

HELP FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME



ADVOCATE

TELEPHONE NUMBER

PRELIMINARY HEARING RESULTS

This book was created by the Office of Victims Service and the District Attorney to provide notice of basic rights and services to victims of crime as required by the Crime Victims Act.

www.pacrimevictims.com

PENNSYLVANIA VICTIM BILL OF RIGHTS

- To receive basic information on the services available
- To be notified of significant criminal justice actions and proceedings
- To be accompanied to all criminal justice proceedings by an advocate or family member
- To submit prior comment on the potential reduction or dismissal of a charge or change in a plea when a personal injury crime or burglary is involved
- To have prior comment on sentencing decisions to include the submission of a victim impact statement
- To be restored to the pre-crime economic status through restitution, compensation through the Crime Victims Compensation Program and expeditious return of property
- To be given the opportunity to provide prior comment on, and receive notice of, post-sentencing release decisions involving an offender who is sentenced to state correctional institution when a personal injury crime is involved
- To receive notice of the release of an offender from a local correctional facility and immediate notice of the escape of such offender in cases involving personal injury
- To receive immediate notice of the release of an offender on bail from a local correctional facility when the offender either violates a protection from abuse order or commits a personal injury crime against a victim protected by the order
- To receive notice when an offender is transferred from a state correctional institution to a mental health facility and of the discharge, transfer or escape of the offender from the mental health facility
- To have assistance in the preparation of, submission of and follow-up on victim compensation claims

VICTIMS COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Victims Compensation may be able to help by paying you back for money you had to pay because of a crime.

Compensation may help with:

- ◊ Medical Expenses
- ◊ Funeral, Travel and Loss of Support in Homicide Cases
- ◊ Counseling for Victims and their Families
- ◊ Relocation Costs or Crime Scene Cleanup

To Receive Compensation:

1. Be a Victim of a crime that happened in Pennsylvania
 2. Report the crime or file a PFA within three days
 3. Cooperate with the police and the Victims Compensation Assistance Program
 4. File the claim within two years of the crime
 5. Not be involved in illegal activity that caused the crime
- ◊ There are exceptions to the requirements especially if the victim is under 18

The program will NOT reimburse you for:

~ Pain and Suffering

~ Stolen or damaged property

To see if you are eligible for help in filing a claim
please contact Victim Services at 724-250-4811.

Please note: Information received in connection with VCAP will be kept
on file for historic purposes.

WHAT YOU MUST DO

TO GET INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CASE, YOU MUST GIVE YOUR ADDRESS AND YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER TO AGENCIES THAT WILL ASSIST YOU WITH YOUR RIGHTS. YOU MUST ALSO TELL THEM IF YOUR ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER CHANGES. ONLY PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR THE POLICE, THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE OR A CORRECTIONS AGENCY MAY SEE YOUR ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER.

PROTECTION FROM ABUSE (PFA) ORDER

If you are a victim of domestic violence, you have the right to go to court and get a PFA order that could include the following:

1. Restrain the abuser from further acts of abuse;
2. Tell the abuser to leave your household;
3. Keep the abuser from entering your home, school or work;
4. Give you or the other parent temporary custody of or visitation with your child or children;
5. Tell the abuser to pay support to you and the minor children if the abuser has a legal duty to do so;
6. Tell the abuser to give up all weapons while the order is in effect;
7. Tell the abuser to stop stalking or harassing you or other persons in your family;
8. Tell the abuser to pay for your losses from the abuse.

*For more information call 24 hours to: 800-791-4000
Or 724-223-8349*

*You may be eligible for enrollment in the
Address Confidentiality Program
For more information call ACP at 800-563-6399*

\$\$\$ RESTITUTION \$\$\$

Restitution is different than compensation.

Compensation is paid by the Victims Compensation Assistance Program.

Restitution is paid by the offender of the crime.

It is part of the sentence ordered by the judge.

**The money is paid by the defendant to the Clerk of Courts who then
sends it to you, the victim.**

**Restitution is for out-of-pocket expenses that are directly related to the
crime.**

Restitution *WILL* pay for stolen or damaged property.

Restitution will *NOT* pay for pain and suffering.

**You will receive an intake packet in the mail that includes a
"RESTITUTION CLAIM FORM"**

**You must return this form quickly and attach any documentation you
might have regarding monies for lost and stolen items.**

This form *MUST* be returned *before* the defendant receives a sentence.

**You can track restitution payments using the Pennsylvania Unified
Judicial System at ujportal.pacourts.us**

Additional instructions are available at:

www.oa.pa.gov/Programs/RestitutionTaskForce/Pages/default.aspx

If you are the victim of a crime and you need any assistance in navigating the justice system please contact the Washington County

District Attorney's
Office of Victim Services.

724-250-4811

We will do everything in our power to make you as whole as possible while we assist you in your journey through the criminal justice system.

The confidentiality of client-advocate communication is essential in protecting the safety of victims and ensuring their privacy. Communications are confidential whether made by adults or children, and whether to or between staff, volunteers, student interns or board members who have met Pennsylvania's statutory requirements for confidentiality. The

District Attorney's Office of Victim Services will protect all information regarding program participants and their children and will fully comply with the confidentiality provisions set forth in Pennsylvania state and federal law. PLEASE NOTE: the courts and Assistant District Attorneys can request information or subpoena the same. This includes information received in the office of Victim Services.

