

Victims Assistance Services

The Victim Assistance Program exists to provide assistance to crime victims and their families. Services provided include:

- ◆ Crisis counseling/short term counseling
- ◆ Criminal justice support
 - ◆ Criminal justice system information
 - ◆ Referral to assigned detectives
 - ◆ Status of case information
- ◆ Information & referral to local social service providers
- ◆ Notification & assistance in filing for Crime Victims' Compensation
- ◆ Assistance with evidence return
- ◆ Personal advocacy
- ◆ Training to law enforcement, community groups and other agencies

Contact Information

Richland Hills Police Department
Victim Assistance 817-616-3780

North Richland Hills Police Department
Victim Assistance 817-427-7007

Haltom City Police Department
Victim Assistance 817-222-7071

Watauga Police Department
Victim Assistance 817-514-5870

NOTICE TO ADULT VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family violence means the intentional use or threat of physical force by a member of a family or household against another member of the family or household. Family includes individuals related by blood or marriage and household means a unit composed of persons living together in the same dwelling, whether or not they are related. Dating violence means an act by an individual against another with whom the individual has or has had a dating relationship (a continuing relationship of a romantic or intimate nature) that is a threat of or is intended to result in bodily injury, assault or sexual assault.

It is a crime for any person to cause you any physical injury or harm even if that person is a member or former member of your family or household.

Please tell the investigating officer if you, your child, or any other household member has been injured; or if you feel you are going to be in danger when the officer leaves.

You have the right to:

ASK the local prosecutor to file a criminal complaint against the person committing family violence; and apply to a court for an order to protect you (you should consult a legal aid office, a prosecuting attorney, or a private attorney). If a family or household member assaults you and is arrested, you may request that a Magistrate's Order for Emergency Protection be issued. Please inform the investigating officer if you want an Order of Emergency Protection. You need not be present when the Order is issued. For example, the court can enter an order that:

- ◆ The abuser not commit further acts of violence;
- ◆ The abuser not threaten, harass, or contact you at home;
- ◆ Directs the abuser to leave your household; and/or
- ◆ Establishes temporary custody of children and directs the abuser not to interfere with the children or property.

A violation of certain provisions of court related protection (such as 1 and 2 above) may be a felony.

What is a Magistrates Order for Emergency Protection?

If the abuser is arrested, at the time of arraignment, the magistrate may grant an Order of Emergency Protection. The Order may contain items as stated earlier, is good for 31 to 91 days and supersedes any other court order that may be in place. It will be mandatory that an Order be issued if there is serious bodily injury or if a weapon is used during the assault. Law enforcement can enforce a violation of this Order.

What is a Protective Order?

The Protective Order is issued by a family court and may contain items 1-4 stated earlier. You may obtain a Protective Order by filing an application with the District Attorney's office in the county in which you reside. If you are in the process of a divorce, your private attorney must assist you in filing for a Protective Order. The Protective Order may be good for up to two years and can supersede any other court orders currently in place. Law Enforcement can enforce a violation of this Order.

A Protective Order can deter violence and provide law enforcement and courts additional authority to intervene in family violence cases but it is not a shield that truly stops the next violent act from occurring.

The procedure for obtaining a Protective Order from the District Attorney (of the county in which you reside) is as follows:

Tarrant County:

*District Attorney Protective Order unit
200 East Weatherford, 3rd Floor
Ft. Worth, Texas 76196
(817) 884-1623*

There is no fee to the applicant. You must however bring a Valid ID, address of person Order is against, and a copy of divorce decree (if applicable)

What is a temporary Ex Parte Order?

A temporary Ex Parte Order is issued at the time an application for a Protective Order is completed. This Order may contain items 1-4 stated earlier and is good for 20 days. This Order is not enforceable by police officers.

What is a Restraining Order?

A Restraining Order is a civil order issued against a non-family member to prevent a person from engaging in certain behaviors, i.e. having contact with the complainant, going to certain places, etc. The Restraining Order is valid for the period specified on the Order and is not enforceable by police officers.

Most violent relationships become more dangerous and more violent over time, not less violent. If you feel you are in danger, please contact one of the resources in this pamphlet for further information about your options. No one deserves to be hurt.

Crime Victim's Compensation

Crime Victims' Compensation is a division of the Attorney General's Office. The program reimburses innocent victims of violent crime for some out-of-pocket expenses they suffer as a result of the crime.

Crime Victims' Compensation is available to pay the amount of expense reasonably and necessarily incurred for:

- ◆ Medical, counseling, prescription and rehabilitative services
- ◆ Partial loss of earnings because of a disability resulting from personal injury
- ◆ Child care for minor children to enable a victim or spouse of a deceased victim to continue employment
- ◆ Funeral and burial expenses
- ◆ Reasonable costs associated with crime scene cleanup
- ◆ Reasonable replacement costs for clothing, bedding, or other property taken as evidence or rendered unusable as a result of the criminal investigation.
- ◆ Loss of wages and travel reimbursement due to participation in, or attendance at, the investigation, prosecutorial and judicial process
- ◆ Relocation expenses for victims of family violence and certain victims of sexual assault.

Reimbursement for property damage or loss is not an eligible expense.

In order to qualify for Crime Victims' Compensation:

- ◆ The crime must be reported within a reasonable period of time that does not impede the investigation and prosecution.
- ◆ A claim must be filed within three years unless good cause can be shown as to why the claim was not filed.
- ◆ The victim must cooperate with law enforcement and prosecution efforts.
- ◆ The victim must be the innocent victim of a violent crime who suffers personal injury.

The Victim Assistance Program will assist you in applying for benefits from Crime Victims' Compensation. Upon request, we will provide you with the claim form, will send the claim form and required documentation to CVC, and notify service providers that a claim has been applied for and the status. Please allow us to assist you in obtaining these benefits if you feel that you qualify.

Rights of Crime Victims

As defined in Article 56, Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, a victim of a violent crime is someone who: (1) has suffered personal injury or death as a result of criminally injurious conduct, or who has been the victim of a crime involving sexual assault, kidnapping, or aggravated robbery; (2) is the close relative (spouse, parent, brother, sister, or adult child) of a victim; or (3) is the guardian of a victim. A victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system:

- 1) the right to receive from law enforcement agencies adequate protection from harm and threats of harm arising from cooperation with prosecution efforts;
- 2) the right to have the magistrate take your safety and that of your family into consideration when bail is being considered;
- 3) the right, if you so request to be informed of relevant court proceedings and of those court proceedings that have been cancelled or rescheduled prior to the event and to be informed of appellate proceedings;
- 4) If you so request, the right to information about procedures in the criminal investigation of your case by law enforcement officials and about general procedures in the criminal justice system, including plea bargaining, restitution, appeals, and parole, from the prosecutor's office;
- 5) the right to provide pertinent information to a probation department conducting a presentencing investigation concerning the impact of the offense of the victim and his family by testimony, written statement, or any other manner prior to any sentencing of the offender;
- 6) the right to receive information about the Texas Crime Victims' Compensation Fund that provides financial assistance to victims of violent crimes and, the payment for a medical examination under Article 56.06 for a victim of sexual assault, and when requested, referral to available social services agencies that may offer additional assistance.

- 7) the right to be informed, upon request, of parole procedures, to participate in the parole process, to be notified, if requested, of parole proceedings concerning a defendant in the victim's case, to provide to the Board of Pardons and Paroles for inclusion in the defendant's file information to be considered by the board prior to the parole of any defendant convicted of any crime subject to this subchapter, and to be notified, if requested, of the defendant's release;
- 8) the right to a separate and secure waiting area before and during court proceedings. If a separate waiting area is not available, other safeguards should be taken to minimize the victim's contact with the offender and the offender's relatives and witnesses, before and during court proceedings;
- 9) The right to prompt return of any property that is no longer required as evidence;
- 10) If requested the right to have prosecuting attorney notify your employer that the need for your testimony may involve your absence from work;
- 11) the right to counseling, on request, regarding AIDS, and HIV infection, and testing for AIDS and HIV related infections if the offense is a sexual offense;
- 12) the right to request victim-offender mediation coordinated by the Victim Services Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice;
- 13) the right to complete a Victim Impact Statement, detailing the emotional, physical and financial impact that the crime has had on you and your family and to have that statement considered by the judge prior to sentencing and/or entry of a plea bargain and by the parole board prior to taking any parole action;
- 14) The right to a forensic medical examination if the sexual assault is reported to the law enforcement agency within 96 hours of the assault.

A victim, guardian or a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim is entitled to the right to be present at all public court proceedings related to the offense, subject to the approval of the judge in the case.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Harris Methodist Hospital HEB	817-685-4000
Baylor Grapevine Hospital	817-481-1588
Cook's Children's (Ft. Worth)	817-885-4000
John Peter Smith	817-921-3431
Harris Methodist (Ft. Worth)	817-882-3333
North Hills Hospital	817-255-1000

RESOURCES

Alcoholics Anonymous	817-332-3533
Alliance for Children	817-427-3110
Area Agency on Aging	817-258-8081
All Church Home for Children	817-335-4673
Catholic Charities	817-282-6646
Child Support Enforcement	817-884-1475
Family Matters Counseling	817-731-8839
Information & Referral	211
Lawyer Referral Services	817-336-4101
Legal Aid of North Texas	817-336-3943
Mental Health / Mental Retardation	817-335-3022
Mission Central	817-595-0011
Mosaic Family Services	214-821-5393
Parenting Center	817-332-6348
Tarrant County District Attorney	
Felony Cases	817-884-1400
Misdemeanor Cases	817-884-3535
Protective Orders	817-884-1623
Victim Assistance	817-884-2740
Women's Center of Tarrant County	
Rape Crisis	817-927-2737
Victim Services	817-927-4039
Safe Haven	
FW Emergency Shelter	817-535-6464
ARL Emergency Shelter	817-460-5566
FW Counseling Center	817-536-5496
ARL Resource Center	817-548-0583
Board of Pardons & Parole	800-84VICTIM
Child/Senior Abuse Hotline	800-252-5400
Crime Victim's Clearinghouse	800-252-3423
Crime Victim's Compensation	800-983-9933
Domestic Violence Hotline	800-799-SAFE
Family Violence Legal Line	800-374-HOPE
Runaway Hotline	888-580-HELP
VINE (toll free notification)	877-894-8463
Suicide and Crisis Center	800-692-4039
Texas Youth Hotline	800-210-2278

Victim Assistance

Information

An Assistance Program for Victims and Family Survivors of Violent Crime



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Report Number

Reporting Officer