

Charter of Victims Rights (*Victims Rights and Support Act 2013*)

If you are a victim of crime, you have the following rights under the Charter of Victims Rights.

1 Respect

You will be treated with courtesy, compassion, cultural sensitivity and respect for your rights and dignity.

2 Information about services and remedies

You will be told as soon as possible about the different services that can help you, including counselling and legal services.

3 Access to services

If you need medical, counselling, and legal help you will be able to get it if it is available.

4 Information about investigation of the crime

If you ask, you will be told about how the police investigation is going. But in some cases there may be some things the police can't tell you.

5 Information about prosecution of accused

Prosecution is about taking the accused to court for the crime. This is done by the police or, in serious cases, the Director of Public Prosecutions.

- As a victim, you will be told:
 - what the charges are or why the accused has not been charged;
 - any decision of the prosecution to change or drop charges;
 - the date and place of the court hearing;
 - the final court result, including any appeal or gaol sentence given.
- If the prosecution is thinking about changing or dropping the charges they will have a talk to you about this if the crime:
 - was a serious sex crime, or
 - caused you physical harm, psychological or psychiatric harm.

But the prosecution don't have to talk to you if:

- you don't want to talk about it, or
- they can't find you.

6 Information about trial process and role as witness

If you have to give evidence as a witness in a trial you will be told about how the trial works and what you have to do.

7 Protection from contact with accused

While your case is in court you will be protected from contact with the accused and the defence witnesses.

8 Protection of identity of victim

You can keep your address and phone numbers private unless the court says different.

9 Attendance at preliminary hearings

You do not have to go to any committal hearing (like a mini trial) or other court business before the trial unless the court says you must.

10 Return of property held by State

If the police or prosecution took any of your goods as evidence you have the right to get it back as soon as possible.

11 Protection from accused

If you need protection tell the police or prosecution when the accused applies for bail.

12 Information about special bail conditions

You will be told about any special bail conditions the accused is given, which are meant to protect you or your family, like a condition which says the accused must not contact you.

13 Information about outcome of bail application

If you were the victim of sexual assault or other serious assault you will be told if the accused gets bail or not.

14 Victim impact statement

In some cases you may be able to tell the court about how the crime has affected you and you will be given help and support to do this. This is called giving a 'victim impact statement.'

15 Information about impending release, escape or eligibility for absence from custody

If the offender is in gaol you can be told if the offender is going to be released from gaol soon, has escaped gaol or is on day release.

16 Submissions on parole and eligibility for absence from custody of serious offenders

You can have a say if the offender applies for parole.

17 Financial assistance for victims of personal violence

If you have been injured as a result of serious personal violence, you may be eligible for financial assistance under the Victims Support Scheme.

18 Information about complaint procedure where Charter is breached

You can make a complaint if you think your rights under the Charter have not been met. You can ask for information about how to do this.