

WHAT IS THE VICTIM'S ROLE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM?

Although a victim is not a party in criminal proceedings, they have a vital role to play in the criminal justice process and their testimony is a very important part of the Crown prosecutor's case against the accused.

LIMITATIONS

These rights must be applied in a reasonable manner so that they are not likely to interfere with investigations or prosecutions, endanger someone's life or safety, or injure national interests such as national security.

WHERE CAN I GO IF I NEED HELP UNDERSTANDING MY RIGHTS?

If you need help understanding your rights as a victim of crime, you may want to contact a victim service in your area. Victim services can provide support and resources to victims of crime. They can respond to safety concerns you may have after a crime and can also give you information about the criminal justice system.

To search for a victim service near you, use the Victim Services Directory located on the Justice Canada website at:

justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/victims-victimes/vsd-rsv/index.html



RESOURCES

It may also be helpful to contact your local or nearest:

Police services

Courthouse

Crown prosecutor's office

Community or student legal aid clinic

VICTIMS' RIGHTS IN CANADA



Your rights to information, protection, participation, and to seek restitution under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights!*



You can also consult
Canada.ca/victims
for more information

WHO HAS VICTIM RIGHTS?

The *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* (CVBR) defines a victim as an individual who has suffered physical or emotional harm, economic loss or property damage as a result of a crime committed in Canada.

All victims may exercise their rights under the CVBR while they are in Canada. Canadian citizens or permanent residents may exercise these rights even if they are outside of Canada, as long as the crime took place in Canada.

If a victim is deceased or is unable to act on their own behalf, the following people may act on the victim's behalf:

- the victim's spouse
- an individual who had been living with the victim as their common law partner for at least one year at the time of the crime
- a relative or dependant of the victim
- anyone who has custody of the victim or of the victim's dependant.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A VICTIM OF CRIME:

RIGHT TO INFORMATION

You have the right, on request, to information about the criminal justice system and your role in it and available victim services and programs. You also have the right, on request, to specific information about the progress of the case, including information relating to the investigation, prosecution, and sentencing of the person who harmed you, and information about an accused who has been found unfit to stand trial or not criminally responsible on account of mental disorder, while that person is under the jurisdiction of a court or a Review Board.

RIGHT TO PROTECTION

You have the right to have your security and privacy considered at all stages of the criminal justice process, to have reasonable and necessary measures taken to protect you from intimidation and retaliation, to request that your identity be protected from public disclosure and to request testimonial aids when appearing as a witness.

RIGHT TO PARTICIPATION

You have the right to convey your views about decisions to be made by criminal justice professionals that affect your rights under the CVBR. You also have the right to present a victim impact statement to describe the effect the crime had on you and to have your statement considered.

RIGHT TO SEEK RESTITUTION

You have the right to have the court consider making a restitution order against the offender for specific financial losses due to the crime. You also have the right to enter an unpaid restitution order as an enforceable civil debt.

RIGHT TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

You have the right to make a complaint if you believe your rights have been breached or denied by a federal department or agency using the complaint systems in that department or agency.

WHEN DO A VICTIM'S RIGHTS APPLY?

Victims have rights at all stages of the criminal process, including:

- when an offence is being investigated or prosecuted
- when the offender is subject to the corrections or conditional release process
- when the accused is subject to a court or review board's jurisdiction if he is found unfit to stand trial or not criminally responsible due to a mental disorder.