

**YOUR RIGHTS
AND
RESPONSIBILITIES
AS A
CRIME VICTIM
AND
WITNESS**



This brochure is made available to you courtesy of the Nevada Advisory Council for Prosecuting Attorneys, the Nevada District Attorneys Association, and your local prosecutor's office.

Important Telephone Numbers

State of Nevada, Victim of Crimes Program	Southern Nevada Northern Nevada	(702) 486-2740 (775) 688-2900
Domestic Violence Hotline		(800) 500-1556
Nevada Parole and Probation Website: www.dps.nv.gov/pandp/	Southern Nevada Northern Nevada	(702) 486-3001 (775) 687-5040
Nevada Board of Parole Commissioners Website: www.parole.nv.gov	Southern Nevada Northern Nevada	(702) 486-4370 (775) 687-5049
Nevada Department of Corrections Website: www.doc.nv.gov		(775) 887-3284
Victim Information Notification Everyday (VINE)	Washoe County	(888) 268-8463
Clark Co. Victim Witness Assistance Center Clark County		(702) 455-4204
Crisis Call Center Hotline (Crisis Intervention; Suicide Prevention; Information and Referral; Abuse and Neglect Reporting for Children and Seniors; Sexual Assault Support Services)		(775) 784-8090; (800) 273-8255 (V/TTY)

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THE PROCESS BEGINS

What Should I Do If a Crime Has Occurred?

If you have not reported the crime, you must do so immediately by calling 911. Explain to the emergency dispatch officer what happened and if the suspect is still in the area. The dispatch officer will assign your call to the appropriate law enforcement agency to make a full report. *It is very important that you do not move, touch, or destroy any evidence of the crime, as the law enforcement officer will need to photograph it and take it into evidence.*

You will be asked to fill out a statement as to what happened. It is critical that you make this statement as complete as possible. If you have trouble writing, notify the law enforcement officer of this and he/she will arrange for someone to help you. In your statement, only include what you saw or know to be true—do not speculate. *It is very important that you put down any statements the suspect made to you before, during, or after the crime.* If you remember something after you have submitted your statement, you should fill out a supplemental statement and make sure it is given to the law enforcement officer who took your first statement, or the detective who has been assigned to handle the case. Even if you are not sure the information you have is important, it is better for you to fill out a supplemental statement and let the law enforcement officer or prosecutor determine whether it is necessary information. Often, cases have been lost because a witness did not give complete information to the law enforcement officer or prosecutor.

Your Role as a Victim or Witness

As a crime victim, you are essential for the prosecution of the defendant. However, you are not a formal party to the criminal proceeding. In a criminal proceeding, the state (or city) is the plaintiff, and the accused is the defendant. It is important that you realize the prosecutor has the discretion as to whether or not to proceed on criminal charges. Even if you do not want the defendant prosecuted, the prosecutor can proceed. The same is true if you want to prosecute and the prosecutor declines. Please keep in mind that you always have the option of filing a civil lawsuit against the defendant through a private attorney.

As a witness (non-victim), you have seen, heard, or know something about a crime that has been committed, and it is important that you be prepared to testify. Oftentimes a witness' reluctance to get involved results in a suspect not being charged, convicted, or punished.