

YOUR RIGHTS AS A VICTIM OF A CRIME



Courtesy of:
**SHERIFF
DENNIS M. LEMMA**
Seminole County Sheriff's Office

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VICTIMIZATION

No one wants or asks to be a victim of a crime. Through no fault of our own, whether young, senior, rich or poor, we are all potential targets.

When citizens become involved with law enforcement, the court system or other agencies as a victim, they are frequently faced with a variety of emotions. Without assistance, dealing with any or all of these emotions can be difficult or frustrating.

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office wants to ensure your recovery is speedy and your needs are met. Our Victim Services program was established to help you cope with the aftermath of crime.

WE CAN HELP WITH:

- Short-term crisis intervention for first and secondary victims.
- Referral to community agencies who may provide additional assistance.
- Assistance in filing Victim Compensation claims.

Services are provided
24 hours a day, 7 days
a week, to assist victims
and/or their families. Call
407-665-6922.



YOUR RIGHTS AS A VICTIM

- * To be informed of crisis intervention services, supportive counseling and social services agencies that can help you, including referrals to social service agencies.
- * Explanation concerning the stages of the Criminal Justice process, including your role, what the system expects from you, including your right to be consulted by the State Attorney in certain felony cases, regarding case disposition.

- * The right to have a Victim Advocate present during discovery depositions, and the right to be excused from depositions held at any correctional facility, unless you are currently incarcerated.
- * To be treated with dignity and compassion, and provided information concerning protection from intimidation. It is a third degree felony to threaten and intimidate victims and witnesses. Please contact your local law enforcement agency should this occur.
- * To be notified of the arrest, release, escape, and/or approval for community control or work release of the accused, in addition to information concerning court dates and procedures, including timely notification of scheduling changes.
- * To be advised of your right to a prompt and timely disposition of your case so far as it does not interfere with the rights of the accused
- * To be assisted by criminal justice agencies in prompt return of property unless there is a compelling need for law enforcement to retain it.
- * Access to general victim assistance: translator, transportation, and separate waiting rooms.
- * To be told of your rights to request and receive restitution and/or compensation for injuries sustained as a result of a crime, including assistance in filing Florida Crimes Compensation Claims. (1.800.226.6667)
- * To be heard, present, and informed at all crucial stages of the criminal justice system, including the submission of a victim impact statement, and access to some portions of the pre-sentence investigation report.
- * Victim may request assistance from law enforcement and the State Attorney's Office, in notifying employers/creditors of financial strain and absenteeism resulting from their victimization. Upon consent of the victim, the State Attorney may assert the rights of the victim.
- * An incarcerated victim has the right to be informed and to submit written statements at all crucial stages of the criminal/parole/juvenile proceedings.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A VICTIM (CONTINUED)

- * Victims of sexual offenses may request the courtroom be cleared in certain instances during the victim's testimony, in cases that involve the transmission of body fluids, the victim may request hepatitis and HIV testing of the accused.
- * Victims have the right to not be excluded from court proceedings, based solely on the fact that they are a witness.
- * To be informed of address confidentiality programs for victims of domestic violence and in certain instances, the right for victims to request exemption from disclosure, information considered public record.
- * In juvenile cases, minor victims may request at sentencing/disposition, that the defendant be required to change schools, if they attend the same school.
- * The right of a victim to request the presence of a Victim Advocate during the forensic medical examination. An Advocate from a certified rape crisis center shall be permitted to attend any forensic medical examination.
- * No law enforcement officer, prosecuting attorney, or government official shall ask or require a victim of a sexual offense to submit to a polygraph examination or other truth-telling device as a condition of the investigation.

For additional information and victim assistance,
contact:

Seminole County Sheriff's Office
Victim Services Department
407-665-6650

