

Introduction

The United States Attorney is the Chief Prosecutor of crimes against the laws of the United States. There is a United States Attorney's Office for each federal judicial district.

Victims and witnesses have important responsibilities in the judicial process. Your contribution, in time and energy, is very much appreciated by everyone in the United States Attorney's Office.

Knowing that you may experience feelings of confusion, frustration, fear, & anger as a result of the disruption of life which you have experienced, we hope that this information will be helpful.

If you have questions about your case, please feel free to contact the U.S. Attorney's Office. Contact names and numbers are listed on the back of this brochure.



Bill of Rights

Victims of federal criminal offenses are accorded certain rights under the Law. Those rights include:

1. The right to be treated with fairness and respect;
2. The right to be reasonably protected from the accused;
3. The right to be notified of court proceedings;
4. The right to be present at all public court proceedings, unless the court determines that the victim's testimony would be materially affected if he or she heard other trial testimony;
5. The right to confer with the Assistant U.S. Attorney assigned to the case;
6. The right to restitution, if applicable, and
7. The right to information about the conviction, sentencing, imprisonment & release of the offender.

Victim Impact Statements

Federal Prosecutors shall advocate fully to the court the right of a victim of a crime of violence or sexual abuse to make a statement or present information in relation to the offender's sentence if the victim is present and if the victim wishes to make a statement at the sentencing. The U.S. Probation Officer is required to prepare a Victim Impact Statement so that their pre-sentence report will fully reflect the effect of the crime upon victim.

Restitution

Five classes of Federal Crimes that must include mandatory restitution as a part of a defendant's punishment are:

- 1) Sex Crimes
- 2) Sexual Exploitation of Children
- 3) Telemarketing Fraud
- 4) Domestic Violence
- 5) Failure to Pay Child Support

The Court does, of course, have discretion in determining the manner in which the restitution is to be paid based on the economic circumstances of the defendant. The order is to be enforced by the U.S. Attorney "by all available and reasonable means."

Victim Compensation

Every state in the country operates a program to help pay for some of the expenses resulting from crimes involving violence or abuse. Victims of assault, rape, domestic violence, child abuse, drunk driving and other crimes involving personal injury may qualify for this assistance. A conviction of the offender is not required. Each state's program eligibility is slightly different. Check with the program in the state where the crime occurred to determine eligibility.

Services Provided by Victim/Witness Unit

Crime is a shattering experience that affects the lives of millions of Americans. It can destroy a person's sense of safety and security. Of paramount importance to crime victims and witnesses is their treatment by the criminal justice personnel, who should care about their suffering; enforce their rights and protections; offer support to help them heal; and hold the criminal accountable for the harm caused.

The U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney's Office in this district have taken several steps to make the participation by victims of crime and witnesses as trauma-free as possible.

The U.S. Attorney's Victim/Witness Unit provides direct services to crime victims. These services include, but are not limited to:

- .. Notification of case status throughout the criminal justice proceedings
- .. Emotional support through the court proceedings
- .. Referral to additional needed resources
- .. Assistance with State of Nebraska Crime Victim's Compensation Program
- .. Assistance in ensuring that you are afforded your rights as a crime victim.