

Crime Victims Bill of Rights

As a victim of a violent crime, as the guardian of a victim, or as the close relative of a deceased victim, you have certain rights in the Texas criminal justice system. Among these are:

1. The right to PROTECTION from harm and threats of harm arising from cooperation with prosecution efforts;
2. The right to have your SAFETY, and that of your family, taken into consideration when bail is being considered;
3. The right to be INFORMED about court proceedings, including cancellations or rescheduling upon request;
4. The right to INFORMATION about procedures in criminal investigations and in the criminal justice system;
5. The right to receive INFORMATION about the Texas Crime Victims Compensation Fund and referral to available social service agencies;
6. The right to provide INFORMATION to a probation department conducting a pre-sentence investigation about the impact of the offense upon you and your family;
7. The right to have the law enforcement agency that requests a medical examination of a victim of an alleged sexual assault PAY all costs of the examination only;
8. The right to be NOTIFIED about parole proceedings, to participate in the parole process, and to be notified of the inmate's release;
9. The right to be PRESENT at all public court proceedings related to the offense, if the presiding judge approves;
10. The right to a SAFE waiting area before and during court proceedings;
11. The right to prompt RETURN of any property that is no longer needed as evidence;
12. The right to have the prosecutor NOTIFY your employer that the need for your testimony may involve your absence from work;
13. The right to COMPLETE a Victim Impact Statement, detailing the impact of the offense upon you and your family, and to have that statement considered during sentencing and any parole action;
14. 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 or sexual assault.

NOTE: Article 56 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure states: "A judge, attorney for the state, peace officer, or law enforcement agency is not liable for a failure or inability to provide a right enumerated in this article."