

There is HELP for
VICTIMS
OF 
CRIME

La. R.S. 46:1841

Legislative intent: "In recognition of the civic and moral duty of victims and witnesses of crime to cooperate fully and voluntarily with law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, and in further recognition of the continuing importance of such citizen cooperation to state and local law enforcement efforts and the general effectiveness and well-being of the criminal justice system of this state, the legislature declares its intent, in this Chapter, to ensure that all victims and witnesses of crime are treated with dignity, respect, courtesy, and sensitivity, and that the right extended in this Chapter to victims and witnesses of crime are honored and protected by the law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and judges in a manner no less vigorous than the protection afforded the criminal defendants."

Rights of Crime Victims and Witnesses

The following is a synopsis of your rights as provided by Louisiana law if you are a victim or witness of a felony crime against the person.

Your Responsibilities:

- You have the right
- You must report the crime within 72 hours unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- You must designate a family member to be the contact for minor or homicide victims.
- You must provide the current address and telephone number of the contact person.
- You must file a victim/witness notice form with the Department of Public Safety and Corrections if you wish to be notified of the escape, parole, or other release of the inmate named in the notice form.
- YOU MUST REQUEST YOUR RIGHTS to be notified of, to be present at, and to be consulted during the proceedings.

The family of minors or homicide victims have these same rights and responsibilities.

Victims of delinquent acts do not have all the rights listed. Victims of violent delinquent acts, however, now have most of these rights.

A witness is any person who has testified or is expected to testify for the prosecution.

Law Enforcement shall:

- ensure that you receive emergency, social, and medical services as soon as possible.
- give you a crime victim's brochure.
- give you a victim/witness notice form.

You Have Many Rights!

You have the right to be notified of the arrest of the accused, the right to advance notice of and the right to be present at all hearings and court proceedings in the prosecution of the accused. You also have the right not to be excluded from any portion of a hearing or trial if subpoenaed unless the court finds your presence prejudicial.

- to be provided by law enforcement with a private setting when being interviewed.
- to be informed by the District Attorney as to what you can expect and what is expected of you and how to get information.
- to be assisted in informing your employer of the need for you to miss work in order to cooperate with the prosecution of the case.
- to be informed as soon as possible of any change affecting your appearance at a proceeding if you are scheduled to appear.
- to be provided by the court, whenever possible but always in cases of violent crimes, with a secure waiting area away from the defendant, his family and friends.
- to have your attorney confer with the agencies about the prosecution and disposition of the case.
- to be consulted by the District Attorney for your view on dismissal, plea bargain, or sentencing alternatives.
- to be given specific information about maximum and minimum sentencing and prison terms prior to the sentencing hearing.
- to make an oral or written victim impact statement prior to sentencing. This is when you have the chance to tell how the crime affected and changed your life.
- to express your opinion at the sentencing hearing.
- to request restitution if the defendant is found guilty. Restitution shall be required if the defendant is placed on probation or parole. It can be paid in cash or service to the victim or paid to the Crime Victims Reparations Fund, or performed as community service work. Probation shall be revoked if the requirements are not met. Restitution can also be required as a condition of work release.
- to have personal property returned promptly when no longer needed as evidence.

Once the defendant has been convicted and becomes an inmate, you have the right to be notified:

- when he is released on bond.
- of a pardon or parole hearing and the right to be present and make written or oral statements.
- immediately of an escape and within 48 hours of a recapture.
- of the appeal, discharge or parole.
- of a scheduled execution. A family member of the victim may be present.

Remember

You must request some of these rights - so ask each agency whenever you are in doubt.

You must give the law enforcement agency (police, sheriff) the name, address, and phone number for the contact person for the family.

You must file the victim/witness notice form with the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to be notified of events once the perpetrator has been sentenced to a prison term.

Crime Victims Contact:

Jefferson Parish Sheriffs Office

1233 West Bank Expressway
Harvey, La 70058, Bldg C
(504) 376-2401 Community Relations Office

JPSO Community Relations Deputy

Kent Wolkart
(504) 376-2426 Office
(504) 376-2421 Fax

Department of Public Safety & Corrections

Crime Victims Services Bureau

Status of Sentenced Inmates for
"Victim Notice Form"
225-342-1056

MADD Louisiana State Office

2644 S. Sherwood Forrest Plaza Suite 123
Baton Rouge, LA 70816
225-926-0807 Office
225-926-3842 Fax

Covenant House

611 North Rampart Street
New Orleans, LA
(504) 584-1111
Non Residential & Residential Programs for abused youths 16-21

Jefferson Parish District Attorney's Office

200 Derbigny Street
Gretna, LA 70053
Victim/Witness Assistance Program
504-361-2860
Provides Services for: Victims/Witnesses of all Felony Crimes
Provides: Referrals, Crisis Intervention, Court Preparation Assistance, Information on Judicial Process

Children's Bureau: Project Last

400 Lafayette Street Suite 140
New Orleans, LA 70130

504-525-2366

Grief and trauma counseling for child survivors of homicide victims

Metropolitan Battered Women's Program

Jefferson 504- 837-5400

LA statewide hotline 1-888-411-1333

River Parishes 985-651-7397

Shelter, counseling, support groups, children's counseling, legal services for women & children in domestic violence situations.

Child Victims/Physical & Sexual Abuse