## How we can help

Victim Support is an independent charity that offers free and confidential support to anyone affected by crime and traumatic incidents.

We will listen with compassion and tailor our support to you.

We can work with you to understand the impact of the crime, and where you may want further support. Our help could include speaking to the police, accessing legal advice, financial support or mental health services.

We also provide opportunities for you to share your experience with others, such as the media, or to help other victims.

## My Support Space

My Support Space is an online resource designed to help you manage the impact that crime has had on you. It includes interactive guides that contain videos, techniques, tips and activities as well as an online diary.

We have a number of guides that contain information about the criminal justice system and your rights. To create your free account visit: **mysupportspace.org.uk/moj**

## Diversity matters and we value it

We are committed to supporting the needs of the diverse communities we serve. We can provide interpreters and information in alternative formats. If you have additional needs please let us know so we can put the right support in place.

**Supportline: 08 08 16 89 111**

**Your local Victim Support:**

Devon & Cornwall
0300 303 0554

We are an **independent** charity offering **free**, **confidential** support to people affected by crime and traumatic incidents.

For information and support, contact us by:

- calling: Supportline **08 08 16 89 111**
- using our 24/7 live chat service: **victimsupport.org.uk/live-chat**
- using BSL: **victimsupport.org.uk/bsl**
- Online: **victimsupport.org.uk**

To find out how you can help us, visit **victimsupport.org.uk/get-involved**

**@VictimSupport**
**VictimSupport**
**victimsupport_uk**
**Linkedin.com/company/victim-support**

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VICTIM SUPPORT

# YOUR RIGHTS

**How we can help you after a crime**



**victimsupport.org.uk**

INFORM

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## Your rights as a victim

**At Victim Support, we recognise that victims of crime may not be aware of their rights and entitlements. This leaflet will help you to understand the information and support that you are entitled to receive as a victim.**

We are independent of the police and will support you regardless of whether or not you've reported the crime. If you decide that you do want to report the crime to the police, Victim Support can help you to understand whether your rights have been met.

## The Victims' Code

**Victims of crime in England and Wales have 12 rights, set out in the Code of Practice for Victims' of Crime (VCOP). This is also known as the Victims' Code. These rights are:**

1. To be able to understand and to be understood.
2. To have the details of the crime recorded without unjustified delay.
3. To be provided with information when reporting the crime.
4. To be referred to services that support victims and have services and support tailored to your needs.
5. To be provided with information about compensation.
6. To be provided with information about the investigation and prosecution.
7. To make a Victim Personal Statement.
8. To be given information about the trial, trial process and your role as a witness.
9. To be given information about the outcome of the case and any appeals.
10. To be paid expenses and have property returned.
11. To be given information about the offender following a conviction.
12. To make a complaint about your rights not being met.

## Your rights as a witness*

**If a case goes to court, you may be called as a witness. Witnesses can expect certain standards of care, which are set out in the Witness Charter. These standards include:**

- A main point of contact to keep you informed, provide support or refer you to support.
- The ability to claim some expenses as a result of attending court.
- A needs assessment to see what help you may need to give evidence.
- Special measures if you are considered to be a vulnerable or intimidated witness.
- Information, or details of where information can be found, about the court and the court process.
- Being treated with dignity and respect at all times.

**Victims of crime who are witnesses also have additional rights under the Victims' Code:**

- The right to ask court staff if you can enter the court building through a separate entrance from the defendant and their family and friends.
- You have the right to an interpreter if you don't speak English as a first language.
- The right to meet the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) advocate or representative and to ask them questions about the court process, where possible.

## How to make a complaint

If you're a victim of crime and you feel that your rights under the Victims' Code have not been met, then you can complain directly to the criminal justice agency concerned. This might be your local police force or the Crown Prosecution Service.

If you've done that and are still dissatisfied, then you can take your complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

They are responsible for considering complaints relating to the Victims' Code.

You must first contact your MP and ask them to refer your complaint to the Ombudsman as they will not consider cases directly from a member of the public.

## Restorative Justice

Restorative justice (RJ) brings together those harmed by crime, and those responsible for the harm. This enables everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.

As part of the VCOP, victims are entitled to receive information about RJ and be made aware of RJ services available to them.

You can find out more about RJ by reading our Restorative Justice leaflet.

*This leaflet reflects the rights in place that were accurate on date of printing April 2023, please check on **gov.uk** website for any updates.

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