

## **Charter of Victims' Rights for agencies**

Victims of crime have rights that government and non-government agencies need to uphold.

The Charter of Victims' Rights, set out in the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009*, describes the treatment victims can expect to receive from Queensland Government agencies, their officers and funded non-government agencies that provide services to victims of crime.

Victims have the right to make a complaint if this charter is not followed.

### **Appropriate treatment by government and non-government agencies**

#### **Respect, courtesy, compassion and dignity**

A victim will be treated with courtesy, compassion, respect and dignity, taking into account the victim's needs.

#### **Privacy**

A victim's personal information, including the victim's address and telephone number, will not be disclosed unless authorised by law.

#### **Information about services**

A victim will be informed, at the earliest practicable opportunity, about services and remedies available to the victim.

#### **Rights in the criminal justice system**

##### **Information about the investigation**

A victim will be informed about the progress of the investigation of the crime, unless informing the victim may jeopardise the investigation. If the investigation may be jeopardised, the victim will be informed accordingly.

##### **Information about the prosecution and court matters**

A victim will be informed of each major decision (including the reasons) made about the prosecution of a person accused of committing the crime. This includes decisions about any of the following matters:

- the charges brought against the accused
- not bringing charges, or substantially changing the charges, against the accused
- accepting a plea of guilty to a lesser or different charge.

A victim will be informed about:

- the name of a person charged with an offence in relation to the crime
- the issuing of a warrant for the arrest of a person accused of committing the crime
- details of relevant court processes, including when the victim may attend a court proceeding and the date and place of hearing of a charge against the accused (also includes details of an application for bail made by the accused)
- details of any diversionary programs available to the accused in relation to the crime
- the outcome of a criminal proceeding against the accused, including the sentence imposed and the outcome of an appeal.

### **Information about bail applications**

A victim will be informed about the outcome of a bail application made by the accused and any arrangements made for the release of the accused, including any special bail conditions imposed that may affect the victim's safety or welfare.

### **Information about the role of a witness**

If a victim is a witness at the accused's trial, the victim will be informed about the trial process and their role as a witness.

### **Contact with accused at court**

During a court proceeding, the victim will be protected from unnecessary contact with, or violence or intimidation by:

- the accused
- defence witnesses
- family members and supporters of the accused.

### **Victim impact statements**

A victim may make a victim impact statement under the *Penalties and Sentences Act 1992* for consideration by the court during sentencing of a person found guilty of an offence relating to the crime.

### **Return of victim's property**

A victim's property held by the state for an investigation or as evidence will be returned to the victim as soon as possible.

### **Rights when the offender is imprisoned**

### **Convicted offender information**

Once an offender has been convicted, eligible victims can register to be placed on the victims register. For or more information phone [1800 098 098](tel:1800098098) (freecall).

[Victims of young offenders](#) can phone [13 74 68](#).

An eligible victim will be kept informed of the following matters:

- the offender's period of imprisonment or detention
- the escape of the offender from custody or whether the offender is unlawfully at large.

### **Opportunity to make written submissions to the parole board**

An eligible person will be given the opportunity to write to the parole board under the *Corrective Services Act 2006* about granting parole to the offender.

### **Right to make a complaint**

A victim may make a complaint about a contravention of a right under this charter, and will be given information about the procedure for making a complaint.

A friend or family member may also make the complaint for the victim, with their permission.

The complaint can be made straight to the agency the victim has been dealing with or to the Victim Services Coordinator at Victim Assist Queensland.

A victim can contact Victim Assist for a complaint form. If preferred, they can write your complaint as a letter or email.