

Office of the  
Director of Public Prosecutions

## What information should not be included in a victim impact statement?

The prosecutor in your case is entitled to strike through and remove parts of your victim impact statement if it includes:

- details of the offence itself
- details of other crimes committed by the offender
- any medical diagnosis that does not have supporting documents from a medical practitioner
- anything that is factually incorrect
- your opinion of the personal characteristics of the offender
- comment on how the offender should be punished;
- offensive language

The prosecutor will determine whether your victim impact statement is suitable to be provided to the court. You should contact the prosecutor as soon as possible if you are worried that your victim impact statement will not be provided to the court.

## Will I have to read my statement out in court?

No. The prosecutor usually gives your statement to the judge. The prosecutor may read out sections of your statement or draw the judge's attention to particular points.

If you wish to read your statement to the court, let the prosecutor know. The judge may allow you to read the statement to the court. Sometimes, however, the prosecutor decides that it would be best to just tell the court some details from your statement.

## Who can support me while I write my statement?

Writing about your experience may be difficult. Victim Assist Queensland can help link you to an appropriate support person who can be with you to talk through any difficult emotions you may feel while writing your statement. They can be contacted on **1300 546 587**.

## Further information

If you have any questions or need help, contact **Victim Assist Queensland on 1300 546 587** or the ODPP in your region.

### Freecall

P: 1800 673 428

### Brisbane

P: (07) 3035 1122  
[ODPPVictimLiaisonSupervisor@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVictimLiaisonSupervisor@justice.qld.gov.au)

### Beenleigh

P: (07) 3081 2300  
[ODPPVLOBeenleigh@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOBeenleigh@justice.qld.gov.au)

### Cairns

P: (07) 4038 5731  
[ODPPVLOCairns@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOCairns@justice.qld.gov.au)

### Ipsswich

P: (07) 3470 7419  
[ODPPVLOIpsswich@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOIpsswich@justice.qld.gov.au)

### Maroochydore

P: (07) 5376 5200  
[ODPPVLOMaroochy@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOMaroochy@justice.qld.gov.au)

### Rockhampton

P: (07) 4921 6227  
[ODPPVLORockhampton@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLORockhampton@justice.qld.gov.au)

### Southport

P: (07) 5675 7000  
[ODPPVLOSouthport@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOSouthport@justice.qld.gov.au)

### Toowoomba

P: (07) 4591 4758  
[ODPPVLOToowoomba@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOToowoomba@justice.qld.gov.au)

### Townsville

P: (07) 4781 8934  
[ODPPVLOTownsville@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOTownsville@justice.qld.gov.au)

ODPP-#31623-v3B May 2019



# Making a victim impact statement

## Information for victims and their families

If you have been the victim of a crime, you have the right to tell the court about how the crime has affected you. You can do this in one of three ways:

- 1) Prosecutor's submissions.
- 2) Sworn evidence.
- 3) A victim impact statement.



## What is a victim impact statement?

A victim impact statement allows a victim to explain the effect a violent crime or sexual offence has had on them. It is in addition to the written and signed statement that the victim has given the police. Where the statement given to police describes the events surrounding the violent crime or sexual offence that has caused harm to the victim, a victim impact statement explains how that violent crime has affected the life of the victim.

## Who can make a victim impact statement?

You can make a victim impact statement if you have suffered harm because:

- a violent crime or sexual offence has been committed against you;
- a violent crime or sexual offence has been committed against an immediate family member;
- you are a dependant of someone who has had a violent crime or sexual offence committed against them;
- you went to the aid of a victim of violent crime or sexual offence.

## Why should I make one?

It will help the judge or magistrate understand how you have been affected by the crime. If the person accused of the crime is found guilty after trial or pleads guilty, the judge can consider the effects on you when passing sentence.

Having the impact of the crime described in court is a right guaranteed by law. It gives you a chance to take an active part in the criminal justice process.

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

No, it's your choice. If you decide not to make one, you can still tell the prosecutor about how the crime has affected you.

## When do I need to make a victim impact statement?

A victim impact statement is only used at a sentence hearing. It is important that the information contained in your statement is as current as possible when it is placed before the sentencing judge. For that reason, you may wish to prepare a victim impact statement closer to the time when the matter is to proceed to hearing.

You will need to provide our Office with your victim impact statement in a timely manner. You should discuss the exact timeframe with the prosecutor or your victim liaison officer if you are planning on writing a victim impact statement.

## How do I make a victim impact statement?

You need to write down the details of what you have suffered as a result of the crime. Remember, you shouldn't describe how the crime happened – the prosecutor will do that. Stick to information about how the crime has affected your life.

It is important that the statement is in your own words, although someone else can assist you with writing it (e.g. Victim Assist Queensland). You must sign and date the statement once you have completed it. If you require any help with writing your statement, you should talk to a staff member of the ODPP.

## Who will read or hear my statement?

Staff from the ODPP preparing the case, including the prosecutor, will read your statement. A copy of your victim impact statement must be given to the defence lawyers and will probably be read by the offender.

A copy of your victim impact statement will be given to the judge or magistrate and will be placed on the court file. Parts of your Victim Impact Statement may be read aloud during sentencing. This means that other people present in the court at that time will hear your statement. In rare cases, other parties (including the media) may request access to the court file under Right to Information legislation.

## Will I have to go to court if I make a victim impact statement?

It is possible that the defence lawyer might cross-examine you or ask you questions in Court on the contents of your victim impact statement.

## What information should I include?

Your victim impact statement should only include details of the impact the crime has had on you. Therefore, it should include details of any physical injury, emotional harm or other loss or damage you have suffered as a result of the crime.

- If you have been **physically injured** – describe the injuries, the pain you've suffered, the medical treatment you received at the time, any ongoing treatment and any long-term physical effects. You should attach a medical report if your victim impact statement refers to a physical injury.
- If you have suffered **emotional harm** – describe how you felt at the time of the offence and afterwards, and how your enjoyment of life, sense of well-being and relationships with other people have been affected. Include details of any counselling or therapy you have received as a result. You should attach a medical report if your victim impact statement refers to a diagnosed psychological condition (e.g. anxiety, PTSD).
- If you have suffered any **financial loss** – explain how this has happened, how your capacity to earn money has been reduced, or any additional expenses you have had, such as medical or counselling costs, or the cost of repairing damage to your property.

You may attach other documents, such as medical reports and receipts, if you think that they will support your statement.

Remember – anything you include must be truthful, accurate and relevant to the crime of which the accused has been found guilty. If the defence challenges any part of your victim impact statement, you may be required to go into the witness box to swear to the truth of your victim impact statement and you may be cross examined by the defence lawyer.

When you are satisfied with the statement, sign and date it and give it to your victim liaison officer or a lawyer from our Office.

Office of the  
Director of Public Prosecutions

# Victim Liaison Service Survey

## Information for victims and their families

The prosecution of your matter is now at an end. As a result, we would like to invite you to provide feedback regarding the service you received from our Office.

Participation in this survey is voluntary.



**Queensland  
Government**





## Are my responses anonymous?

Yes.

You do not need to provide your name or contact details to complete the survey. We will not be able to tell who completed the survey and you will not be contacted by our Office regarding your feedback.

If you have an enquiry that requires a response from our Office, or if you would like to make a formal complaint, please email or write to us at the address provided below.



Directorate  
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions  
GPO Box 2403  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

or



[MailboxODPP@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:MailboxODPP@justice.qld.gov.au)

## Do I have to complete the survey?

No.

Participation in this survey is voluntary.

If you decide not to complete the survey now but change your mind in the future, you may take the survey at a later date.

## Will my Victim Liaison Officer see the responses I provide?

No. The responses you provide will not ordinarily be sent to your Victim Liaison Officer.

However, you may indicate that you want some feedback to be passed on to your Victim Liaison Officer.

Please provide the name of your Victim Liaison Officer if you would like them to be advised of some specific feedback.

## How long will it take to complete the survey?

The survey should take between 10 and 15 minutes to complete.

The exact length of the survey and the number of questions you are asked will depend on your experience with the ODPP and the way the matter progressed through the courts.

## Do I have to provide my personal information?

No.

You will be asked to provide some personal details, such as your age and gender, however you do not have to answer these questions. You may select 'Prefer not to answer' if you wish.

## What if I don't know the answer to a question?

Most of the questions will allow you to answer 'Unsure' if you do not know the answer to the question.

## What type of questions will I be asked?

The purpose of the Victim Liaison Service is to ensure that victims of crime and their families are kept informed as their matter progresses through the criminal justice system. Another critical function of the service is to ensure victims are informed of external organisations who can provide specialised assistance and support.

Therefore, the survey focuses on whether our Office kept you up to date during the court process, and whether you were provided with factsheets about the criminal justice process and brochures about relevant organisations (such as Victim Assist Queensland).

You will also be asked some questions about the service you received, including whether ODPP staff treated you with respect, and adequately addressed your enquiries.

Most questions are multiple choice. You will also have an opportunity to provide general comments at the end of the survey.

## What will the results be used for?

Your responses will help us evaluate and improve the service provided by the Victim Liaison Service.






## Where can I access the survey?

The victim survey can be access at the website below. You will need to enter the password provided.

**Website:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/odppvlsurvey>  
**Password:** ODPPVLS

Please note, this is a generic password and will not identify you as the respondent.

Alternatively, if you would like to receive a hardcopy (paper version) of the survey, please write to us at the address below.

 Directorate  
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions  
GPO Box 2403  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

or

 [MailboxODPP@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:MailboxODPP@justice.qld.gov.au)



## Further information

If you have any questions or need help, contact the ODPP in your region.

**Freecall**  
P: 1800 673 428

**Brisbane**  
P: (07) 3035 1122  
[DPPVictimLiaisonSupervisor@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:DPPVictimLiaisonSupervisor@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Beenleigh**  
P: (07) 3081 2300  
[ODPPVLOBeenleigh@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOBeenleigh@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Cairns**  
P: (07) 4038 5731  
[ODPPVLOCairns@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOCairns@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Ipswich**  
P: (07) 3470 7419  
[ODPPVLOIpswich@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOIpswich@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Maroochydore**  
P: (07) 5376 5200  
[ODPPVLOMaroochy@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOMaroochy@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Rockhampton**  
P: (07) 4921 6227  
[ODPPVLORockhampton@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLORockhampton@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Southport**  
P: (07) 5675 7000  
[ODPPVLOSouthport@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOSouthport@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Toowoomba**  
P: (07) 4591 4758  
[ODPPVLOToowoomba@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOToowoomba@justice.qld.gov.au)

**Townsville**  
P: (07) 4781 8934  
[ODPPVLOTownsville@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:ODPPVLOTownsville@justice.qld.gov.au)

ODPP-#2463591-v1B July 2019

