

## TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

If you are a victim of a crime and feel that your rights have been violated or you have been mistreated by the criminal justice system, you may contact the Crime Victim Justice Unit to make a complaint or request assistance.

Complaint forms are available by contacting the Crime Victim Justice Unit or can be found online at [www.ojp.state.mn.us](http://www.ojp.state.mn.us).

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## Subjects of Complaints

The CVJU has the authority to investigate complaints from crime victims about actions taken by members of the criminal justice system, reparations, and victim service providers. The CVJU does not have the authority to investigate judges.

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## CVJU VISION

The Crime Victim Justice Unit (CVJU) strives to achieve just, fair, and equitable treatment of crime victims and witnesses by providing a process to question the actions of criminal justice agencies and victim assistance programs within the State of Minnesota.

The CVJU has the authority to investigate decisions, acts, and other matters of the criminal justice system so as to promote the highest attainable standards of competence, efficiency, and justice for crime victims. The actions of the CVJU are guided by impartiality, confidentiality, and respect for all parties.

## CRIME VICTIM JUSTICE UNIT

### Office of Justice Programs

445 Minnesota Street, Suite 2300  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1515

Phone: 651-201-7310  
Toll-free: 800-247-0390  
Fax: 651-296-5787  
TTY: 651-205-4827

**Email:** [dps.justiceprograms@state.mn.us](mailto:dps.justiceprograms@state.mn.us)

**Web site:** [www.ojp.state.mn.us](http://www.ojp.state.mn.us)

Business hours:  
Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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### AFTER HOURS ASSISTANCE

24-HOUR CRISIS REFERRAL: DIAL 2-1-1

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### FINANCIAL COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS

For information on financial compensation available to victims of violent crime, please contact:

#### Crime Victims Reparations Board

Office of Justice Programs

651-201-7300 • 888-622-8799

Minnesota Department of Public Safety  
Office of Justice Programs

# Crime Victim Justice Unit



Minnesota Office of Justice Programs

# CVJU SERVICES

The Crime Victim Justice Unit (formerly the Office of the Crime Victim Ombudsman) serves crime victims by providing:

## Information and Referral

- Information on criminal statutes and victim rights.
- Referral to appropriate agencies and organizations including crime victim services.

## Assistance

- Information about procedures and practices of all aspects of the criminal justice system.
- Explanation of the roles of law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and others.

## Investigations

- Investigations of crime victim rights violations and mistreatment.
- Information and explanations of agency actions.

## Outcomes

- Determination of whether victim mistreatment or statutory rights violations occurred.
- Documentation of findings and a report to involved parties.
- Recommendations to subject agency to correct errors and improve response to victims.

# CRIME VICTIMS HAVE RIGHTS

## Right to be Notified of

- Victim rights.
- Prosecution process and the right to participate.
- Content of any plea bargain agreements.
- Changes in court proceeding schedule when a victim has been subpoenaed or requested to testify.
- Final disposition of the case.
- Appeals filed by the defendant, the right to attend the oral argument or hearing, and the right to be notified of the final disposition.
- Sentence modifications for the offender, including the date, time and location of the review.
- Release, transfer to a less secure facility, or escape of the offender from prison or custodial institution.
- Offender's petition for expungement.
- Right to request restitution and right to apply for reparations.
- Information on the nearest crime victim assistance program or resource.
- Petition to civilly commit an offender, outcome of that petition, and notice of offender's possible discharge/release from civil commitment.

## Right to Protection from Harm

- Right to a secure waiting area during court proceedings.
- Right to request address and other information be withheld in open court.
- Right to request law enforcement withhold victim's identity from the public.
- Right to confidential request for HIV testing of offender in sexual assault cases.
- Protection against employer retaliation for victims and witnesses called to testify, and for victims of heinous crimes and their family members wishing to take reasonable time off to attend court proceedings.
- Tampering with a witness is a crime and should be reported.

## Right to Participate in Prosecution

- Right to request a speedy trial.
- Right to provide input in a pretrial diversion decision.
- Right to object orally or in writing to a proposed disposition or sentence.
- Right to object orally or in writing to a plea agreement at the hearing.
- Right to inform court of impact of crime orally or in writing at the sentencing hearing.
- Right to inform court at the sentencing hearing of social and economic impact of crime on persons and businesses in the community.
- The right to be present at the sentencing and plea presentation hearings.
- Right to submit statement regarding decision to discharge/release offender from civil commitment.

## Right to Apply for Financial Assistance

- Victims of violent crime may apply for financial assistance (reparations) from the state if they have suffered economic loss as a result of the crime.
- Victims may request the court to order the defendant to pay restitution if the defendant is found guilty or pleads guilty.
- Victims may request that a probation violation hearing be scheduled 60 days prior to the expiration of probation if restitution has not been paid.

## Domestic Violence and Harassment Victims

- Right to be informed of decision by the prosecutor to decline prosecution or dismiss case, accompanied by information about seeking a protective or harassment order at no fee.
- Protection against employer retaliation for victims to take reasonable time off to attend order for protection or harassment restraining order proceedings.