

# Nottinghamshire Police

## Victim Information



### Victim Information Pack

A guide to all the services and support available to you from reporting through to trial.

Officer:

Contact details:

Occurrence number:

## **Introduction**

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Being a victim of crime can be a traumatic and sometimes life changing event. This pack aims to give you the information you need to help you cope and recover, including links to support agencies and networks.

## **What is the Victims' Code?**

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Nottinghamshire Police strives to put victims of crime first. The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime entitles all victims to support from the criminal justice agencies. You are also entitled to support if you are a close relative of someone who has been killed as a result of a crime.

## **What can I expect when I report a crime?**

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Under the Victims' Code, you are entitled to receive the following from police:

- A written acknowledgement that you have reported a crime, including the basic details of the offence;
- An enhanced service if you are a victim of a serious crime, a persistently targeted victim or a vulnerable or intimidated victim;
- A needs assessment to help us to work out what support you need;
- Information on what to expect from the Criminal Justice System - (the courts);
- A referral to an organisation that supports victims of crime;
- Information about the police investigation, e.g. if a suspect is arrested, charged and has any bail conditions;
- The opportunity to make a Victim Personal Statement, where appropriate, to explain how the crime has affected you;
- An update on whether the suspect is to be prosecuted or not, or given an out of court disposal (such as a conditional caution);
- Information about how you can seek a review of Police and Crown Prosecution Service decisions not to prosecute, to discontinue, or offer no evidence in all proceedings;
- Information about the time, date, location and outcome of court hearings, if you are asked to give evidence in court;
- Information about what to expect and support that might be used if you give evidence in court;
- Information on the Victim Contact Scheme if the offender is sentenced to 12 months or more for certain violent or sexual offences;
- Information about Restorative Justice and how you can take part;
- The opportunity to make a complaint if you do not receive the information and services you are entitled to, and to receive a full response from the relevant service provider.

## Victim Needs Assessment

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Upon reporting a crime the police will conduct a needs assessment. By assessing your needs they will consider enhanced support if you are a victim of serious crime, persistently targeted, vulnerable or intimidated.

## Making a Victim Personal Statement (VPS)

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If you have provided the officer with a written witness statement, you will be offered the opportunity to make a Victim Personal Statement.

A Victim Personal Statement is a written account. It's your way of telling people working in the Criminal Justice System about the crime you have suffered and the impact it has had on you, whether physically, emotionally, psychologically, financially or in any other way. Your Victim Personal Statement gives you a voice and helps the court to understand what you have been through.

Making a Victim Personal Statement is voluntary. Before deciding to make a Victim Personal Statement, you will be advised by the police that if the case reaches court, your Victim Personal Statement will be seen by the Defence. You may also be asked questions about your Victim Personal Statement during the trial.

Once the Victim Personal Statement is completed and signed it cannot be changed or withdrawn if you have second thoughts about what you have said. However, you may submit a further Victim Personal Statement to add to/or clarify your original Victim Personal Statement.

Your Victim Personal Statement can include information such as:

- Any physical or psychological injury you may have suffered.
- The impact on your family.
- How your quality of life has changed on a day-to-day basis.
- If you are worried about the alleged offender being given bail.
- If you feel the crime was racially motivated or that your faith, sexuality or disability played a part in the crime.
- If you need or are receiving additional support as a result of the crime.
- If you intended to claim from the alleged offender for any injury, loss or damage.

Subject to permission of the court, you can read your Victim Personal Statement out in court or have it read out on your behalf if the defendant is found or pleads guilty.

## Business Impact Statement

If your business or enterprise has been the victim of a crime the Business Impact Statement allows you to detail how the crime has affected your business in terms of the direct financial impact (assets stolen or damaged), indirect financial impact (loss of custom etc.) and non-financial impact (reputation). The making of a Business Impact Statement does not prevent you from making a separate Victim Personal Statement detailing how the crime has impacted on you personally. The officer in the case may arrange for the completion of this statement.

## What if the police can't identify who committed the crime?

Not all crimes are detected. Even so, your crime will be investigated. Your investigating officer will agree with you how frequently and by what means you prefer to be updated. You will be told when the investigation has come to a close or a development has occurred.

## What happens if I have to go to court?

If your case goes to court, you may be a witness in the trial. If your case does not go to court, you should be told the reason for this decision.

If the case goes to trial, you will be assigned a Witness Care Officer. They will keep you up to date about what is happening. This includes information about the dates and locations of court hearings and whether you will be required to give evidence.



Your Witness Care Officer will explain what to expect when going to court and can arrange a court familiarisation visit with the Witness Service, if required. The Witness Care Officer will support you until the case is finished. The Witness Service will ensure that you have a copy of your statement on the day of the trial, prior to you giving your evidence. This is to act as a reminder of what you have said in your statement, but you will not be allowed to take the statement into the court room.

If you have any problems or concerns about going to court, you must contact **101** and ask for the Witness Care Unit or contact your investigating officer.

## Help in court - special measures

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Special measures are arrangements which can be put in place to help you, if you are a vulnerable or intimidated victim, to help you to give your best possible evidence in. Please talk to the officer in your case, your Witness Care Officer or other point of contact for more information. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) will apply for any special measures on your behalf, but the Court will make the final decision about whether the special measures that have been requested can be used.

The special measures available to vulnerable and intimidated victims, with the agreement of the court, include:

- **Screens** - so that you cannot be seen by the defendant whilst giving evidence.
- **Live link** - you may be able to give evidence during the trial from a room outside the court room or a suitable location outside the court building, via live TV link. Screens can also be applied for, to block the defendant's view of television monitors in court.
- **Evidence given in private** - members of the public are excluded from the court room whilst you give evidence.
- **Removal of wigs and gowns** - used at Crown Court. Judge and lawyers remove their wigs and gowns to create a less formal environment. This is mostly used for young witnesses.
- **Video Recorded Interview as Evidence in Chief** - in certain circumstances the police will obtain your account by video interview rather than a written statement. The prosecution can apply for this video interview to be used in place of you physically giving evidence in court.
- **An Intermediary** - having someone to help you understand questions when being interviewed or giving evidence. Intermediaries explain questions and answers to help you to understand without changing the substance of the evidence.
- **Aids to communication** - these may be permitted to help a witness to give evidence. This could include using an interpreter or someone to communicate for you. It could also cover the use of a communications aid or technique. Whatever aids are allowed they must be independently verified and understood by the court.

## Alternatives to going to court

Dealing with a crime out of the court allows the police to deal proportionately with certain crimes. Out of court disposals are not suitable for more serious cases and for those where the offender does not admit their responsibility. They would also not normally be considered for those who repeatedly commit crimes.

There are a number of out of court disposals available for the police to consider:

- Community Resolutions
- Simple Adult Cautions or Youth Cautions (for under 18s).
- Adult Conditional Cautions or Youth Conditional Cautions (for under 18s).
- Penalty Notices for Disorder or Cannabis Warnings

## Young Victims

If you are a victim who is under the age of 18, you and usually your parent or guardian will be automatically entitled to receive an enhanced service.

As a young victim, you will be given the same rights as an adult victim. Your parent or guardian may be updated with the progress of the case, if you prefer. As a young victim, you are able to have your statement video recorded to make it easier for you to tell the police what happened. Making a video recorded statement may also mean that you do not have to repeat this evidence in court. However, you can choose to give evidence at court if you would prefer.

As part of your special measures, Nottinghamshire Police can apply to the courts to make giving evidence easier for you. Two of these special measures are used mainly for young victims:

- Giving evidence in a different room by video link.
- Judges and solicitors removing their wigs and gowns in court.

Further arrangements which you are entitled to:

- Meeting with the CPS advocate wherever possible to ask about the court process;
- Ask to use a different entrance; and
- Wait in a separate area.

Just ask the officer in charge of your case or your Witness Care Officer. The Nottinghamshire Police website also has information on what to expect when going to court for both you as a victim and your parent/guardian. Further advice can be obtained by contacting Nottingham Victim Care on 0800 304 7575 or email [admin@nottsvictimcare.org.uk](mailto:admin@nottsvictimcare.org.uk)

## **Support for victims: Nottinghamshire Victim CARE Service**

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Nottinghamshire Victim CARE is a free and confidential service available to all victims of crime and anti-social behaviour in Nottinghamshire.

As a victim, if you report a crime to the police, they will ask if you would like to talk to Victim CARE about any help you might need to manage the impact the crime has had on you. If you agree they will pass your details onto Victim CARE.

Victims do not however have had to report a crime to the police to impact the crime has had on you. If you agree, they will pass your details onto Victim CARE.

You do not have to report a crime to the police to access the service and you can choose to contact the service at a later date, if you wish.

A team of experience caseworkers are available at Victim CARE to provide you with enhanced information and support designed around your individual needs. This may include:

- Emotional and or practical support or advocacy;
- A dedicated case worker providing one to one support;
- Outreach and drop in surgeries; and
- Access to restorative justice services arranged by their dedicated practitioners.

**For more information or to contact Nottinghamshire Victim CARE:**

**Call 0800 304 7575**

**Email: [admin@nottsvictimcare.org.uk](mailto:admin@nottsvictimcare.org.uk)**

**Web: [www.nottsvictimcare.org.uk](http://www.nottsvictimcare.org.uk)**

**Opening hours: 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday  
9am to 5pm Saturday**



## Support for victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence

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If you have been a victim of **domestic violence or abuse** the officer in charge of your case will ask you if you wish to be referred to specialist independent support, which may include help from an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA). You can also get help by calling the free 24 hour domestic and sexual violence helpline number on page ten of this booklet.

If you have been a victim of **sexual violence** the officer in charge of your case will ask you if you wish to be referred to specialist independent support such as the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), which is also called the Topaz Centre, or the Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Service, or ISVA. Both the Topaz Centre and the ISVA Service are independent from the police and offer specialist support tailored to meet individual victims' needs, including advice and access to counselling.

## Support for Bereaved Relatives

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If you are a relative bereaved by homicide your Family Liaison Officer will ask you if you wish to be referred to a specialist independent support from the Homicide Service.

## Restorative Justice

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Restorative Justice gives victims an opportunity to tell the offender exactly how they feel about what has happened - this may be face to face or indirectly via a third person. The victim may also have an opportunity to ask the offender questions which can help victims to have closure.

Restorative Justice support is provided as part of the Nottinghamshire Victim CARE service. The process is voluntary, requiring consent from both the victim and the offender.

Restorative Justice is available at various stages of the criminal justice process including: after arrest, after conviction or even once the offender has been released.

For more information and to get advice about Restorative Justice contact Nottinghamshire Victim CARE:

Call 0800 304 7575

## Victims' Right to Review

When Nottinghamshire Police decide not to prosecute a suspect in an investigation, victims of crime who are not satisfied have the right to challenge the decision. The purpose of a review is not to apportion blame but to secure justice and when identified, highlight possible improvements to decision making.

Any victim in a qualifying case where a decision is made not to prosecute is entitled to seek a review of that decision. To find out if you qualify to request a review your investigating officer will be able to advise you.

The right of a victim to request a review arises where the police:

- Make a decision not to bring proceedings.
- Make a decision that the case does not meet the minimum requirements for referral.

You have the right to request a review within three months of being notified of the decision not to prosecute.

There are a number of reasons why no further action may be taken, including insufficient evidence or where taking matters further is not in the public interest.

You will be updated with the reasons why this decision has been made by the investigating officer.

A review will be allocated to a Review Officer of Inspector or more senior rank, dependent on the nature of the investigation.

To request a formal review of a case, please contact our Right to Review service direct via email at [vrr.contact@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:vrr.contact@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk), ensuring you provide your name, incident number and contact number and brief overview of the case you wish to be reviewed.

Remember, requesting a review is not a complaint against the service you have received. However, if you do have a complaint or concern relating to the conduct of any Nottinghamshire Police employee, please visit our Complaints and Compliments page on our website at: [www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/site-page/complaints](http://www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/site-page/complaints)

In many cases, decisions about what action to take are made by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). If the decision to take no further action was made by the CPS, then Nottinghamshire Police are not able to review that decision.

Further details can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2lJR9a>

## For further information and support agencies

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If you have been a victim of any crime and would like support (whether you have reported it to the police or not) call **Nottinghamshire Victim CARE: 0800 304 7575** or visit **[www.nottsvictimcare.org.uk](http://www.nottsvictimcare.org.uk)**

### **For support around domestic or sexual abuse:**

**Women's 24 hour free domestic and sexual violence helpline: 0808 800 0340**

Hearing impaired people can make contact via textphone on 18001 followed by the helpline number

Instant interpretation is available from Language Line: 0808 800 0341

**Men's domestic abuse service provided by Equation: 0115 960 5556**

Men's domestic abuse helpline (national): 0808 801 0327

**Sexual Assault Referral Centre (Topaz Centre): 0800 085 9993 (24 hour) or [www.topazcentre.org](http://www.topazcentre.org)**

Provides crisis support for men and women who have been sexually assaulted or raped, including forensic examinations and access to healthcare and other follow on support.

**Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVA): 0115 950 8713 or [www.nottssvss.org.uk](http://www.nottssvss.org.uk)**

ISVAs provide practical, informational and emotional help for adults including advocacy and support through the criminal justice process. Support may be with housing, finances, work or college or reporting to the police.

The Survivor Support Service is included within the ISVA service and provides practical support to survivors of non-recent childhood abuse who were let down by institutions.

### **For specialist sexual violence counselling:**

Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support (SVS) services: 0115 941 0440 or [www.nottssvss.org.uk](http://www.nottssvss.org.uk)

ISAS (Nottinghamshire residents only): 0115 824 0314 or [www.isas-notts.org.uk](http://www.isas-notts.org.uk)

S.H.E. UK (Nottinghamshire residents only): 01623 622 916 or [www.she-uk.org.uk](http://www.she-uk.org.uk)

**Other support for victims of crime:**

If you are worried about forced marriage: 0207 008 0151

Restorative justice – call Nottinghamshire Victim CARE: 0800 304 7575

**Call Crimestoppers to report a crime anonymously: 0800 555 111**

**Register your property free: [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com)**

**Join Nottinghamshire Alert: [www.nottinghamshirealert.co.uk](http://www.nottinghamshirealert.co.uk)**

**Join the business alert community: [www.nottsbusinesswatch.co.uk](http://www.nottsbusinesswatch.co.uk)**

**Report fraud and online crime: [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)**

**Your notes:**

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To speak to us call **101** or in an emergency dial **999**