

The Victim's Charter

A statement of service standards for victims of crime

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



Contents

Introduction	1
You can expect	2
What will happen	8
Help from the police	8
Victim Support	9
Compensation	9
What happens if someone is caught	10
Being a prosecution witness	11
Witness Service	11
Help at court	12
Special help for certain types of witness	13
What happens in court	15
After the court case	16
Victim helpline	16
Information about the release of offenders	16
Complaints	18
The police	18
The Crown Prosecution Service	18
Crown Court	19
Judges	20
Magistrates' Court	20
Magistrates	20
The National Probation Service	20
Victim Support and the Witness Service	21
The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority	21
Information for Victims & Witnesses on the Criminal	
Justice System	22
Useful Leaflets	23-26
Useful addresses and Website	27

Foreword by the Home Secretary, Attorney General, and Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs

We are determined to put the needs of victims closer to the heart of the criminal justice process. This Victim's Charter, introduced by the previous Government in 1996 and building on the first Charter in 1990, made a good start in outlining the standards of service to which victims are entitled. We regard this as an interim measure and are determined to do more.

Our aim is to increase the satisfaction and confidence of victims and witnesses and meet their different needs. Plans to achieve this are set out in *A new deal for victims and witnesses: national strategy to deliver improved services*, published in July 2003, but also in a related number of documents including consultation papers on domestic violence, witness issues, restorative justice and the recently published action plan on anti-social behaviour.

A new Code of Practice for victims is being drawn up which will be binding on the criminal justice agencies. A Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses will be appointed to monitor the code, to advise on changes to it, and to promote the interests of victims in general. The Parliamentary Ombudsman will be able to investigate complaints from victims about breaches of the Code. These developments are all included in the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill which is going through Parliament during 2004. These important new initiatives will represent a significant step forward in improving services for all victims of crime.

We recognise the commitment already shown by the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the courts, the National Probation Service, Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, Victim Support and the Witness Service in developing better services for victims and witnesses.

In the meantime, the standards outlined in this Charter will guarantee services that are already regarded as among the best in the world. We look forward to making them even better.



David Blunkett, Lord Falconer and Lord Goldsmith

Introduction

If you have been the victim of a crime, this Charter aims to explain, as clearly as possible, what happens after the offence has been reported to the police and the standards of service you should expect. There is also a section describing what other information is available and a list of addresses that you may find useful. Where these sources of information are referred to in the Charter you will find this symbol: ⓘ

The way you are treated cannot make up for what you have suffered. But we aim to make sure that the unpleasant effects of the crime are not made worse by what happens later. We aim to treat you fairly and courteously and to provide a good service. However, things sometimes go wrong. If you feel that you have not received the standard of service you should have done, this Charter includes a section telling you how to complain. If you think there is more that could be done to improve the service, you should contact either the agency concerned or the Victim Confidence Unit, Office for Criminal Justice Reform, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT.

You can expect

a crime you have reported to be investigated and to receive information about what happens

- **The police will respond to your report as quickly as they can.**

The police look into all crimes reported to them. If you phone them to tell them about a crime they will send an officer to see you if necessary.

- **The police will give you the name and phone number of the officer or ‘crime desk’ responsible for your case.**

The police are normally your first point of contact. If you have any questions at any time you can contact this person, who will either answer your question or put you in touch with someone who can.

- **The police will give you a leaflet called ‘Victims of Crime’ as soon as you report the crime in person at a police station. In other cases they will send you one within five working days.**

This leaflet explains what will happen during the investigation and if someone is caught.

- **The police will do their best to catch the person responsible for your crime and to keep you informed of significant developments in your case.**

The police will tell you if someone has been caught, cautioned or charged. You will be asked if you wish to receive further information about the progress of your case. You will also be told the date of the trial and the final result, even if you are not required as a witness.

Victims of serious crime may also receive extra help.

- **If a member of your family has been killed as the result of a crime, or you are the parent or carer of a child who has been the victim of a serious crime and who is a witness, the police will give you the relevant information pack to help you.**
- **In cases of rape, or where a child is the victim of a serious crime, a police officer who has received special training will be available if required.**

You can expect

the chance to explain how the crime has affected you, and your interests to be taken into account

- **The police will ask you about your fears about further victimisation and details of your loss, damage or injury.**
- **In some circumstances, the police should offer you the opportunity to complete a Victim Personal Statement and will provide you with a copy of the leaflet ‘Making a Victim Personal Statement’.**

The police, Crown Prosecutor, magistrates and judges will take this information into account when making their decisions.

- **Where a charge is dropped or substantially altered the CPS will offer to meet the family of someone killed as a result of crime, victims of sexual offences, child abuse, racially and religiously aggravated offences and offences with a homophobic or transphobic element to explain the prosecution decision**
- **If you wish, a victim liaison officer from the probation service will provide you with information after the court case and tell you when someone sentenced to 12 months or more in prison, as a result of committing a sexual or other violent crime, is likely to be released.**

Within eight weeks of the sentence a probation service victim liaison officer will get in touch with you to find out whether you want to receive information through the victim contact scheme, whether you want to be told when the prisoner may be released from prison and whether you have any worries about them being released. Your worries can be taken into account when considering whether conditions need to be attached to the offender’s release.

- **You can use a phone helpline if you have received unwelcome contact from a prisoner or have any concerns about their temporary release.**

The helpline number is 0845 7585112 and all calls are charged at the local rate. The details of your concerns will be passed to the governor of the prison, who will take whatever action is needed.

You can expect

if you have to go to court as a witness you will be treated with respect and sensitivity

- **You will be offered the support of the Witness Service at the Court.**
- **You can ask to see a courtroom before the case starts so that you know what to expect.**
- **You can ask to wait separately from those involved in the case.**

Staff and trained volunteers from the Witness Service (run by Victim Support) can help you, your family and friends at the court before, during and after the trial.

- **You can reserve a seat in court for a relative or friend accompanying you.**

In some courts a lack of space may mean that you cannot reserve seats or wait in a separate area. Court staff will make suitable arrangements wherever possible.

- **In the Crown Court we aim to make sure witnesses do not have to wait for more than two hours before being called to give evidence.**
- **However, if delays occur, court staff or a representative of the Crown Prosecution Service will explain why there is a delay and tell you how long the wait is likely to be.**
- **While you are waiting to give evidence a representative of the Crown Prosecution Service will introduce himself or herself to you (wherever possible) to tell you what to expect.**

The Crown Prosecution Service representative should give you the chance to read your statement again and you can refer back to your statement at any stage in the proceedings in order to refresh your memory.

You will be paid travel and certain other expenses for the time you are at court to give evidence. The Crown Prosecution Service representative will give you a form so you can claim expenses. He or she will answer any questions you have about filling the form in.

- **The Crown Prosecution Service aims to pay expenses where possible within five days but not later than ten working days from receipt of a correctly completed claim form.**

Vulnerable Child Witnesses (aged under 17)

All Crown Court centres have a Child Witness Officer to make sure that everything runs as smoothly as possible. The Witness Service (run by Victim Support) also offers help to child witnesses. In some areas of the country help may also be available from other organisations such as the NSPCC.

If you are the parent or carer of a child witness you can expect the following:

- **the trial will be arranged for the earliest possible date;**
- **a Child Witness Officer will answer your questions about procedures in the Crown Court;**
- **a member of the Witness Service will meet you and the child when you arrive at court and take you to a private waiting area;**
- **In Crown court special measures, such as screens around the witness box or giving evidence over a live TV link, will be made available to help the child give evidence. Some special measures will also be available in the magistrate's court. More will be made available as facilities continue to be improved.**

- **If a TV link is to be used you and the child will see a demonstration of the TV link before the trial.**

Other vulnerable witnesses

- **If a witness has a physical or mental disability or has a significant impairment of mental or social functioning, the Crown Prosecution Service can ask for the judge for special measures to help them give their evidence.**

Intimidated witnesses

- **The Crown Prosecution Service can ask for the judge for some special measures to help witnesses who are fearful or distressed about giving evidence. If the witness is a victim of a sexual offence these measures will be made available unless the victim does not want to make use of them.**

You can expect

to be offered emotional and practical support

- **Victim Support will normally send you a letter, phone you, or arrange a visit from a volunteer within four working days of you reporting the crime.**

In most cases – such as burglary, assault, robbery, theft (except from and of cars), arson, harassment or damage to your home – the police will pass your details to Victim Support within two working days of the crime being reported, unless you ask them not to. In cases involving sexual offences, domestic violence and homicide, your details will only be given to Victim Support if you agree. In such cases individual arrangements will be made. You can also contact Victim Support directly.

- **The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority will aim to give you a decision within 12 months of you making your application.**

If you have been injured as a result of a violent crime you may apply for compensation under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. There is a leaflet called 'Compensation for Victims of Violent Crime' which you can get from the police or the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority.

A booklet 'A Guide to the 2001 Compensation Scheme' explains how to claim compensation. You can get the booklet from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority.

- **The court will consider making a compensation order in all cases if you have suffered loss, damage or injury. They will give reasons if they decide not to make an order.**

The police will give you a form to fill in and return so that compensation can be considered.

What will happen

Help from the police

When you report a crime the police will investigate it as quickly as possible. If you wish, they can also give you crime prevention advice for the future. A useful booklet is 'Your Practical Guide to Crime Prevention'. You can get this from *Crack Crime*. ⓘ

If any of your stolen property is recovered and identified, the police will return it to you as soon as possible. If they cannot do so immediately, they will explain why and tell you when you are likely to get it back.

If you give a statement to the police, they will give you a leaflet "Giving a Statement to the Police, what happens next. They will also ask you about any personal circumstances that will need to be taken into account if you have to attend court to give evidence and any dates on which you cannot attend.


The police will be your initial and often continuing point of contact for information on what is happening with your case. If they cannot help you themselves they will put you in touch with someone who can. Increasingly, when a charge is brought against a suspected offender, you will be given a single point of contact in a victim and witness care unit and they will then keep you updated with the case.

Victim Support

Victim Support is an independent registered charity which receives financial support from the government. It offers help to victims of crime. The police tell Victim Support about most cases (see page 7) or will ask if you want to be put in touch with Victim Support.

Victim Support will aim to send you a letter, phone you or arrange a visit from a volunteer within four working days of you reporting the crime. Victim Support's services are free and confidential. Staff and volunteers come from all sections of the local community and are specially trained to help victims of crime. A volunteer will show you an identity card which is issued by the national office of Victim Support and approved by the police.

Victim Support offers emotional support to help you cope with your experience. They also give you practical help, such as help with claims for insurance or criminal injuries compensation, and information about other organisations which may be able to help with specific problems.

You can also get in touch with your local Victim Support scheme yourself. Details are in the phone book, or you can contact the Victim Supportline: Tel no 0845 3030900. 

Compensation

You may be able to get compensation from two sources. If someone is found guilty, the court must consider ordering them to pay compensation for any loss, injury or damage you have suffered. The offender has to pay compensation before any fine. Compensation is limited to what the offender can reasonably afford, so may not cover your loss or injury in full. The compensation is often paid in instalments.

If you have been injured as a result of a violent crime you may be able to get compensation under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. Someone does not have to be caught and found guilty for you to be able to claim compensation. Details are given in the leaflet “Compensation for victims of violent crime” you can get this leaflet from the police. A booklet ‘A Guide to the 2001 Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme’ is also available from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority. The Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme have a freephone helpline to assist people to decide whether to apply (or request publications) the number is 0800 358 3601 and an interactive website at www.cica.gov.uk. All applications can be filled in and sent electronically. ⓘ

What happens if someone is caught

If someone is caught, the police will decide whether to caution them or consider charging them. A formal police caution is a way of dealing with people who have offended for the first time or whose offence is not too serious. When deciding whether to caution someone, the police will consider the harm done to you and will take your interests into account.

If the police decide to consider charging someone, they will consult the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The CPS then prosecutes cases in court.

The CPS looks carefully at every case and keeps them under review. The Crown Prosecutor will decide whether there is enough evidence for there to be a realistic prospect of conviction. If there is not, the case will not go ahead, however serious the offence was. If there is enough evidence, the Crown Prosecutor will take your interests into account when considering whether it is in the public interest for the prosecution to continue. Information about the CPS can be found at www.cps.gov.uk.

Being a prosecution witness

The police or the victim and witness care unit will tell you if you need to appear in court as a witness. Most cases are dealt with in magistrates' courts. The more serious offences go to the Crown Court for trial by jury. There is a separate charter for the Crown Court, called the 'Charter for Court Users'. You can get a copy from the Court Service Headquarters. ① There are also a growing number of local Charters for magistrates' courts.

Arranging a court case can be complicated, particularly if there are a lot of people involved. Currently big efforts are being made to improve this process and reduce the number of adjournments. If the police or the victim and witness care unit have told you that you may be needed as a witness, keep them updated about any days when it would be difficult for you to attend court. Those arranging the case will do their best to make sure that the case comes to court as quickly as possible and that it is on a day which is convenient to you.

Witness Service

There is a Witness Service in every criminal court. The Witness Service is run by Victim Support and is independent of the court, police and CPS. They will support you and your family and can arrange for you to visit a courtroom before you give evidence and provide information on court proceedings. If you wish, they can arrange for someone to accompany you into the courtroom.

If you are already in contact with Victim Support they will be able to put you in touch with the Witness Service. You will receive the Witness Service leaflet 'Going to Court' or a letter when you are called to give evidence. You can also get copies from your local Victim Support scheme or the national office of Victim Support. ①

Help at court

Giving evidence in court can be stressful. The people involved – the police, the CPS, the Witness Service and court staff – will give you as much information as possible about what is likely to happen. However, they cannot discuss your evidence or the details of the case.

You will be sent a letter telling you where and when the trial will be. With this letter there will be a leaflet called ‘Witness in Court’ which explains what will happen. You will also receive information about the court facilities. Crown Court centres have a Customer Service Officer who you can ask about facilities at the court. If you are going to a magistrates’ court and you have any questions about the facilities, you should contact the police, who will put you in touch with the court.

When you arrive, you will find clear signs to help you find your way around. A representative of the CPS or Witness Service will tell you which courtroom your evidence will be heard in. The CPS representative will also be able to deal with any questions you have about procedures and tell you approximately how long you will have to wait before giving your evidence.

Everyone will do their best to make sure that you are called to give evidence as soon as possible. However, there are sometimes delays. If you have to wait, court staff or a representative of the CPS will tell you why and say how long the wait is likely to be.

Special help for certain types of witness

Children (aged under 17)

If children are witnesses in cases involving sex, violence or cruelty, the police will give them and their parents or carers an information pack called 'Child Witness'. You can get further copies from the NSPCC. [i](#)

Crown Court centres have a Child Witness Officer to answer questions about the facilities at the court and court procedures. They will liaise with the judge and the court staff to make sure that the case comes to court as soon as possible. They will also liaise with the Witness Service. The Child Witness Officer will explain how the live TV link equipment works in conjunction with the Witness Service. When the child arrives at court to give evidence, the Witness Service will take the child to a private waiting area away from the defendants.

In Crown Courts special measures will be made available to children to give evidence – video recorded evidence in chief, evidence by live TV link, screens around the witness box, evidence given in private, or removal of wigs and gowns. In the magistrates' court only the first two of these are available at present in serious cases due to limited facilities. However, facilities are being improved.

Other vulnerable witnesses

If a witness has a physical or mental disability or has a significant impairment of mental or social functioning, the Crown Prosecution Service can ask for the judge for the same special measures that are available to children to help them give their evidence. In addition communication aids may be made available. In some courts intermediaries to help communication are being trialled.

Fear of attack

If you are worried about being attacked or harassed as a result of the court case, you should tell the police. They will tell you what can be done and tell the CPS so that they can let the court know at the time bail is being considered.

If the accused person is released on bail, the police will do their best to tell you as quickly as possible. They will tell you whether there are any conditions attached to the bail and what you can do if the conditions are broken.

When you give evidence, the judge or magistrate may agree that your name and address should not be read out in court. They may also allow you to give evidence from behind a screen. It is up to the judge or magistrates to decide whether to allow this to happen. If you want these arrangements to be considered, you should tell the police or the CPS. In the Crown court only at present, the CPS can also ask for the judge for evidence by live TV link, evidence given in private, or removal of wigs and gowns.

Rape and sexual assault

If you have been raped or sexually assaulted your identity will not be revealed in court. You will not be cross examined by the accused. There will be restrictions placed on evidence and questions about your sexual history. It is also a criminal offence for anyone to publish your name, address, photograph or other details which may identify you. In the Crown Court, the CPS will ask the judge for you to give your evidence by live TV link, screens around the witness box, evidence given in private, or removal of wigs and gowns unless you do not wish them to do so.

What happens in court

If you have to give evidence you can ask to have a friend or supporter in the court. Someone from the Witness Service can accompany you if you wish. After you have given evidence you will be told whether you can leave. You can watch the rest of the case if you wish.

A high standard of proof is needed before someone can be found guilty. This may mean someone who you are sure is guilty, is not actually found guilty. This is not a judgment on you but on the strength of the prosecution case as a whole.

When someone is found guilty their lawyer may put forward arguments for a lighter sentence. This is called a plea in mitigation. If this includes information which the CPS know is untrue they will say so.

Before sentence is passed the magistrates or judge may ask the probation service to prepare a 'pre-sentence report' on the offender. The report will include an assessment of the effect the crime had on you. This may be taken from the victim personal statement and witness statements you may have given which are provided to the probation service by the CPS.

In certain limited cases, the Attorney General may refer cases, where the sentence passed in the Crown Court is unduly lenient, to the Court of Appeal. This must be done within 28 days of the sentence being passed. If you believe that the sentence has been unduly lenient, you can discuss this with the local office of the CPS, who have put in place systems by which potentially unduly lenient sentences can be brought to the attention of the Attorney General.

If there is an appeal against the conviction or sentence in cases such as burglary, domestic violence, racially motivated offences, assaults, robbery, and theft and where someone has been killed, raped, or sexually assaulted, the police will keep you informed of developments. They will tell you the date of the hearing, if someone is granted bail, and the result of the appeal.

After the court case

If you are still worried about your safety the police can give you advice on what to do to protect yourself. Where appropriate, the police may be able to give you practical help.

Victim Helpline

If a prisoner contacts you and you do not want this to happen again, or if you have any concerns about possible release, you can use a phone helpline to make sure that the prison governor knows your concerns. The helpline number is 0845 758 5112.

Information about the release of offenders

In cases involving serious sexual or violent offences, where the offender is sent to prison for a year or more, a victim liaison officer from the probation service will get in touch with you within eight weeks of the sentence being passed to explain the victim contact scheme. They will tell you what happens during the sentence and especially how any decision to release the offender will be made and how you might contribute to the release process and express your views and concerns. No life sentence prisoner will be released until they have served the period set for retribution and deterrence and the Parole Board is satisfied that it is safe to do so.

When release is being considered, the probation service make careful plans and arrangements for supervising offenders. The probation service, through the victim liaison officer, will take your concerns into account when making their plans. The offender may still be released, but conditions may be attached to their release. If the offender behaves in a way which suggests that they may present a risk to public safety, or they break any conditions attached to their release, they may go back to prison.

More information about the probation service victim contact scheme can be found in the leaflet: “Release of Prisoner: Information for victims of sexual or other offences”. ⓘ

Offenders who are detained in hospital will only be discharged after a full and risk assessment has been determined how they can safely be managed in the community. As a general rule, a patient’s treatment and progress in hospital are confidential and, unless the patient consents to information being given out, this limits the information you can receive about an offender’s release. If the patient is detained under the Mental Health Act, you may write to the mental health review tribunal and record any concerns you have about his/her discharge. Those wishing to write to the tribunal concerning the consideration of any patient’s application for discharge should address their letter to the Head of MHRT Secretariat, MHRT HQ, Wellington House 133-155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG.

More detail about life sentences for murder and offenders detained in hospital after committing homicide is given in the pack ‘Advice for bereaved families and friends following murder and manslaughter’. ⓘ

Complaints

All of the agencies involved in your case aim to provide a high standard of service. But things sometimes go wrong. If they do, the agencies want to know what happened. This part of the Charter tells you what you can do if you are unhappy about:

- > the way you have been treated;
- > the information you have received; or
- > decisions which have been made.

If your complaint is about the police

- **Ask at your local police station for a leaflet explaining how to complain.**
- **You can make a complaint about a police officer, or police force policy, practice or procedure at the police station involved or by writing to the Chief Constable. You will get an initial response within 10 working days.**
- **If you make a complaint about a police officer acting unfairly or incorrectly, the matter will be overseen by the Police Complaints Authority (the Independent Police Complaints Commission from April 2004). They aim to finish investigating a formal complaint within 120 days.**
- **If your property has been lost or damaged while it was in police possession you may be entitled to compensation. Write to the Chief Constable with details of your claim.**

If your complaint is about the Crown Prosecution Service

- **Write to the CPS office which dealt with the case. These are listed in their leaflet 'The Crown Prosecution Service'.**
- **They aim to reply within three working days of receiving your letter. If they cannot send a full reply within this time they will acknowledge your letter and send a full reply within 10 working days.**

- **Most complaints can be sorted out by the office which dealt with your case. However, if your local CPS office does not answer your complaint to your satisfaction, you may write to the Chief Crown Prosecutor of the area. He or she will carry out an independent review. Your local CPS office will be able.**
- **to tell you what action you can take if you are still not satisfied at the end of this review.**

If your complaint is about the Crown Court

- **Get a leaflet about the court's complaints procedure from your local court. The names of the Chief Clerk and the Courts Administrator are displayed at every court.**
- **You should complain in writing to the Chief Clerk of the court. If you are not satisfied with his or her response you can write to the Courts Administrator.**
- **If you are still not satisfied after the Courts Administrator's investigation, you can write to the Customer Service Unit at Court Service Headquarters ①. If you complain in writing they will acknowledge your complaint within two days and send a full reply within 20 working days. If you are still not satisfied write to a Member of Parliament and ask him or her to ask the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the Ombudsman) to look into your complaint.**
- **If you believe you have lost money as a result of a mistake by a member of court staff write to the Chief Clerk, providing specific proof of any financial loss. The Chief Clerk will review your claim and send it to the Courts Administrator. Large claims are passed to the Customer Service Unit. Your claim will be acknowledged within two days and a full reply sent within 20 working days (if it can be resolved without taking legal advice). If legal advice is needed you will be told of this within 20 working days and sent a final reply within 40 working days.**

If your complaint is about a judge

- **If you wish to complain about the conduct or behaviour of a judge (and not just because a decision has gone against you), write to the Lord Chancellor, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW.**

If your complaint is about a magistrates' court

- **Details of the complaints procedure will be displayed in the court building. Leaflets are also available in some courts.**
- **You should complain to the Clerk to the Justices. If you are not satisfied with the response, you can write to the Justices Chief Executive of the Magistrates' Court Committee. You can get the address from the Clerk to the Justices of the court.**
- **They will acknowledge complaints within a few days.**

If your complaint is about a magistrate



- **If you wish to complain about the way a magistrate has behaved you should write to the Clerk to the Justices. If you are not satisfied with the response, write to the local Advisory Committee whose address is available from the Clerk.**

If your complaint is about the Probation Service

- **Complain to the local manager or Senior Probation Officer at the office you have been dealing with. If you are not satisfied with the response, you can ask for a copy of the leaflet: "Making a Complaint", which is available from all probation services offices and complain to the Chief Probation Officer for your area. If you are still not satisfied, the leaflet explains how to make an appeal.**


- The probation service will acknowledge your complaint within five working days and you will be told of the procedure that will be followed and the time this is expected to take.

If your complaint is about Victim Support or the Witness Service

- Details of Victim Support's complaints procedure are available from the area office or national office .
- If you are not satisfied with the service you have received you should contact the area office which provided the service. If you are still not satisfied you can contact the National Association of Victim Support Schemes at the national office . You will receive a response within one month.

If your complaint is about the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority

- If you are dissatisfied with the decision made in your case you may ask for it to be reviewed. If you are unhappy with the review decision, you can appeal against it to the independent Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel. Details of how to do this will be sent to you with the decision.

If you want to complain about the way your application for compensation was dealt with, or you believe you have lost money as a result of a mistake, you can write to The Manager, Customer Care Team, Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority or send an email to customercare@cica.gsi.gov.uk. 

Information for victims and witnesses on the criminal justice system

The Victims and Witness Walkthroughs

The walkthroughs are an interactive tour of the criminal justice system which use pictures, sound and text to guide users through the criminal justice system. They also advise on the personal support available and include links to relevant web-sites and access to key documents. The tours aim to make the process easier to understand and provide the victim/witness with some idea of what he or she can realistically expect to happen.

The victims walkthrough guides anyone who has been a victim of crime through each stage of the criminal justice process from the initial reporting of a crime to the court outcome and beyond. There are specific links to other relevant websites and access to key documents.

The witness walkthrough has been designed to meet the needs of both prosecution and defence witnesses. It covers the process from the time a crime is reported, through the police investigation, prosecution decision making, court processes, and sentencing (explaining the role of the witness at each stage).

The walkthroughs can be found on the CJS Online website (www.cjsonline.org), the official website for the criminal justice system. The site holds information about many aspects of the criminal justice system as well as links to the websites of the associated organisations.

Useful leaflets

Name	What it covers	Where to get it
Burglary	A Victim Support leaflet which gives information and advice for people who have suffered a burglary	The local office of Victim Support or the National Office, Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ (please enclose an SAE) Tel: 020 7735 9166
Charter for Court Users	Sets minimum standards of service for the main areas of court work	Court Service Headquarters, Southside, 105 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QT Tel: 020 7210 1775
Child Witness Information Pack	Information useful to children and their parents or carers when a child has to be a witness in a court case	Your local police or NSPCC, National Centre, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH Tel: 020 7825 2500 Website: www.nspcc.org.uk Child Protection Helpline: 0800 800 500
Code for Crown Prosecutors	Sets out the general principles applied by Crown Prosecutors when deciding whether to prosecute cases	CPS Publicity Office, 50 Ludgate Hill, London EC4M 7EX Tel: 020 7273 8078
Going to Court	Information on the Witness Service and what happens at court	The local office of Victim Support or the National Office, Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ (please enclose an SAE) Tel: 020 7735 9166

Name	What it covers	Where to get it
Information leaflet for Victims of Domestic Violence	Explains the help available to victims of domestic violence	Crack Crime, PO Box 999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6FS
Advice for bereaved families or friends following murder or manslaughter	Information useful for those who have lost a family member through a violent incident	Your local police or the Home Office, Room 153, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT. Tel: 020 7273 2066
Rape and Sexual Assault	A Victim Support leaflet which gives information about rape and sexual assault and what help is available	The local office of Victim Support or the National Office, Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ (please enclose an SAE) Tel: 020 7735 9166
Release of Prisoners: Information for victims of sexual or other violent offences	Explains the victim contact scheme operated by the National Probation Service	Local probation service offices (see "probation service" in the telephone book for the address of your local office)
Statement on the Treatment of Victims and Witnesses	Explains how the CPS put their commitments into practice	CPS Publicity Office, 50 Ludgate Hill, London EC4M 7EX Tel: 020 7273 8078

Name	What it covers	Where to get it
The Crown Prosecution Service	Explains the role of the CPS and how it makes the decision to prosecute	CPS Publicity Office, 50 Ludgate Hill, London EC4M 7EX Tel: 020 7273 8078
Victims of Crime	Explains what happens during an investigation and if someone is caught	Your local police or the Home Office, Room 431, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT. Tel: 020 7273 4145 www.homeoffice.gov.uk
Victims of Crimes of Violence	A guide to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme	Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, Tay House, 300 Bath Street Glasgow G2 4LN
Compensation for Victims of Violent Crime	Explains the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme when deciding whether to apply	Tel: 0141 331 2726 Freephone helpline 0800 358 3601 Website www.cica.gov.uk
Violence	A Victim Support leaflet which gives information and advice for victims of violence	The local office of Victim Support or the National Office, Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ (please enclose an SAE) Tel: 020 7735 9166
Witness in Court	Explains what happens in court	The Home Office, Room 431, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT Tel: 020 7273 4145 www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Name	What it covers	Where to get it
Working for victims of crime	Outlines the services of Victim Support	The local office of Victim Support or the National Office, Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ (please enclose an SAE) Tel: 020 7735 9166
Your practical guide to crime prevention	Advice on crime prevention	Crack Crime, PO Box 999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6FS
Help with racist crime	A Victim Support leaflet which gives information on racist crime and what help is available	The local office of Victim Support or the National Office, Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ (please enclose an SAE) Tel: 020 7735 9166
Helping your child cope with the effects of crime	A Victim Support leaflet providing information and advice to parents and carers	The local office of Victim Support or the National Office, Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ (please enclose an SAE) Tel: 020 7735 9166
Murder and manslaughter – information for victims’ families	A Victim Support leaflet providing information and advice for parents and carers	The local office of Victim Support or the National Office, Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ (please enclose an SAE) Tel: 020 7735 9166

Useful addresses

Court Service Headquarters,
Southside, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London
SW1H 9AT. Enquiries Tel: 0870 000 1585.
Publications Tel: 020 7273 2066

**Criminal Injuries Compensation
Authority,** Tay House, 300 Bath Street,
Glasgow G2 4LN. Tel: 0141 331 2726
Freephone helpline 0800 358 3601
Website: www.cica.gov.uk

Home Office, 50 Queen Anne's Gate,
London SW1H 9AT.
Enquiries Tel: 0870 000 1585.
Publications Tel: 020 7273 2066
Website: www.homeoffice.gov.uk

National Probation Directorate
Horseferry House, Dean Ryle Street
London SW1P 2AW
Tel: 020 7217 0659
Website: www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk

**Police Complaint Authority
(Independent Police Complaints
Commission from April 2004),**
10 Great George Street, London
SW1P 3AE. Tel: 020 7273 6450
Website: www.pca.gov.uk

Crack Crime, PO Box 999, Sudbury,
Suffolk CO10 6FS.

**Crown Prosecution Service
Headquarters,** 50 Ludgate Hill, London
EC4M 7EX. Enquiries tel: 020 7334 8505.
Publications tel: 020 7273 8078
Website: www.cps.gov.uk

**National Society for the Prevention
of Cruelty to Children,** 67 Saffron Hill,
London EC1N 8RS. Tel: 020 7825 2766

MHRT Secretariat
MHRT HQ, Wellington House,
133-155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG

Victim Support National Office,
Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road,
London SW9 6DZ Tel: 020 7735 9166
www.victimsupport.org
Victim Supportline: 08453030900

**Independent Police Complaints
Commission** 90 High Holborn London
WC1V 6BH Tel no 08453 002002
(local rate) Enquiries@ippc.gsi.gov.uk

