instruments of crime, plan the investigation process, as well as choose certain techniques and their combinations in the production of individual investigative actions, operational search and other measures.

Successful investigation of intentional harm to life and health committed by convicts held in penitentiary institutions depends on various factors. It seems to us that effective interaction with correctional institution officials, skillful use of information characterizing the specifics of the personality of victims from among convicts serving a sentence of imprisonment are crucial.

It is not possible to investigate such crimes without interaction with authorized persons of correctional institutions in a timely, high-quality manner and clarification of the causes and conditions that contributed to its commission, since there are a lot of nuances present both in organization of activities and personality traits of convicts, official and unofficial norms of behavior, stratification of persons held in the institution that the subject of the investigation may not know about. Inquirers and investigators should cooperate not only with the operational staff, representatives of the security service, but also with the heads of detachments. A head of the detachment is an official who has the maximum information about each convict under his control. If he has appropriate experience, he already at the first acquaintance with the convict (when conducting a conversation, filling out documents outlining individual educational work) makes certain conclusions, including about the degree of victimhood, prospects of getting along in a team, ability to defuse conflict situations. Such information is important for investigation of the crime and establishment of other circumstances of intentional harm to life and health by convicts serving sentences in places of deprivation of liberty.

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