



UNDERSTANDING YOUR RIGHTS AS A Victim of Crime

If you are a victim of crime in Pennsylvania, you have the following rights:

- ▶ **Get basic** information about services that can help you.
- ▶ **Be told** when important things happen in your case, like:
 - If an adult offender is given or denied bail.
 - If a young person (juvenile) is kept in custody or let go after being arrested.
 - If a petition is filed saying a juvenile committed a crime.
 - If an adult or juvenile escapes before their trial, and when they are caught again.
- ▶ **Have a** family member, victim advocate, or support person with you at court.
- ▶ **Share your** thoughts about the defendant's bail conditions, when bail is first set or if later changed.
- ▶ **Get immediate** notice if someone who broke a Protection From Abuse (PFA), Sexual Violence Protection Order (SVPO), or Protection From Intimidation (PFI) order is released on bail from jail.
- ▶ **Get help** writing or saying a victim impact statement that explains how the crime affected you physically, emotionally, and financially.
- ▶ **Receive as** much support as possible to get back what was lost—through money (restitution), victim compensation, or returning items used as evidence.
- ▶ **Get information** and help to fill out and follow up on a compensation claim.
- ▶ **Be told** about the Address Confidentiality Program if you're eligible to apply.
- ▶ **Stay in** the courtroom during any criminal proceedings unless the judge decides your testimony would change if you hear other people talk first.
- ▶ **Be notified** if an offender is moved from a state prison to a mental health facility, or if they are released, moved, or escape from custody.
- ▶ **Share your** opinion before an adult is sentenced or a juvenile's case is decided. You can also give a victim impact statement at this time.
- ▶ **Be told** the outcome of the case and any sentence given. This includes if the sentence later changes.



- ▶ **Be notified** of and give your thoughts if there's a new sentencing decision.
- ▶ **Get notice** and give your opinion if the prosecutor wants to let the offender into the Recidivism Risk Reduction Incentive (RRRI) Program, even if the offender doesn't meet all the normal requirements.
- ▶ **Be told** and give your opinion if the court considers letting the offender join the State Drug Treatment Program.
- ▶ **Be notified** if the offender is arrested for breaking a PFA order.
- ▶ **Receive notice** 90 days before the offender could be released on parole. You can share your thoughts in writing or in person about what parole should look like—or why it shouldn't happen at all.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

These Rights are Here to Protect & Support You

The justice system seems overwhelming, but support is available for you every step of the way. If you are a victim and believe your rights have been violated, contact the Office of the Victim Advocate at OVA.PA.GOV.

**Scan the QR code to visit
PCV.PCCD.PA.GOV**



- ▶ **Be told** what the parole board decides before the offender is released.
- ▶ **Attend the** trial, including murder trials, and stay for sentencing if you want to share input.
- ▶ **Be present** if the offender is executed.

*This list was organized for quick reference. For the full list of victim rights and resources, **scan the QR code or visit PCCD.PA.GOV**.*



ADDITIONAL RIGHTS FOR Specific Victims



► If you are a victim of a crime committed by a young person (juvenile):

- **Be notified** before any court hearings about the case.
- **Be told** if the juvenile's case is moved to or from adult court.
- **Receive notification** about what happens at the end of the case and what the final decision is.

► If you are a victim of a personal injury crime:

- **Be told** when the person accused is arrested or when charges are filed.
- **Be notified** about sentencing. (if the prosecutor knows ahead of time).
- **If you ask**, be told when the offender is released from jail.
- **Be notified** when decisions are being made about the offender's release from jail, like for:
 - Medical Reasons
 - Parole
 - Work Release
 - Relocationand be allowed to share your thoughts before and after those decisions.
- **Receive notice** when an adult offender is released including:
 - Medical Release
 - Parole
 - Work Release
 - Transfer to a Community
 - Temporary Leave (furlough) Treatment Center
- **Be told** right away if the offender escapes, and again when they are caught.
- **If you ask**, be told about any appeals being filed, heard, or decided.
- **Be notified** if the offender is sent to a mental health facility from jail or prison.
- **Receive notification** when the court no longer has control over the case.
- **Be able** to share your opinion before an offender is released early for medical or work reasons.
- **Share your** thoughts ahead of time if the charges might be reduced or dropped, if the plea changes, or if the case is moved away from court.

► If you are a victim of sexual assault:

- **Get information** about how to request a protection order.
- **Have a** trained counselor from a rape crisis center with you at the hospital during and after a medical exam.
- **Have a** sexual assault evidence kit collected and tested without your name if you choose.
- **Have the** rape kit collected and tested even if you don't know exactly where the assault happened.
- **Never be** billed for the cost of the rape kit or medical exam.
- **Have your** rape kit kept safely for the full time allowed by law.
- **If you ask**, be told the status of your rape kit, including at least 60 days before it might be destroyed.

► If you are a victim of a personal injury crime committed by a juvenile:

- **If you ask**, be told before the juvenile is released from a residential placement, shelter, or detention center.
- **By request**, be told and allowed to share a written objection before a juvenile is moved or released from a placement that goes against a court's earlier plan or order.
- **If you request**, share a written statement and speak in court during a review hearing about the juvenile's case.

Local Support & Resources

► PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV)

717.545.6400 or PCADV.ORG

Find Your Local Domestic Violence Program

PCADV.ORG/FIND-HELP

24-Hour National Hotline

800.799.SAFE (7233)

► PA Coalition to Advance Respect (PCAR)

800.692.7445 or PCAR.ORG

Find Your local Rape Crisis Center

888.772.7227

► PA ChildLine

800.932.0313 or DHS.PA.GOV

► PA Office of the Victim Advocate

800.563.6399 or OVA.PA.GOV

VISIT PCV.PCCD.GOV OR SCAN THE QR CODE TO FIND YOUR LOCAL AGENCY'S INFO

