



Leicestershire  
**Police**

Protecting our communities

# Information for Victims of Crime



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# Information for Victims of Crime

Becoming a victim of crime can be a distressing and upsetting experience.

This booklet explains what happens next, and gives you information about organisations that you can access for support.

## What happens when you report a crime

Now that you have reported a crime, you will be asked to provide additional details about what happened.

An officer will carry out an initial assessment. This will often lead to an investigation, which could include a forensic examination, statement taking, house-to-house enquiries and intelligence checks.

To help the police investigate your crime you should let them know:

- if you remember something that is not already included in any statement you give
- if your contact details change
- if the crime involved any type of hostility, for example if you were targeted because of your race, sexuality, religion, disability or gender identity, or perceived race, sexuality, religion, disability or gender identity
- if you have any specific needs, for example, mobility, communication or religious requirements



The police will tell you if the crime investigation can be progressed and will keep you informed of what is happening. They will also tell you if the investigation is closed and give you a reason why.

If your crime involves injury, loss or damage you may be able to claim compensation if someone is caught and convicted at court.

You will need to let the officer know and give accurate details of injury, loss or damage e.g. receipts so compensation can be asked for.

## Dealing with your crime

During an investigation, if someone is arrested they may be questioned and a decision will be made about what will happen to them.

Depending on the offence, this decision is taken either by the police or the Crown Prosecution Service.

There are several ways the offender can be dealt with including:

- being released with no further action
- undertaking a community resolution or restorative justice
- being subject to an out of court disposal such as a caution
- being charged or summonsed and brought before the courts

If someone is charged or summoned and sent to court, we will contact you and advise you of the **first** court date and explain the process. If after the first hearing there has been a guilty plea we will inform you of the outcome.

If a not guilty plea is entered by the defendant, the Witness Care Unit at Leicestershire Police will make contact with you following the first court date. They will update you, provide you with the necessary information and practical support should you be required to attend court to give evidence and refer you, with your permission, to other organisations who may be able to offer other types of support.

If your case is sent to the Crown Court for further hearings, the Witness Care Unit will maintain contact with you and provide updates and support in line with the Victims Code of Practice.

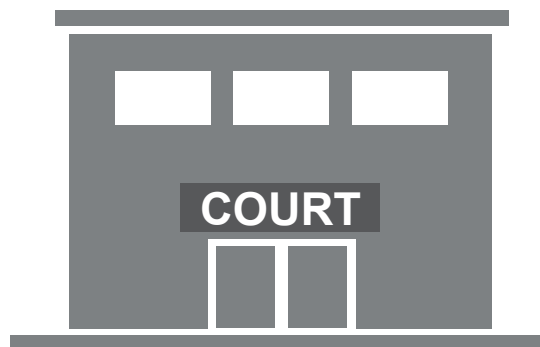
***It is important that you contact the Witness Care Unit if your contact details change.***



## What will happen with the witness statement?

By making a statement you are helping to bring any offenders to justice.

If a suspect is charged with an offence you may be asked to attend court in order to give evidence, however if your statement is agreed by the CPS and defence as being a full enough account, then they may choose to rely solely on your statement.



## Who will see my statement?

Everyone involved with the case, so when you provide a statement please do not include personal information unless it is relevant to the circumstances of the incident. More information about giving a witness statement is available at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-new-leaflet-giving-a-witness-statement-to-the-police-what-happens-next](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-new-leaflet-giving-a-witness-statement-to-the-police-what-happens-next)

## The media

Details of crimes may be released to the media via the force website and social media accounts to help trace any witnesses or appeal for information which might help the investigation.

If this is the case, your details will not be released. This includes your name or full address. Appeals aren't issued for all crimes. A number of things will be taken into account before an appeal is considered and this will be discussed with you.



## The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime

The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime sets out what services you can expect from criminal justice agencies when you have reported a crime, if you are an individual or a business.

For example, the code places a requirement to keep you up to date on the progress of your case.

Leicestershire Police will agree a victim contract with you and will undertake to keep you updated with any active investigation at least every 28 days via a preferred contact method. Please ask the investigating officer if you would like more regular updates or if you would prefer an alternative method of update.

More information about the code is available by visiting website:  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime)

# Victim Personal Statements

## What is a Victim Personal Statement?

A Victim Personal Statement (VPS) is a written or video recorded statement that gives you an opportunity to tell criminal justice agencies and the courts about how a crime has affected your life.

All victims of crime are entitled to make a VPS if they want to. A VPS can also be made by:

- bereaved relatives or partners in homicide cases
- bereaved relatives or partners in fatal road traffic cases
- parents or carers where the primary victim is a child or vulnerable adult

Your VPS will explain the impact the crime has had on you. For example, you might want to mention:

- any physical, financial, emotional or psychological injury you have suffered and/or any treatment you may have received as a result of the crime
- if you feel vulnerable or intimidated
- if you no longer feel safe
- the impact on your family
- how your quality of life has changed on a day-to-day basis
- if you need additional support, for example because you are likely to appear as a witness at the trial

Please be aware that the VPS is a formal witness statement and you will need to sign a declaration confirming that it is true to the best of your knowledge.

## How your VPS will be used when it has been made

After you have made your VPS, it becomes part of the case papers. However, your personal information, like your contact details, will not be included.

Your VPS can be seen by everyone involved in the case, including the defendant and their lawyer(s), police, prosecution, and the judge or magistrate if the case goes to court.

However, your VPS will only be considered by the court if the defendant either pleads guilty or is found guilty by the court.

The court and/or the defence could cross-examine you about the contents of the VPS in order to clarify or challenge certain points. This may be reported on in the media.

Your VPS will not dictate how the offender is to be punished as sentencing is for the court to decide. However, the judge or magistrate will consider your VPS and the level of harm caused to you by the offence, along with all the other evidence.

To find out more visit:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/victim-personal-statement](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/victim-personal-statement)

## Will I have to go to court?

You will only have to go to court if the defendant:

- denies the charge and pleads 'not guilty'
- pleads guilty but denies an important part of the offence which might affect the type of sentence he or she receives

If you are required to go to court, the prosecution and defence lawyers will ask you questions about your evidence. You will be able to read your statement to refresh your memory first.

If you have given a statement and are then asked to go to court to give evidence, you must do so as it is a legal requirement. If you are asked to go to court, you will be sent a letter telling you when and where to go and an explanatory leaflet.



Extra help is available to support vulnerable or intimidated witnesses. The Witness Care Unit, Witness Service, the police or the CPS will tell you what type of help is available.

More information about being a witness is available from [www.cjsonline.org/witness](http://www.cjsonline.org/witness) or [www.cjsonline.org/victims](http://www.cjsonline.org/victims) for victims of crime.



As a victim of crime, the police will ask to pass your information to Victim First.

Victim First is a free, independent and confidential service for victims and witnesses of crime and antisocial behaviour in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. This victim-led service is designed to ensure that the needs of the victim and witness are put first and foremost at every stage of the justice process.

Victim First are provided with the details of victims so that they can contact them on behalf of the Chief Constable and explain the support and other services which they are able to provide to victims of crime. They work in partnership with Leicestershire Police and other agencies offering support, information and guidance across a wide range of areas. They are provided with details of victims and witnesses who have consented to support and will make contact within 48 hours to explain their menu of support.

#### **Victim First offers:**

- someone to talk to in confidence (face to face meetings or telephone support)
- information and advice
- advocacy with the police and other organisations on behalf of victims
- signposting to specialist organisations
- practical support (target hardening, personal alarms)
- mental health support (in-house mental health nurse)
- facilitation of restorative justice

You can call Victim First whether the crime is recent or in the past. They will support you even if you choose not to report the incident.

**Victim First Helpline 0800 953 95 95**

Email: [support@victimfirst.pnn.gov.uk](mailto:support@victimfirst.pnn.gov.uk)

Online: [www.victimfirst.org](http://www.victimfirst.org)

If you have been a victim of a violent offence, you may be eligible for compensation from the **Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA)**. You can apply for compensation whether someone has been prosecuted for the offence or not. To find out more, visit: [www.cica.gov.uk](http://www.cica.gov.uk) or call **CICA** on 03000 033601.

## Other useful contacts

### **Citizens Advice**

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

### **Crimestoppers**

[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

0800 555 111

### **Her Majesty's Court's and Tribunal Service**

[www.gov.uk/going-to-court-victim-witness/help-getting-to-the-court](http://www.gov.uk/going-to-court-victim-witness/help-getting-to-the-court)

### **Crown Prosecution Service**

[www.cps.gov.uk](http://www.cps.gov.uk)

0116 204 6700

### **Leicestershire Police Witness Care Unit**

[Witness.CareUnit@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Witness.CareUnit@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk)

101, ask for Leicestershire Police Witness Care Unit

# Checklist

Leicestershire Police is committed to serving the public and placing them at the heart of everything we do, by providing the best possible service to the communities we serve.

The following checklist will help our staff to confirm that they have provided you with all of the information that you need as a victim of crime.

At the rear of this booklet you will find a notes page that you can record information that you may have remembered or questions that you wish to ask next time we contact you.

- ✓ Given practical help?
- ✓ Offered advice?
- ✓ Explained what is going to happen next and why?
- ✓ Left written details of the name and contact details of the officer attending?
- ✓ Left crime/occurrence/incident reference number?
- ✓ Explained what further contact you should expect – when, how and who by?
- ✓ Established a 'Victim Contact Agreement' with you?
- ✓ Checked if you have any further questions/concerns?
- ✓ Advised you about your right to access support from Voice for victims and witnesses at any time and obtained explicit consent where appropriate?
- ✓ Explained what a Victim Personal Statement is and offered you the opportunity to make one?

## In an emergency or for general enquiries

In an emergency, when there is a crime in progress or a life at risk, always call **999**

To report a crime or incident, provide information or for advice, call **101** or visit **[www.leics.police.uk](http://www.leics.police.uk)**

To report information about crime anonymously call CrimeStoppers on **0800 555 111**

## Notes / further questions

Crime/occurrence/incident number:

Type of offence:

Officer attending:

Officer investigating:

Officer's investigating contact details:

Date occurred:

Date reported: