

## Can I get someone to help me write a victim impact statement?

Any person can assist you, but it is important that the statement is in your own words. The Victim Support and Child Witness Service will also help you.

## What do I do if I can't write in English?

Contact the Victim Support and Child Witness Service. Staff can help you to write it in English. They can also arrange to have your statement translated from your language into English.

### STATEMENT GUIDE

To the presiding judge/magistrate

In the matter of: \_\_\_\_\_  
(offender's name)

Charge(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Before you: \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

Victim Impact Statement of:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(write your name here)

The following headings could be used:

Physical: \_\_\_\_\_

Emotional: \_\_\_\_\_

Financial: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Where you can find the Victim Support and Child Witness Service

### PERTH

**Victim Support and Child Witness Service**  
Level 2, District Court Building  
500 Hay Street  
PERTH WA 6000  
**Phone** 9425 2850  
**Fax** 9425 4428  
**Freecall** 1800 818 988  
**Email** vss@justice.wa.gov.au

### PEEL DISTRICT

Rockingham Justice Complex  
15-17 Whitfield Street  
ROCKINGHAM WA 6168  
**Phone** 9527 7699

### COUNTRY

**Albany**  
Albany Courthouse  
184 Stirling Terrace  
ALBANY WA 6330  
**Phone** 9845 5222

**Broome**  
Kimberley Regional Offices  
2 Weld Street  
BROOME WA 6276  
**Phone** 9194 2400

**Bunbury**  
Ground Floor, Bunbury Courthouse  
65 Wittenoom Street  
BUNBURY WA 6230  
**Phone** 9781 4294

**Carnarvon**  
Carnarvon Courthouse  
Cnr Robinson Street and  
Babbage Island Road  
CARNARVON WA 6701  
**Phone** 9941 5566

**Derby**  
Derby Courthouse  
Loch Street  
DERBY WA 6728  
**Phone** 9191 2274

**Esperance**  
Esperance Courthouse  
100 Dempster Street  
ESPERANCE WA 6450  
**Phone** 9071 6318

**Victims of Crime**  
**Website** [www.victimsofcrime.wa.gov.au](http://www.victimsofcrime.wa.gov.au)

**Department of the Attorney General**  
**Phone** 13 67 57 **Website** [www.dotag.wa.gov.au](http://www.dotag.wa.gov.au)

**Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions**  
Level 1, International House  
26 St Georges Terrace  
PERTH WA 6000  
**Phone** 9425 3999  
**Country callers** 1800 264 144  
**Fax** 9425 3600

Mandurah Courthouse  
333 Pinjarra Road  
MANDURAH WA 6210  
**Phone** 9583 1120

**Geraldton**  
Geraldton Courthouse  
Marine Terrace  
GERALDTON WA 6530  
**Phone** 9964 4816

**Kalgoorlie**  
Kalgoorlie Courthouse  
208 Hannan Street  
KALGOORLIE WA 6430  
**Phone** 9093 5334

**Karratha**  
Karratha Courthouse  
Balmoral Road  
KARRATHA WA 6714  
**Phone** 9143 1877

**Kununurra**  
Kununurra Courthouse  
94 Coolibah Drive  
KUNUNURRA WA 6743  
**Phone** 9166 7130

**Northam**  
Northam Courthouse  
118 Wellington Street  
NORTHAM WA 6401  
**Phone** 9622 7017

**Port Hedland**  
South Hedland Justice Complex  
Hawke Place  
SOUTH HEDLAND WA 6722  
**Phone** 9172 9307



# Preparing a Victim Impact Statement

## What is the Victim Support and Child Witness Service?

The Victim Support and Child Witness Service is part of the Department of the Attorney General and assists victims of crime. It provides counselling, information and support at court.

The Victim Support and Child Witness Service can also assist you with a victim impact statement and give you information about criminal injuries compensation.

## What is the purpose of a victim impact statement?

A victim impact statement tells the judge or magistrate about how a crime has affected you.

It may be taken into account when the offender is sentenced.

As the State prosecutes offenders, a victim impact statement may be the only opportunity you have to tell the court how a crime affected you.

For many people, it is important they have a say about something that has had a major impact on their lives.

## Do I have to make a victim impact statement?

No. It is your choice whether you make a victim impact statement.

You may be asked by the police, court or prosecutor if you want to prepare a victim impact statement.

Or you can inform the court or prosecutor that you want to make a statement. The Victim Support and Child Witness Service can help you to do this.

## When is a victim impact statement used?

It is used if the offender pleads guilty or is found guilty by the court.

The prosecutor presents your written victim impact statement to the court before the judge or magistrate decides the sentence. You do not have to attend.

Sentencing can occur immediately after the offender is found guilty, or the judge or magistrate may set another time for sentencing.

## Can I make a verbal statement?

Usually, but this will need to be discussed with the prosecutor. They will then consult with the judge or magistrate who will make a formal decision.

## Who gets to see my victim impact statement?

Three copies go to the court. One is for the judge or magistrate, one is for the prosecutor, and the offender's lawyer also gets a copy. The offender usually gets to see your victim impact statement.

Sometimes the prosecutor may read some or all of your statement to the court. The judge or magistrate may also refer to your victim impact statement when sentencing. This means that other people in the court (which may include the media) can hear your statement.

## How long should it be?

It should be concise and cover all important points included.

## What do I include in my statement?

You might like to include:

- details of any physical injuries and the effect of these injuries on your life
- details of the emotional impact of the crime on you and your family
- where the crime has resulted in death, you may wish to talk about the deceased person and the life they led

- information about what your life was like before the crime if it has changed (including any career changes or loss of future prospects)
- details of the financial impact of the crime, for example, lost wages, medical or counselling expenses, transportation costs, damage to property
- any request for compensation or restitution to be considered by the court
- any other information you think is important.

## Is there anything I should not include in my statement?

You should not include:

- anything that is abusive or offensive
- details of the crime, as this is contained in your police statement
- how you would like the offender to be sentenced
- anything that is factually inaccurate.

## How do I set out the information?

There is no set style for writing a victim impact statement. It is important, however, that you write it in your own way and sign and date it. See the suggested guide over the page.

## How do I lodge my victim impact statement?

The Victim Support and Child Witness Service can forward your victim impact statement to the court for you. If you would like to lodge it yourself, you will need to deliver your original victim impact statement and two copies to the Magistrates Court or Children's Court before the date the offender is due to be sentenced.

If the offender is being sentenced in the District or Supreme Court, your victim impact statement must be delivered to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (see back panel for the address).