

You should be treated with respect

The *Victims' Charter Act 2006* is a law in Victoria that says that police, victims support services and prosecutors should treat you with:

- respect
- courtesy
- dignity.

You should be told about:

- the services available to help you
- how the police investigation is going
- if someone has been charged for the crime
- dates and times of court hearings.

The prosecutors should:

- explain the court process to you
- explain what happens if you are a witness
- help to keep you safe at court.

If you believe that you haven't been treated with respect or given the right information, you can make a complaint.

The Victims' Charter Enquiries and Complaints Officer can:

- try to resolve your complaint by following up with the organisation for you
- talk about your options for making a more formal complaint if you're not happy with the result.

Victims' Charter Enquiries and Complaints Officer

Call 1800 819 817 and ask to speak with the Victims' Charter Enquiries and Complaints Officer.

Visit victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au/rights to see all of the service standards you should expect from these organisations.

The Victims of Crime Helpline

Open 8am–11pm every day

Call 1800 819 817

Text 0427 767 891

Email vsa@justice.vic.gov.au

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service.

For more information, visit relayservice.gov.au

victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au

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If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, such as large print or audio, please telephone the Victims of Crime Helpline on 1800 819 817 or email vsa@justice.vic.gov.au

Services for people affected by crime

We can help you manage the effects of crime and guide you through the legal process.

victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au

The effects of crime

Crime can affect people in many ways, and every person's reaction is different.

At the start, you might feel shocked, fearful or angry.

A common reaction is feeling numb, and not believing that this has happened to you.

You might suffer from:

- headaches
- nausea
- sleep problems or tiredness
- jumpiness
- repeated thoughts of the event.

You might have feelings that come and go, like:

- guilt
- fear
- anger
- sadness
- confusion
- helplessness.

All of these feelings are a normal part of being a victim of crime.

In most cases they are temporary, and remember that people recover at different rates.

Don't be afraid to ask for help

Even if you're not sure what you need or what help is available, it's a good idea to contact us to find out.

Talk to someone

The Victims of Crime Helpline is a free service that gives information and advice to people affected by crime. Even if you haven't told the police about the crime, you can still call the Helpline for information.

The Helpline can also connect you with a free support service called the Victims Assistance Program.

They can help you with:

- communicating with police
- changing locks and other emergency security
- managing your safety
- organising transport and medical services
- finding other services that can help you
- getting ready for court
- making a Victim Impact Statement for court
- making a submission to the Adult Parole Board
- organising counselling
- applying for financial assistance.

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Get help with the legal process

The Victims Assistance Program can help you through the police investigation and court process.

Call 1800 819 817

victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au/court

Get information about the offender

The Victims Register can give you information about the offender who was sent to prison for a violent crime committed against you.

You may be able to find out the offender's:

- sentence length
- release date
- parole conditions.

You can also have a say about the person leaving jail to go on parole.

There are laws about what information is available from the Victims Register, and who can get it. You will need to fill out an application form.

Visit victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au/victimsregister to get the application form.

For more information or to apply

Call 1800 819 817

Email VictimsRegister@justice.vic.gov.au