

How to Write Your Victim Impact Statement



HELP FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

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Communication Disabilities Access Canada

Ending Violence Association of BC

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Provincial Office of Domestic Violence

PROJECT VIDEOS

How to Report a Crime When You Have a Communication Disability

How to Report a Crime to Police

What to do if You Have Been Sexually Assaulted

Being a Witness and Testifying in Court

How to Write Your Victim Impact Statement

What Happens When You Go to Court

What Happens When You Report Being a Victim of a Crime (Sign Language Series Videos)

PROJECT HELP SHEETS

How to Report a Crime to Police

What to do if You Have Been Sexually Assaulted

Going to Court and Being a Witness

How to Write Your Victim Impact Statement

ORIGINAL PROJECT ILLUSTRATIONS

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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What is a Victim Impact Statement?

When you've been the victim of a crime, you can be hurt physically and emotionally.

Crimes can also damage your property and cost you money. For example, you may be so upset about the crime you haven't been able to work. Or, you may need to replace things that were damaged or stolen from your home.

The law says every victim has the right to fill out a victim impact statement.

But, you don't have to do a Victim Impact Statement if you don't want to. It's your choice.



Who Can Write a Statement?

You can fill in the form yourself or a friend, family member or Victim Services Worker can help you.

How Do You Fill it Out?

There's an official Victim Impact Statement form you have to use. You can fill out all of the form or just parts of it. You can include a picture you've drawn, or a poem or letter you've written, if that helps you explain the effect the crime has had on you.



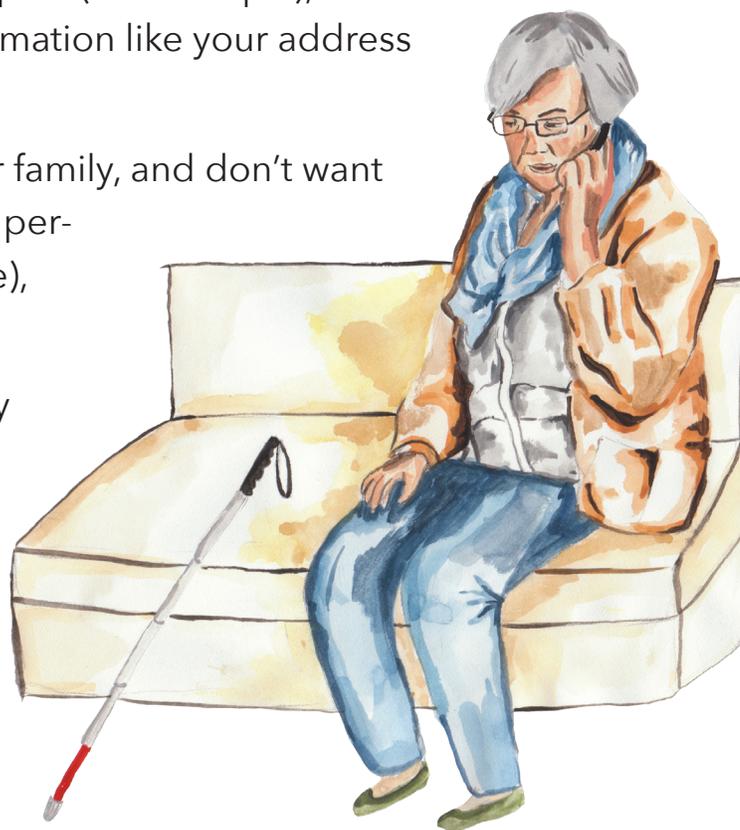
The victim impact statement must be written in your own words. It's OK to have someone help you, but they should only write down what you have said or communicated -not their ideas or feelings. This person also needs to write on the form that they helped you.

Tips to Help You

- ✓ Start working on your statement before your trial and take your time. Even write a practice statement first.
- ✓ Use the information guide that came with the form to help you.
- ✓ Talk about how the crime hurt or harmed you.
- ✓ Don't talk about the accused or the crime. Don't say what kind of sentence you think the Judge should give.
- ✓ Remember to number and sign any pages that you attach to the form. If you're attaching papers (like receipts), make sure to cover up personal information like your address or credit card number.

If you're afraid for yourself or your family, and don't want any contact with the accused (the person who is charged with the crime), write this in your statement.

If you're worried about your safety right now, tell the police or the Crown Counsel for your case.



How Will My Statement Be Used?

When you've finished the statement, give it to the Crown Counsel. They have to give the statement to the defense lawyer and the accused. The defense lawyer may ask you questions about your statement.

The Crown Counsel gives your statement to the Judge when he or she is deciding the sentence for the person if they are found guilty. Or sometimes Crown Counsel will use your statement to tell the Judge how the crime affected you.

You can go to the sentencing hearing at the court house and ask to give your statement yourself or you can ask the court to allow someone to read it for you.



Do You Need a Communication Intermediary?

Communication Disabilities Access Canada has a Canada-wide list of communication intermediaries. See their list at: <http://www.access-to-justice.org/>