If You Are Threatened Or Harassed

If anyone threatens you or you feel that you are being harassed because of your cooperation with this case, there are remedies available. Your safety is paramount. Please contact the investigating agent or the Victim-Witness Program immediately. They may discuss with you additional safety measures and assistance such as temporary restraining orders, possible relocation, or other appropriate referrals.

Other Assistance & Services

If you are a victim, you are entitled to:

- Notification of case events, usually by letter or E-mail, through the Victim Notification System. If the defendant is convicted and sentenced to the custody of the Bureau of Prisons, notification will continue regarding the defendant's release date, furlough, or escape. **REMINDER: please keep us informed of any address, E-mail, or telephone number changes.**
- Referrals to other agencies or professionals for counseling, shelter, and/or compensation.

If you are a victim or a witness, you are entitled to:

- A separate waiting area away from defendant and defense witnesses.
- Courtroom support.
- Information and assistance with travel, lodging, parking, and reimbursement for mandatory court appearances and pre-trial interviews.

A Federal Courthouse

Limited Confidentiality Statement

We are here to assist you as you go through the criminal justice process. However, you should know that we work as part of a team with the criminal prosecutor and the investigative case agent. We do our best to keep sensitive information confidential. As part of the team, there are times when we may need to share information you provide with the other team members. This is especially important if you share information regarding your safety, a medical emergency, information that relates to child abuse, and/or information that is critical to the investigation or prosecution of the case.

Contact Information

Vivian Van Vleet
Victim-Witness Program Manger
Southern District of Iowa
110 East Court Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309
1-800-848-0869

Susan Stewart-Lodmell
Victim-Witness Specialist
Southern District of Iowa—Branch Office
131 East 4th Street, Room 310, Davenport, Iowa 52801
1-888-464-8370

State Compensation Program
1-800-3735044
(515) 281-5044
State Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-942-0333
National Organization for Victim Assistance
800-TRY-NOVA
National Center for Victims of Crime
800-FYI-CALL

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE FOR FEDERAL CRIME VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

"Our Nation's highest ideals of compassion and justice demand that we protect the welfare of all victims." - Attorney General Alberto Gonzales

Office of the United States Attorney
Southern District of Iowa
Victim-Witness Program

Information for Victims and Witnesses of Federal Crime

The following information has been prepared to help answer questions that may arise. We have included information which will give you an understanding of how the Federal criminal justice system works.

The role of the United States Attorney's Office is to prosecute cases fairly and justly. Our actions on your behalf do not constitute an attorney-client relationship and we cannot give you legal advice. The interests of the United States may occasionally diverge from your interests as a victim.

Victims' Rights

The Crime Victims' Rights Act gives victims of offenses charged in Federal court the following rights:

• The right to be reasonably protected from the accused. • The right to reasonable, accurate, and timely notice of any public court proceeding involving the crime or of any release or escape of the accused. • The right not to be excluded from any such public court proceeding, unless the court, after receiving clear and convincing evidence, determines that testimony by the victim would be materially altered if the victim heard other testimony at that proceeding. • The right to be reasonably heard at any public proceeding in the district court involving release, plea, sentencing, or any parole proceeding. • The reasonable right to confer with the attorney for the Government in the case. • The right to full and timely restitution as provided in the law. • The right to proceedings free from unreasonable delay. • The right to be treated with fairness and with respect for the victim's dignity and privacy.

We will make our best efforts to ensure you are provided the rights described. You may seek the advice of an attorney with respect to these rights.

If you believe that an employee of the United States Attorney's Office failed to provide you with one or more of these rights, you may file an administrative complaint, as provided under 28 CFR § 45.10. Please contact the United States Attorney's Office to obtain information about these procedures.

The Criminal Justice Process

As the case moves through the Federal court system, there are several events that typically occur.

INVESTIGATION

ARREST

DETENTION HEARING (POSSIBLE)

The Government is seeking to detain of the defendant and may do so based on the statement of the prosecutor or by presenting witnesses and exhibits.

PRELIMINARY HEARING

A Judge determines if there is sufficient probable cause to charge the defendant. This only occurs if the defendant has not been charged by the grand jury.

or

GRAND JURY HEARING

A Grand Jury hears evidence in a non-public proceeding and may issue a formal charge called an Indictment.

An Arrest Warrant may be issued at this time.

ARRAIGNMENT

A defendant appears in court and hears the charge(s) against him/her. At this time, the defendant typically enters a plea of not guilty.

DISCOVERY, PLEA NEGOTIATIONS & MOTIONS

This may include hearings & rulings on motions concerning the admissibility of evidence, trial issues, or a possible guilty plea from the defendant.

TRIAL

The Government presents its case with witnesses, followed by the defendant's case. The trial generally results in a verdict by a jury.

PRE-SENTENCE INVESTIGATION & REPORT PREPARED

After a finding of guilt, a pre-sentence report is prepared for the judge by U.S. Probation, at which time you have the right to submit written victim impact statements.

SENTENCE

APPEAL

Restitution and Compensation

Victim Compensation

The Victim Compensation Program for the State of XXX helps cover expenses for victims of violent crime who have suffered physical or psychological injury. The Crime Victim Compensation Program may be able to reimburse you for crime related expenses such as medical care, mental health expenses, and lost wages due to crime related injuries. To obtain further information and an application, contact the Victim-Witness Coordinator listed on the back of this brochure.

Restitution

Under Federal law, restitution is mandatory for many (but not all) types of crimes. It is important for victims, who may be entitled to restitution, to keep a record of their losses, medical expenses, property damage and counseling expenses, with receipts when possible. This information will be needed by the probation department if the defendant is convicted and ordered to pay restitution.

The Emotional Impact Of Crime

Many victims of and witnesses to crime are emotionally affected by their experience and although everyone reacts differently, many people report common reactions such as:

- Anger
- Feelings of panic and/or anxiety
- Nightmares and sleep pattern changes
- Feelings of self-doubt, shame or guilt
- Reliving what happened
- Depression, difficulty concentrating
- Increased concern for personal safety and that of their family

Many people continue to have these responses for some time after the crime. The Victim/Witness Unit can assist you in finding appropriate support services.