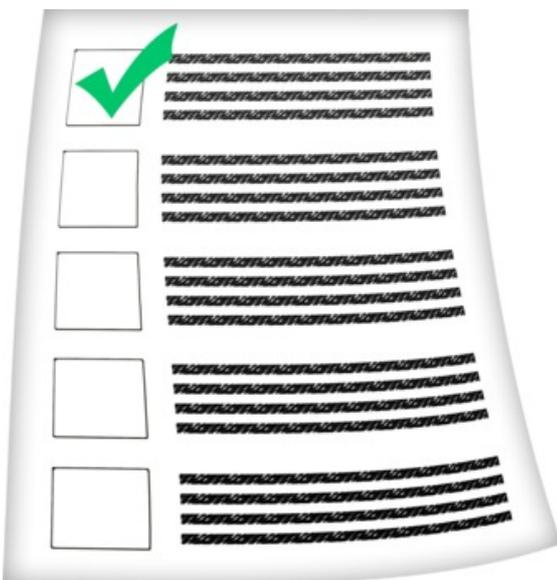




Victim Charter

A Charter for victims of crime

Your rights and the support you can get if a crime happens to you



What is this booklet about?



This booklet can help you if a crime has happened to you in Northern Ireland.

It tells you about your rights and the support you can get.



You can also get this support if:

- someone in your family died after a crime or because of a crime
- a crime happened to someone you are caring for and they can't ask for the support themselves
- a crime happened to your child.



This booklet tells you the main things that the **Victim Charter** says.

The Victim Charter is a document. It talks about your rights if a crime happens to you.

It tells you what information you will get.



What support should you get?



You may talk with lots of people if a crime happens to you.

For example:

- the police
- the courts
- people called the Victim and Witness Care Unit



They help you if the case is to go to court



- people who can support you like Victim Support NI or the NSPCC Young Witness Service.



This booklet tells you your rights and what support and information you can get.

You can talk to any of these people about the support and information you need.



The people you speak to about the crime should:

- be polite and treat you fairly



- give you information in a way you understand if they can

This could be in another language if you need it

- ask you if you need support to say what happened

You can usually take someone with you to support you as well



- tell you about the support you can get
This support should be free.



The people you speak to about the crime should also:

- try to help you get the right support



- tell you what is happening about the crime

- tell you what you need to do



- explain any decisions that are made about the crime.



The police

You should tell the police if a crime happens to you. Or ask someone else to.

Call 101. If the crime is really bad call 999.



The police should only ask you questions when they need to.

You can usually take someone with you.

The police should:



- help you get any support you need to tell them and the court what happened

- tell you about what may happen next

- tell you in 10 days or less what they are doing about the crime

- tell you any big decisions about the crime

- give you back anything they took from you as soon as they can.



Deciding if the case will go to court



You will be told if the case will go to court or not.

If it will **not** go to court you have the right to:



- say if you are unhappy about this
- find out why this decision was made
- ask for the decision to be looked at again.



People from the Victim and Witness Care Unit will talk to you about all of this.

You will get the name and number of someone to speak to from there if you have any questions.

Going to court



You may need to go to court if a crime happens to you.

You will be told about this.



You may have to tell the court what happened and answer some questions.

You will get information about going to court if this happens.



You will get help from people in the Victim and Witness Care Unit, Victim Support NI or the NSPCC Young Witness Service.

They will tell you:

- what is happening and when
- what you need to do
- what decisions are made about the crime
- if you can get any money back that you spent going to court.





You can ask them any questions.

You can tell them what support you need.

You can also:



- watch a video about what happens in court



- visit the court first to see what it is like

- ask to go into court through a different door from the person you think did the crime



- ask to be kept away from the person you think did the crime if you can



- ask for someone to support you

They can meet you at court when you get there.

You can also:



- tell the court why the crime was bad for you and how you feel about it

You can write something down about this or ask someone to write it for you.



If a judge says it is OK you may be able to:

- sit behind a screen in court so you don't have to see the person you think did the crime



- tell the court what happened by video

This means you don't have to go into the courtroom

You can also answer questions by video



- get someone to help you answer questions in court if you find it hard to talk



- ask the judge and other people in court to take off their wigs and gowns

These are things some people wear in court.

Support if you feel upset or worried about the crime



There are some people who can help if you feel upset, worried or need information.

They can also tell you about other support you can get.

You can get in touch with them:

Victim Support NI
Phone 028 9024 3133 or 0845 3030900



For children and young people

NSPCC Northern Ireland
Phone 028 9035 1135

NSPCC Young Witness Service
Phone 028 9448 7533

The police or the Victim and Witness Care Unit should help you get this support if you need it.



Victim Support NI can also help you ask for money if a very bad crime happened to you and you got hurt.

You have 2 years after the crime happened to ask for the money.



If you are not happy with the support you get

You may not be happy with how people treat you.



Tell the people you have been talking to about the crime, like the police, the courts or other people.

They should tell you how to say you are not happy. This is called making a complaint.

Other things



You may have the chance to say more about the crime and how you feel.

You may have the chance to tell this to the person who did the crime.



You will be told if this can happen.

You will get help to stay safe.

But it is up to you. You can say no.



If a person is found guilty of the crime they may go to prison or hospital.

Or they may have to do something called being supervised.



You can ask for information about when the person leaves prison or hospital. Or how it will work when they are being supervised.

You should ask people from the Victim Information Unit about this.

