

The Rights of Crime Victims

Wisconsin law provides crime victims
the following rights:

- To receive information from the investigating law enforcement agency about your rights as a crime victim.
- To be notified of the criminal charges issued by the District Attorney's Office and the procedure for prosecuting those charges.
- **To attend court proceedings, subject to any sequestration order.** The court may require victims to exercise this right by telephone or other available means, if the victim is incarcerated, under arrest, or committed to a treatment facility, and the victim does not have a representative.
- To be accompanied, upon request, to court proceedings by a service representative.
- To a speedy disposition of the case in order to minimize the length of time a victim must endure the stress of their responsibilities in connection with the case.
- To have his/her interests considered when the court is deciding whether to grant a continuance of any hearing in the case.
- To be provided with appropriate intercession services to ensure that employers of victims will cooperate with the criminal justice process in order to minimize loss of income or benefits resulting from court appearances.
- To have his/her interests considered by the court in determining whether to exclude persons from a preliminary hearing.
- To be provided with a safe and secure waiting area while attending court proceedings.
- To request, **in certain cases**, an order for and to be given the results of testing to determine the presence of sexually transmitted disease or of any strain of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- To have, at his or her request, the opportunity to consult with the district attorney concerning the case and possible outcomes of the prosecution, including potential plea agreements and sentencing recommendations. This right does not limit the obligation of the district attorney to exercise his or her discretion concerning the handling of any criminal charges against the defendant.
- To have, upon request, the opportunity at sentencing to make an oral statement or a written statement to be read in court, relevant to sentencing.
- To have the pre-sentence investigation writer, in cases in which a pre-sentence investigation is ordered, make a reasonable attempt to contact the victim.
- To request that the court order restitution, and to docket a civil judgment for unpaid restitution.
- To have, upon request, to receive information about the outcome of the case.
- To have any stolen or other personal property expeditiously returned by law enforcement agencies when no longer needed as evidence. If possible, all such property, except weapons, currency, contraband, property subject to evidentiary analysis and property the ownership of which is disputed, shall be returned to the owner within ten (10) days of being taken.
- To apply for financial assistance from the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Crime Victim Compensation Program, in certain cases. Assistance is available in violent crimes and does not cover property losses. To obtain more information about the Crime Victim Compensation, call 1-800-446-6564.
- To complain to the Department of Justice concerning the treatment of crime victims and to request review by the Crime Victims Rights Board of the complaint.

If you wish to exercise any of the above rights or have any questions, please contact the victim/witness office at (715) 395-1349.