

WHO IS A VICTIM OF CRIME?

A victim is a person who suffers harm directly as a result of an act committed by another person in the course of a criminal offence.

This harm includes physical, emotional or psychological harm, the loss of an immediate family member and damage to property.

Why is there a Charter of Victims Rights?

The Charter of Victims Rights is part of the Victims Rights Act 1996. It protects the rights of victims and ensures they are cared for properly.

The Charter shows how victims of crime should be treated by all government departments, such as police, courts, health services and the ODP. P.

What is the role of the Victims of Crime Bureau?

The Victims of Crime Bureau monitors the implementation of the Charter of Victims Rights in NSW. If you require a copy of the Charter of Victims Rights, need to discuss or clarify any concerns or require information about a department's complaint unit, contact the Victims of Crime Bureau.

The Victims of Crime Bureau can also assist you with information, support and a referral service if required.

CONTACTING THE VICTIMS OF CRIME BUREAU

TELEPHONE:

VICTIMS SUPPORT LINE (VSL)

(02) 9374 3000 or 1800 633 063

(Toll free outside the Sydney metropolitan area)

The VSL is a 24 - hour telephone support, information and referral service for victims of crime.

TTY SERVICE FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED:

(02) 9374 3175

TELEPHONE INTERPRETER SERVICE:

131 450

FAX:

(02) 9374 3020

POSTAL ADDRESS:

Locked Bag A5010
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235

STREET ADDRESS:

Level 6, 299 Elizabeth Street SYDNEY

WEB SITE ADDRESS:

www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/vcb

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

vcb@agd.nsw.gov.au

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CHARTER OF VICTIMS RIGHTS



Attorney General's
department of nsw

Your
Rights
as a
victim of
crime

What are my rights as a victim of crime?

As a victim of crime you are entitled to be treated with respect, courtesy and compassion by all government departments.

You also have the following rights:

- You have the right to access, where available, medical, counselling, welfare, health and legal assistance provided by various government departments appropriate to your circumstances.
- You have the right to obtain information about the police investigation of the crime committed against you, the prosecution of the accused and the trial process, through the Police or Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP). This information should be made available to you, except where it could harm the progress of the case.
- You may have the right to be consulted if the prosecution decides to modify or not proceed with charges laid against the accused.
- In most instances you have the right to privacy such as having telephone numbers and residential address withheld from the accused person. It's important to discuss this with the prosecutor involved in your case.

- You have the right to be protected from unnecessary contact with the accused person and defence witnesses during the course of court proceedings. If you are concerned about your safety, you can talk to the police, prosecutor or court officer.
- In most cases, you have the right to tell a court what you have suffered as a result of an offence. You can have access to information and assistance for the preparation of a Victim Impact Statement. Your spoken or written Statement will be given to the judge or magistrate after conviction but before sentencing. The Victims of Crime Bureau and the ODPP can provide information on how to prepare a Victim Impact Statement.
- If you place your name on the Victims Register with the department responsible for the custody of a person who has committed an offence against you or your family, you have the right to be informed when an offender is about to be released from custody or escapes from custody.
- If you are a victim of violent crime you have the right to apply for compensation and/or counselling from the Victims Compensation Tribunal, telephone (02) 9374 3111 or 1800 069 054 (toll free).

What should I do if I am unhappy about the way a government department has treated me?

You have the right to discuss the issue(s) with the department concerned.

All government departments have a procedure that must be followed when you want to make a complaint and they must inform you of this.

Firstly, inform the person you are dealing with in the government department of your concerns. Quite often, concerns can be resolved at this point. If you are still unhappy, contact a more senior officer in that department.

At any time you may ask a support person to assist you when making a complaint. You can also ask for an interpreter if you are from a non-English speaking background.

If you remain dissatisfied, contact the department's official complaints unit or relevant complaints officer.

If after making a complaint you still have concerns, you can contact the Victims of Crime Bureau to find out what, if any, other assistance can be given to you under the Charter of Victims Rights. The Victims of Crime Bureau may liaise with the agency to help resolve the matter.