

USAO Victim Witness Program

The U.S. Attorney's Offices within the U.S. Department of Justice established the Victim Witness Program in 1984. All victims and witnesses of federal crime receive assistance and protection in which they are entitled under the law.

Authority

Victim and Witness Protection Act 1982; Crime Control Act of 1990 and 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act a.k.a.: Crime Bill; Crime Victims' Rights Act, 2004.

What We Provide

The USAO's Victim-Witness program provides assistance to victims and witnesses of serious, violent federal crimes, those who have suffered physical, financial, or emotional traumas, or who have been threatened or intimidated, as follows:

- Assistance and services include victim notification regarding charges filed on the offender; arrest, detention or release of the defendant; on the status of the case which includes all court actions/schedules, any negotiated pleas, trial, sentencing date and sentence imposed.
- Information and referral to medical and/or social services agencies, to County Victim Compensation program and to local, private and public counseling services.
- Consultation with victims and witnesses regarding the opportunity to provide pretrial and victim impact statements containing information on any trauma or loss suffered.
- Supportive contact and consultation such as court orientation, escort, arrangements for hotels, travel, and other expenses employer/credit/victim compensation intervention.
- Preparation for victims and witnesses as to how to present verbal statements to the court at sentencing.
- Communication on behalf of victims and witnesses with agencies such as Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), tribal investigators, U.S. Probation, Bureau of Prisons and other public agencies involved in the case.
- Advice and encouragement to victims and gathering necessary documentation for restitution. Reimbursement for financial loss(es) caused by the defendant is an important aspect in repairing damage done to victims. The defendant may be ordered to pay for lost income, funeral expenses, and other expenses incurred from the crime committed by the defendant.
- Participation with the U.S. Probation Office to prepare Victim Impact Statement which may include an interview with the victim to obtain firsthand knowledge of the impact of the crime on the victim and/or community.
- Immediate emergency monetary assistance to threatened witnesses to guarantee their well-being and availability for trial, other court proceedings or activities related to an ongoing case.