

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is the Victim Assistance Division?**

The Victim Assistance Division is a unit in the Montgomery County District Attorney's Office and provides information and support to crime victims in Montgomery County.

## **What services does the Victim Assistance Division perform?**

- ▶ Provide information about the status of the case and criminal justice system (court procedures and schedules).
- ▶ Provide information on Crime Victim's Compensation Fund to victims of violent crime.
- ▶ Provide information on VINE program
- ▶ Courtroom Accompaniment
- ▶ Provide referrals to community resources and social services
- ▶ Provide victims of violent crime information about submitting Victim Impact Statements
- ▶ Collect restitution information for trial team
- ▶ Provide notification, upon request, to the employer of the victim/witness if cooperation in the prosecution of the crime causes absence from work.
- ▶ Assistance with post conviction proceedings

## **What is Crime Victim's Compensation?**

Crime Victim's Compensation is a financial assistance program to victims of violent crime who sustain emotional and physical injury as a direct result of the crime. Related expenses that cannot be reimbursed by insurance or other

sources may be eligible for benefits. Eligibility is administered by the Texas Attorney General's office. Money for this program comes from court costs paid by criminals, and deposited by each Texas county into the Crime Victim's Compensation Fund. Applications for CVC are available through Victim Assistance.

## **What is a Victim Impact Statement?**

A Victim Impact Statement is a form to describe the emotional, physical and financial effects the crime has had on the victim and family members. Texas law allows victims of kidnapping, sexual assault, aggravated robbery, or any crime in which death or bodily injury occurs to provide victim impact information. Close relatives of deceased victims and guardians of victims can also exercise this right.

## **What is VINE?**

The Victims Information and Notification Everyday system (VINE) at 1-877-894-8463 is available to assist victims to track the release status from county jail and court event changes of offenders from a touch-tone phone. VINE provides recorded instruction that assist crime victims to use the system effectively. Crime victims must register to be automatically notified. This is a free service for crime victims and other concerned citizens. VINE is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in English or Spanish.

## **How do I get restitution?**

Once charges have been filed against a defendant, a request for restitution form will be mailed to you. Please use this form to itemize your loss. You should attach documentation to include receipts, estimates, bills and insurance information to show the value or loss of the damaged/stolen property. There is no public funding available to assist victims of property crimes. For restitution to be considered by the Court, please complete the restitution form and return it to the District Attorney's Office as soon as possible. While the primary purpose of the criminal law is to punish the offender, this office will attempt to obtain restitution for losses incurred. Naturally, we cannot guarantee that you will be reimbursed, but your cooperation will support our efforts in this matter.

## **[Back to Victim Assistance](#)**