



AFP
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

POCKETBOOK GUIDE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

ACT Policing



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ENGLISH	If you need interpreting help, telephone:
ARABIC	إذا احتجيت لمساعدة في الترجمة الشفوية، إتصل برقم الهاتف
CHINESE	如果你需要翻译员的帮助，请打电话：
CROATIAN	Ako trebate pomoć tumača telefonirajte:
GREEK	Αν χρειάζεστε διαμεγμένα τηλεφωνήστε στο
ITALIAN	Se avete bisogno di un interprete, telefonate al numero:
PERSIAN	اگر به ترجمه شفاهی احتیاج دارید به این شماره تلفن کنید:
PORTUGUESE	Se você precisar da ajuda de um intérprete, telefone:
SERBIAN	Ako vam je potrebna pomoć prevodnioca telefonirajte:
SPANISH	Si necesita la asistencia de un intérprete, llame al:
TURKISH	Tercümana ihtiyacınız varsa lütfen telefon ediniz:
VIETNAMESE	Nếu bạn cần một người thông-giọng hãy gọi điện-thoại:

TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICE

131 450

Canberra and District - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS

The Australian Capital Territory is one of the safest places in the country to live however, crime still does occur in our city and it is important to know what options are available if you, or someone close to you, has been directly affected by a crime.

A victim of crime is any person who:

- suffers harm because of crime;
- suffers harm assisting a police officer who is attempting to arrest a person or prevent a crime;
- witnesses a crime where a person has suffered harm; or
- was dependent upon a person who has been injured or died as a result of a crime.

Every individual is unique and, although there are many common reactions to crime, everyone's experience will differ. The effects of crime can be immediate or can take time before they become apparent. Being informed and getting help to deal with these effects may mean that you will feel more supported and may assist your recovery.

police.act.gov.au



Treatment of victims of crime

ACT Policing follows the governing principles set out in the Victims of Crime Act 1994. The Principles provide that a victim should be dealt with at all times in a sympathetic, constructive and reassuring manner and with due regard to his or her personal situation, rights and dignity. Where practical and appropriate, a victim should be informed:

- of the progress of police investigations concerning the relevant offence at reasonable intervals (generally not exceeding one month) except where such disclosure might jeopardise the investigation, and, in that case, the victim should be informed accordingly.
- of the charges laid against the accused and of any modification of the charges.
- of any decision concerning the accused to accept a plea of guilty to a lesser charge or a guilty plea in return for a recommendation of leniency in sentencing.
- of any decision not to proceed with a charge against the accused.
- about the trial process and the rights and responsibilities of witnesses.
- where any property of the victim is held by the Crown for the purposes of investigation or evidence, inconvenience to the victim should be minimised and the property returned promptly.

If you have any enquiries about your rights as a victim please contact the Victims of Crime Commissioner on **1800 822 272**.

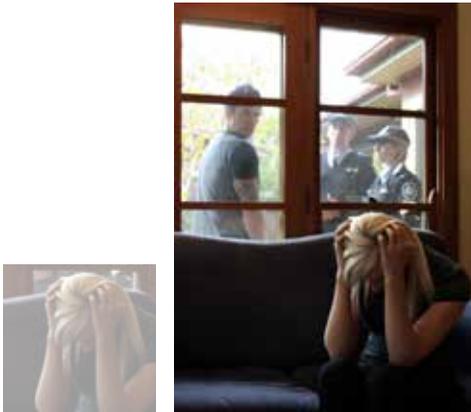
Furthermore:

- a victim should be protected from unnecessary contact with the accused and defence witnesses during the course of the trial.
- a victim's residential address should be withheld unless the court directs otherwise.
- a victim should be relieved from appearing at preliminary hearings or committal proceedings unless the court directs otherwise.
- a victim should be given an explanation of the outcome of criminal proceedings, any sentence and its implications.
- a victim who is known to have expressed a concern about the need for protection from an offender should be informed of the offender's impending release from custody.



In addition:

- victims have the right to be kept informed of any bail the defendant has entered into and the conditions of that bail.
- victims should be informed that they can submit a Victim Impact Statement in certain matters.
- victims are entitled to inform the Sentence Administration Unit that they have an interest in the defendant's release date. Victim details are then placed on the Victims of Crime Register.
- victims may be eligible for financial assistance and counselling for injuries sustained as a result of being a victim of a crime.



Understanding the justice system

In the ACT, it is the role of the police to investigate criminal offences and where appropriate, it is their decision to lay charges. They can either proceed with a caution, summons, arrest or by way of a restorative justice process (subject to eligibility and suitability requirements). In the case of summons or arrest, it is the role of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) to prosecute these charges on behalf of the Territory.

Once a person is charged with an offence, they are referred to as the defendant. The defendant may be in police custody or may receive a summons to appear in court at a later date. If the defendant is arrested and you have concerns for your protection, advise the police officer.

The defendant will initially appear in the Magistrates Court for a mention (first appearance). The defendant may plead guilty, not guilty or may seek an adjournment to obtain legal advice. At this initial mention, bail may be granted and certain conditions may be imposed on the defendant. The defendant has to comply with the bail conditions until their next court appearance.

If the defendant pleads guilty, victims and/or witnesses are not usually required to give evidence. If a plea of not guilty is entered, police must prepare a full brief of evidence which is then submitted to the DPP. The witnesses (including the victim) are given court notices by either the investigating officer or by the DPP which tell them when they are required to appear in court. If you are given such a notice, you must attend unless the DPP or police tell you otherwise.

If you need any further advice on the justice system you can contact the DPP on **6207 5399**.

Protection orders

If you are concerned about your safety you should consider applying for a protection order. There are two types of orders: a Family Violence Order (FVO) or a Personal Protection Order (PPO). A Personal Protection Order is made for a period of up to 12 months and a Family Violence Order up to two years.

A protection order is an order of the court setting conditions that a person(s) must abide by. These conditions can prevent the person(s) from contacting or approaching, causing or threatening to cause personal injury, harassing, intimidating or behaving in an offensive manner toward you (the applicant). You can also ask for the order to exclude the person(s) from your home or your workplace and for property to be returned to you. The terms of the order should relate to your particular need for protection.

If the situation is urgent, an interim (temporary) order may be made by a Magistrate on the same day an application is lodged.

You can apply for a protection order by lodging an application at the Magistrates Court, or with the help of the free Legal Aid service at the court or with your own solicitor. This is separate to any police investigation and details of the harassment, abuse and/or violence must be provided to the Magistrate so a decision can be made in your matter.

If you need further advice you can contact the Legal Aid Domestic Violence and Personal Protection Orders Unit on **6207 1874**.

Victim Impact Statements

A Victim Impact Statement (VIS) gives you, the victim (or a close family member or carer of the victim), the opportunity to participate in the criminal justice process by informing the court and the offender about how the crime has affected you. The court may take this into account when determining the offender's sentence.

The VIS is voluntary and is different to the statement you may have already provided to police as you only write about the harm you have suffered including financial and psychological effects as a result of the crime. You can nominate for the VIS to be read out in court by yourself or a nominated person or only read by the Magistrate, prosecutors, defendant and defence solicitor. In some instances you may be cross examined on the VIS.

Financial assistance

If you have suffered injury, loss or damage as a result of being a victim of crime, you may be entitled to financial assistance or compensation.

Compensation can be claimed within the brief of evidence that the police prepare for the DPP and the court. You should inform the investigating officer if you wish this to happen. This form of compensation is awarded at the discretion of the Magistrate or Judge.

If you have suffered a physical or mental injury as a result of a violent crime committed within the ACT, you may be eligible to apply to the Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme, which is a fund of public monies. Applications are available from Victims Support ACT and are usually made within 3 years of the incident.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family violence (or domestic violence) is a serious matter affecting many lives directly and indirectly. It can harm adults, young people and children physically and emotionally, now and in the future. Abuse in families and relationships is not acceptable; it is a crime.

Family violence occurs when a person is violent or abusive towards someone with whom they have some type of 'family relationship'. It is not limited to relationships between husbands, wives and their children. It also includes violence between defacto couples, boyfriends and girlfriends, gay and lesbian couples and the extended family (relatives) of those couples including stepchildren and adopted children.

No-one should have to deal with family violence alone. You may, of course choose to approach friends or other family members, or a community group for support and assistance. There are also many professionals available to help people who have experienced family violence.



Who can help?

Reporting family violence can be a complex process with many influences impacting on this decision. It is important to remember a victim cannot make the decision to "press charges". This decision is made by investigating police based on the evidence available to them. It is made with the safety and protection of the victim (and their family) in mind.

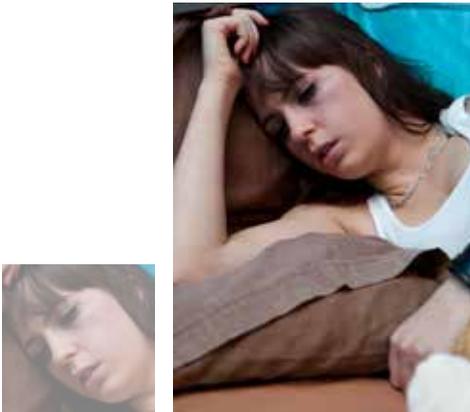
Once police charge an offender and refer the case to DPP, the decision to proceed with the charge/s rests with the DPP. You should be aware that family violence charges are treated differently within the criminal justice system. All family violence charges before the court are identified early and fast-tracked in a special court. This is done with the aim of reducing the stress and concerns of both parties and the family.

Victims should consider a safety plan, which is a personal strategy to help keep them safe. Advice about safety plans is available from the Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS).

Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS)

DVCS is a non-government crisis support agency that provides 24-hour, 7-days-a-week assistance to all people affected by family violence. DVCS provides direct crisis intervention and telephone support, access to safe accommodation, court support to people who have been subjected to family violence, referrals and information for women, men and young people. If you need support or information at any time ring DVCS on **6280 0900**.

The Legal Aid Office (ACT) Domestic Violence and Protection Order Unit may arrange free legal advice and duty lawyer representation for people who need a Domestic Violence Order or Personal Protection Order from the court.



HOME SECURITY

Good home security is not just about fitting deadlocks or alarms. It is also about reporting suspicious activity and looking out for your neighbours. Home burglary is a common crime here in the ACT. It can leave you and your family feeling shocked, violated or angry.

If you have made a report of burglary to police, you may later find additional property to be missing, locate some of the property you reported missing or find an item(s) that may be the property of the offender. Please ensure you contact the attending police officer(s) (see page 20 for contact numbers) and provide these further details.

The following tips are provided to keep your home secure.

Keys

- Never leave spare keys outside your home. Thieves know all the usual hiding places including door mats and pot plants.
- Don't have personal details such as your name, address and telephone number on your keys.
- Give a duplicate set of keys to a trusted friend, relative or neighbour.
- Never give your keys to tradesmen, workmen etc. It is easy for them to make copies without your knowledge or approval.
- If you lose your keys or move into a new home make sure you change the locks.

Windows

- Install key-operated locks on all windows making sure they can all be opened with a master key.
- Use laminated glass or shatter-resistant window film to help prevent windows being broken.

Alarms

Visible alarm equipment can be an effective deterrent. The alarm system you choose should cover all external doors and windows.

Doors

- Install quality deadlocks on all your external doors.
- Check doors and frames are correctly fitted and secure.
- Install a peephole in your front door and always check the identification of strangers.
- Keep your front/back door and/or security doors locked at all times.
- Don't leave messages on the front door when you are out.
- Secure garage/shed doors with deadlocks or strong padlocks.

Yards

- Trim trees and shrubs, especially those close to your house that could be climbed to gain access to your property or be used to hide behind. Make sure you keep all gates locked. The rear and sides of homes are often targeted by thieves.
- Always lock tools, ladders and garden equipment away as these items can be used by thieves to gain entry.
- Install movement-activated security lights at the front and back of your home.

Other general security tips

- When out, leave a radio, television or a light on in the evening to give the impression you are home (use a timer).
- Keep cash and valuables out of sight. Identify/mark your property as marked property is harder to dispose of and ensure you keep a list of all serial numbers.



VEHICLE SECURITY

Motor vehicle theft is unfortunately one of the most common types of crime in the ACT, but with a few precautions and greater community awareness it can be greatly reduced. Vehicle theft is not only distressing and costly to the victim but it also has an impact on the wider community.

How to protect your vehicle from theft

- Always check the windows and doors are closed properly and locked when you leave your vehicle.
- When you go out, park your vehicle in a well-lit, populated area (where possible).
- If you must leave valuables in the vehicle, hide them away.
- Spare keys should never be hidden in or on the car.
- If possible park your vehicle in the garage.
- When your car is being repaired, leave only the ignition key.
- Avoid placing your name, address and registration number on keys.

Anti-theft devices you can use

There are numerous anti-theft devices currently available such as: engine immobilisers, ignition shields, fuel cut-out switches, ultrasonic motion sensors, glass etching, glass break detectors, high powered electronic noise makers, battery isolators, steering wheel locks, hand brake locks, transmission locks and wheel locks.

How to help us

If your vehicle is stolen:

- report it to police immediately
- provide the registration number, make, model, colour and the time and place of the offence.



ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

There are a number of services offered by ACT Policing that may assist you as a victim of crime, during this difficult time:

- Keeping you updated on your case and explaining the police investigation, court processes and court outcomes;
- Providing information and help with completing a Victim Impact Statement;
- Victim Liaison Officers can provide information on, and referral to, victim support and counselling services; and
- Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Team (SACAT) officers can specifically assist victims of sexual assault and child abuse.
- Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers (GLLOs) can provide a point of contact for members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersex and transgender community;

- Indigenous Community Liaison officers and Multicultural Liaison officers can provide support, assistance and advice to indigenous people(s) and members of the community from a culturally and linguistically diverse background; and
- A comprehensive range of information is available to victims at police stations and via the internet at www.afp.gov.au.

Should you require any of these services please refer to the contact numbers provided on pages 18 and 19 of this booklet or visit the police station closest to you.



USEFUL CONTACTS

Australian Federal Police - ACT Policing:

Police emergency response (24hrs):	Triple Zero (000)
Police attendance line (24hrs):	131 444
Crime Stoppers:	1800 333 000

Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Team:	6256 7777
Victim Liaison Officer:	6245 7441
Multicultural Liaison Officer:	6256 7777
Gay and Lesbian Officers:	6256 7777
Indigenous Community Liaison Officer:	6256 7777

Specialist support for victims:

Canberra Rape Crisis Service:	6247 2525
Child Abuse Prevention Service:	1800 688 009
Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) (24hrs):	6280 0900
TTY:	6228 1852
SupportLink:	1300 656 200
Road Trauma Support (via SupportLink):	1300 656 200
Victim Support ACT:	1800 822 272
Youth Justice Victim Register:	6207 0443 or 6205 3568

24 hour support services:

Kids Helpline:	1800 551 800
Lifeline/Youth line:	131 114
Mensline:	1300 789 978

Counselling and support services:

ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service:	6242 5060
Canberra Mediation Service - counselling:	6122 7130
Canberra Men's Centre:	6230 6999
FACES (for adolescents and their families):	6162 6100
Relationships Australia:	6122 7100
Victims of Crime Assistance League:	6295 9600

Legal advice and criminal justice agencies:

Legal Aid Office (ACT):	6243 3411
Legal Aid Helpline:	1300 654 314
Protection Order Section:	6207 1874
ACT Magistrates Court:	6207 1728
ACT Supreme Court:	6207 1709
Family Court National Enquiry Centre:	1300 352 000
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions:	6207 5399
ACT Corrective Services:	6207 0888
ACT Victims of Crime Coordinator:	1800 822 272
Aboriginal Legal Service:	6249 8488
Women's Legal Centre:	1800 634 669
Youth Law Centre:	6173 5410

Home security:

Home Safety Program:	6103 9084
	www.homesafety.act.gov.au
Neighbourhood Watch:	www.nhwact.com.au

This booklet provides only a brief summary of options and services available. For further information and a more comprehensive range of resources, visit police.act.gov.au or your local police station.

Call: 131 444 for police assistance
6256 7777 (AFP switchboard)

Police stations:

- Belconnen: Benjamin Way, Belconnen
- Canberra City: London Circuit, Civic
- Tuggeranong: Cnr Soward Way and Anketell Street, Greenway
- Woden: Callam Street, Phillip
- Gungahlin: Gozzard Street, Gungahlin

police.act.gov.au



INCIDENT REFERENCE CARD

In a life threatening situation you can call the emergency number on **Triple Zero (000)** free call.

For police assistance in the ACT you can call police 24 hours, seven days a week on **131 444** or go to the police station nearest you.

For case updates or queries, you can contact the attending officer listed below or ring the police switchboard on **6256 7777**.

Date: _____

Incident reference number: _____

Attending officers: _____

Police station: _____

Police contact number: _____

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