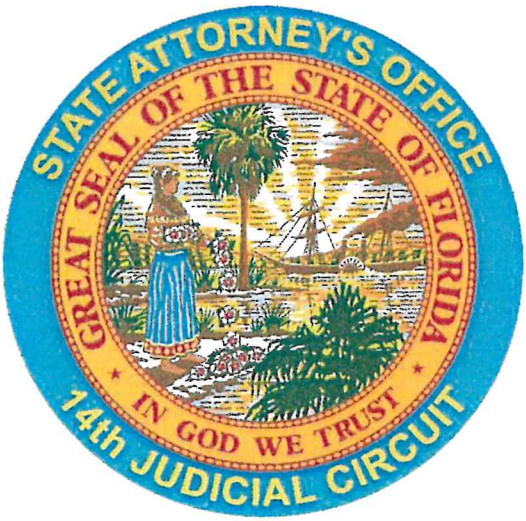
A VICTIM'S GUIDE



Glenn Hess

State Attorney

Fourteenth Judicial Circuit

GLENN HESS, STATE ATTORNEY
Fourteenth Judicial Circuit of Florida

Article I, Section 16 of the Florida Constitution gives crime victims the following rights.

You have the right:

- To receive due process from the courts and to be treated with fairness and respect for your dignity.
- To be free from intimidation, harassment and abuse.
- Within the judicial process, to be reasonably protected from the accused.
- To have the safety and welfare of you and your family considered when setting bail or pretrial release conditions that could affect you or your family.
- To be heard in any public proceeding involving bail or pretrial release.
- To prevent disclosure of information or records that could be used to locate or harass you or your family or which could disclose confidential or privileged information about you.
- To prompt return of your property when no longer needed as evidence.
- To full and timely restitution in every case and from each offender convicted of the crime for all losses suffered, both directly and indirectly, as a result of the criminal conduct.
- To proceedings free from unreasonable delay and to a prompt and final conclusion of the case and any related post-judgment proceedings. (In appropriate cases, the prosecutor may file a good faith demand for a speedy trial, allowing the case to be tried within sixty days, assuming the defendant's due process rights can be met by such, and advancement in the trial date. In non-capital cases, all state level appeals, and post-conviction proceedings must be completed within two years, and capital cases within five years, unless the court enters an order with specific findings concerning why the court was unable to do so and the circumstances causing the delay.)
- To be informed of these rights and to seek an attorney's advice regarding these rights.

Your Rights Under Marsy's Law

Also, upon your specific request, you have these additional rights:

- To reasonable, accurate, and timely notice of, and to be present at, all public proceedings involving the criminal conduct, including, but not limited to, trial, plea, sentencing, or adjudication, even if you are a witness at the proceeding.
- To reasonable, accurate, and timely notice of any release or escape of the defendant and of any proceeding during which a right of yours as the victim may be implicated.
- To confer with the prosecutor concerning any plea agreements, restitution issues, participation in pretrial diversion or release programs by the defendant and sentencing or any other disposition of the case.
- To provide information to anyone conducting or compiling a pretrial investigation regarding the crime's impact on your or your family, and to have such information considered by the court. Once the report is completed, you have a right to receive a copy of it, except for portions made confidential by law.
- To be informed of the conviction, sentence, adjudication, or other dispositions of a convicted offender, his or her release date, or the date of their escape from custody.
- To be informed of all post-conviction processes and procedures, to provide information to the release authority to be considered before any such release and to be notified of any release decision regarding the offender. This right is extended to every person harmed by the offender.
- To be informed of any clemency or expungement procedures regarding the offender, to provide information to the governor, the court, any clemency board, and other authority in these procedures, and to have that information considered before a clemency or expungement decision is made, and to be given notice of that authority's decision before the offender's release.

For informational purposes only.

STATE ATTORNEY'S VICTIM / WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The State Attorney's Victim/Witness Program was implemented to assist you through the difficulties incurred as a result of your crime. The victim advocates work with assistant state attorneys (ASA) to answer your questions, assist in the preparation of Victim Compensation applications, assist in finding the proper professional services to meet your needs, and refer you to counseling or support groups to meet any need you or your family may have. They are available to explain the judicial process and provide Court accompaniment, transportation, translators, as well as other general victim assistance. **You may call the victim advocate for your area at the following locations:**

Bay County, Panama City, Florida: 850-872-4473
Calhoun County, Blountstown, Florida: 850-674-4580
Gulf County, Port St. Joe, Florida: 850-229-6131
Holmes County, Bonifay, Florida: 850-547-2262
Jackson County, Marianna, Florida: 850-482-9555
Washington County, Chipley, Florida: 850-638-6151

AS A VICTIM OR WITNESS TO A CRIME, YOU HAVE CERTAIN RIGHTS

- The right to be present, informed and heard (when appropriate & relevant) at all crucial stages of the criminal and juvenile justice system if that right doesn't interfere with the rights of the accused.
- The right to be free from intimidation or harassment.
- The right to be notified when a defendant escapes or is released from custody.
- The right to ask the Court for restitution and information on enforcement in the event the offender does not pay.
- The right to request assistance from law enforcement and the Office of the State Attorney in notification to creditors and employers regarding financial hardship or absences resulting either from the crime or by cooperating with authorities.
- The right to a prompt, timely disposition of your case, providing that it does not interfere with the rights of the accused.
- The right to be notified of scheduling changes in your criminal or juvenile justice appearances by the scheduling agency.
- The right to be consulted by the Office of the State Attorney in certain felony cases regarding the release of the accused pending proceedings, plea agreements, pretrial diversion programs or sentencing to obtain your view on the disposition of your case.
- The right, upon your request, to have a victim advocate accompany you to a deposition. The advocate may be designated by the State Attorney, Sheriff, Police, or not-for-profit organizations, such as rape crisis centers or domestic violence groups.
- The right to review certain portions of a pre-sentence investigation report for adults or youthful offenders prior to the sentencing of the accused.
- The right to submit an oral or written victim impact statement to the Court prior to the sentencing of the accused.
- The right to a prompt return of property following the completion of the case unless there is a compelling law enforcement need to retain the property.

- The right to assert, or have the Office of the State Attorney assert, your legal rights as a crime victim.
- The right to request and know at the earliest opportunity if the person charged with a sex offense has tested positive for HIV and hepatitis and receive the results of the testing within two weeks of the Court's receipt of the results.
- The right in certain circumstances to request that the offender be required to attend a different school than the victim or siblings.
- The right of a victim of sexual offenses to have the Courtroom cleared, with certain exceptions, during testimony, regardless of age or mental capacity.
- The right for a victim of domestic violence to be informed of the Address Confidentiality Program administered by the Office of the Attorney General.
- The right as an incarcerated victim to be informed and submit written statements at all crucial stages of the criminal and juvenile justice proceedings.
- The right of the victim or next of kin or relatives of victims who are minors to receive advance notification of judicial and post judicial proceedings relating to the case including the arrest, release, work release, or release to community control of the accused as well as proceedings in the prosecution of the accused.
- The right for the victim or next of kin of the victim to not be excluded from any portion of a hearing, trial or proceeding based solely on the fact that such person is subpoenaed to testify, unless the Court determines his or her presence is prejudicial.
- The right to receive general victim assistance such as translators, transportation or separate waiting rooms, upon request.
- The right to be informed of financial compensation from the State of Florida.
- The right to receive information regarding the role of the victim in the criminal or juvenile process.
- The right to receive information on crisis intervention services and local community services. (See Directory of Services at the back of this brochure).
- The right to receive information regarding the stages of the criminal or juvenile justice process.
- The right to be notified of the arrest and release of the offender providing the victim has provided a current address and telephone numbers.
- The right of a victim who is not incarcerated to not be required to attend depositions in any correctional facility.
- The right to request, in specific crimes, that the victim's home and work telephone numbers, home and work addresses, and personal assets not be disclosed to anyone.
- The right to request the presence of a victim advocate during the forensic medical examination.
- The right not to be asked or required to submit to a polygraph examination or any other truth telling device as a condition of the investigation.
- The right of a victim or the victim's legal guardian, or the parent or legal guardian of a victim if the victim is a minor, to request that a person who is charged with any offense enumerated in section 775.0877(1)(a)-(n), Florida Statutes, that involves the transmission of body fluids from one person to another, undergo hepatitis and HIV testing.

AS A VICTIM OR WITNESS OF A CRIME, CERTAIN THINGS ARE EXPECTED OF YOU

When a crime has been committed against you or you have seen, heard, or know something about that crime, you become a victim or witness. As a victim or witness you are a very important part of the case. If you are the victim of a physical injury or the owner of property that has been damaged, stolen, or misused in the commission of a crime, you are vital to the case. You may also be an eyewitness and your testimony is necessary to establish the facts of a case. Interference with a witness by threats or acts of revenge is a third degree felony and a matter to which the law enforcement agencies, prosecutors and Courts will give particular attention and will do their utmost to remedy. Please contact your local law enforcement agency or the Office of the State Attorney immediately should you be threatened or harassed about your case.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SYSTEM AND WHAT IT EXPECTS FROM YOU

When a crime is reported to law enforcement and no arrest is made at the time of the crime, the crime is then investigated by law enforcement officials. If enough evidence is gathered, the investigating agency presents a statement of facts to the Judge for a determination as to whether there is enough evidence to make an arrest. If the Judge feels that there is enough evidence to believe that the accused committed the crime, he may sign an arrest warrant directing law enforcement to arrest the person believed to have committed the crime.

ARREST

When an arrest is made, the arresting officer will make every effort to notify the victim, witnesses, relative of victims and witnesses who are minors, and relatives of homicide victims when those persons have provided current address and telephone numbers to the investigating agency. A Victim Notification Form should be completed which contains the information needed for notification of any release and provided to the facility housing the accused. Please notify the Office of the State Attorney of any changes in your address or telephone numbers. We cannot keep you informed if we cannot reach you!

VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT

Each victim of a crime is required to complete a Victim Impact Statement. This statement allows you to provide the Office of the State Attorney with information about your losses from the crime, how the crime has affected you and your recommendation on how you would like to see your case resolved. Please complete the statement and return it to the Office of the State Attorney. If you have questions regarding the Victim Impact Statement, please contact the Victim Advocate in your area. You also have the right to request, for specific crimes, that your home and work telephone numbers, home and work addresses and personal assets not be disclosed to anyone.

EXEMPTION FROM PUBLIC INSPECTION

Under the provisions of Florida Statute 918.149(3)(a), any information revealing the home or employment telephone numbers, address or personal assets of a victim of sexual battery, aggravated child abuse, aggravated stalking, harassment, aggravated battery, or domestic violence is exempt from public inspection. You must make a written request for your information to be held confidential. Please contact the Office of the State Attorney to receive an explanation of this exemption and receive a form, if appropriate.

FILING FORMAL CRIMINAL CHARGES

Once the Office of the State Attorney receives a formal complaint from law enforcement, an assistant state attorney (ASA) is assigned to handle the case. He or she reviews the case and interviews the victims and witnesses in the case. It is important that you cooperate with the ASA to ensure that all the information about the crime is provided.

After the case has been reviewed by the ASA, he or she will determine if any criminal charges will be filed. The formal charging document is called an "Information." The information is then filed with the Court.

The ASA may determine that the case cannot be prosecuted for any number of reasons (e.g., a lack of evidence, witnesses who cannot be located, problems with the evidence). Whenever possible, the ASA will make every attempt to contact the victim prior to this decision being filed with the Court. The paperwork filed with the Court stating that the State will not prosecute is known as a "No Information," or "no action." If an information has already been filed by the State and new evidence is submitted which leads the State to decide that the case cannot be prosecuted, paperwork is then filed with the Court, known as a "Nolle Prosequi."

If an information has been filed and the defendant has not yet been arrested, an order for the defendant to appear in Court, or an order for the arrest of the defendant may be issued.

FIRST APPEARANCE

If an arrest is made, within 24 hours the Court holds a hearing called the "First Appearance Hearing." At this hearing, the Judge decides whether or not the defendant can be released and if there are any special conditions necessary to protect the victim. The Judge must also ensure that the accused will appear in Court if released. The bond is set by the Judge at this time.

Frequently, the Judge will include a special condition ordering the defendant to have no contact with the victim or witnesses of the case. If you are contacted or harassed by the defendant, you should contact the arresting agency and the Office of the State Attorney immediately. If you wish to attend the First Appearance Hearing, you should contact the Office of the State Attorney to confirm the date and time.

Once the bond amount is set by the Judge, if the defendant is able to post the bond amount, he or she may be released pending trial. If you would like to be advised of the release of the defendant, you must contact the arresting agency, or the jail facility. If the defendant is unable to post bond, the defendant's attorney may request a bond reduction hearing to lessen the original bond amount for the defendant to be released prior to the trial.

THE ARRAIGNMENT

Following the First Appearance Hearing, the defendant is required to appear in Court to state whether he or she is guilty or not guilty of the charges filed. As a victim, you have the right to be present at the arraignment; however, your presence is not required. Sometimes, the defendant will be allowed to enter a PLEA to the charge(s) at ARRAIGNMENT if he or she enters a guilty plea. By entering a PLEA, the defendant is able to avoid a trial on the charges but will face consequences for the crime he or she committed.

SUBPOENAS

Once a case has been set for trial and the prosecution has begun, you may receive a subpoena, which is a Court order requiring your presence at a certain time and place. Your failure to appear could result in a contempt of Court charge against you. If you have any conflict resulting from any subpoenas which has been issued, contact the Office of the State Attorney immediately.

DEPOSITIONS

Florida law allows the defendant's attorney to interview all witnesses in a case after formal charges have been filed and prior to a trial. You may receive a subpoena from the defendant's attorney requiring you to appear to have your deposition taken. You have the right to request that a Victim Advocate accompany you to a deposition. Please make your request known to the ASA handling your case. Victims who are not incarcerated shall not be required to attend depositions in any correctional facility.

You are NOT required to talk to the defendant, his/her attorney, or a representative of the defendant, such as a private investigator regarding your case, without a subpoena. Should you have questions concerning this matter, please contact the ASA assigned to your case.

CONTINUANCES

It is not unusual for a case to be continued or postponed. Every attempt is made to try a case as quickly as possible; however, there are circumstances that cannot be controlled which may make a continuance necessary. It is extremely important that you contact the ASA at least one day prior to your scheduled appearance to make sure that the case not been continued!

PLEA NEGOTIATIONS

Sometimes the defendant may plead guilty to all or some of the charges prior to trial. This plea may be the result of discussions between the ASA and the defendant's attorney. You may want to contact the Office of the State Attorney to inquire about a defendant's plea.

THE TRIAL

In a trial, the ASA presents the witnesses and evidence for the State and the defense attorney presents the witnesses and evidence for the accused. The State has the burden of proving that the defendant did commit the alleged crime. Following presentation of evidence by the State and the defense, each attorney summarizes his or her side of the case, called the "Closing Argument." Following the closing arguments, the Jury is sent out of the Courtroom to decide whether or not the defendant is guilty. The jury's decision is called the "Verdict." When the jury has made their decision, they are then brought back into the Courtroom where the Foreman of the Jury hands down the verdict to the Judge. The verdict is then read aloud by the Deputy Clerk of the Court.

CHANGING YOUR MIND ABOUT PROSECUTING OR TESTIFYING

The ASA will discuss any problems, doubts or questions you may have about your testimony. If you should decide that you do not want to prosecute the defendant, you may be asked to sign paperwork stating why you want to dismiss the charges. The ASA has the responsibility of deciding whether or not to continue with the prosecution of the case.

PRE-SENTENCE INVESTIGATION

When the Judge schedules the sentencing, he or she also orders the Department of Corrections to complete a report on the defendant which includes such items like his/her prior criminal history, personal background, etc. It also includes a section for input from the victim of the crime which provides the Court with information regarding restitution due to the victim, as well as his/her recommendation as to the sentence.

Crime victims or their designees have the right to review a copy of the pre-sentence investigation if one is completed. The Office of the State Attorney will facilitate the review, if requested. Upon completion of a signed agreement by the victim to abide by the limitations placed by law on the use of the information gained in the pre-sentence report, a properly redacted copy will be supplied.

THE SENTENCING

A defendant who has been found guilty or has plead guilty is brought back before the Judge at a scheduled hearing call the "Sentencing." The Judge, using sentencing guidelines, sentences the defendant in a manner appropriate to the crime. The defendant may be sentenced to a term of probation or ordered to make restitution, pay Court costs and a fine, community control supervision, or incarceration in jail or prison.

As the victim, you have the right to be present at the sentencing of the defendant and to appear before the Court to personally state your feelings and recommendations to the Judge. This is done prior to the sentence being imposed. If you wish to be present and speak at the sentencing, contact the ASA or your Victim Advocate so that arrangements can be made. If you do not wish to personally appear before the Court, you may submit a statement in writing to the Court prior to the sentencing.

At the sentencing the Court can order the defendant to pay restitution for damages caused by the crime. If the defendant is also sentenced to prison or jail, the restitution may not be paid until his or her release. The decision on whether to order restitution is strictly up to the Judge; however, if restitution figures are provided and the Court fails to order restitution, the Court must give reasons for not ordering the restitution. If an order of restitution is converted to a civil lien or civil judgment against the defendant, the clerks shall make available at their office, as well as on their website, information provided by the Secretary of State, the Court, and the Florida Bar on enforcing the civil lien or judgment. If you have questions regarding this matter, please contact the Office of the State Attorney.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

If you have been the victim or are afraid you will become a victim of domestic violence, you have the right to request an Injunction for Protection. An Injunction is a Court order signed by a Judge that orders the abuser to have no further contact with you personally or at your place of employment, residence or by telephone. It may also give you temporary custody of your children, sole use of your home, temporary child support and Court ordered counseling for the abuser.

To obtain an Injunction for Protection, visit the Clerk of Circuit Court in your county Courthouse and complete the forms. You must present a picture I.D. when filing for the injunction. Once completed a Judge will review your request for Injunction and either grant or deny it. If granted, you will be given a Temporary Injunction along with a Court date to appear before the Judge. You must attend this hearing, otherwise the Judge could dismiss your injunction! The Sheriff's Department in your county will serve the abuser with the injunction. You must contact your local sheriff's office to verify service. Keep a copy of the injunction with you at all times.

If you are a victim of domestic violence and would like to complete an application for the Address Confidentiality Program, please contact one of the state attorney victim advocates in your local state attorney's office. They have been certified by the Office of the Attorney General to complete these applications and will be happy to assist you. You may also contact directly the Attorney General's Office or your local domestic violence center.

JUVENILE CASES

A juvenile arrested and charged with a misdemeanor or non-violent felony may be released immediately into the custody of the parent or legal guardian. Juveniles charged with more serious crimes may go to a detention center. You have the right to attend any crucial hearing concerning your case; however, you should be advised that information gained by the victim, including the next of kin of a homicide victim regarding any case handled in juvenile Court, must not be revealed to any outside party except as is reasonably necessary in pursuit of legal remedies. You also have the right to request, in certain circumstances, that the offender be required to attend a different school than the victim or siblings of the victim.

The Juvenile Justice Process consists of the following steps:

INTAKE: The process of determining where a child under the age of 18 will be placed until the case is resolved. There are three forms of detention status: home, non-secure or secure.

DIVERSION PROGRAMS: An alternative to trial where the juvenile is placed in a community-based program such as juvenile arbitration, juvenile alternative sanction program (JASP), or treatment plans. If a juvenile successfully completes the diversion program, then the charges are generally dismissed.

FORMAL CHARGES: The filing of a petition in Court by the Office of the State Attorney. Charges may be filed in juvenile or adult Court, depending upon the crime and the age of the offender.

ARRAIGNMENT: The accused is formally charged and enters a plea of guilty, not guilty, or no contest.

ADJUDICATORY HEARING: The trial of the juvenile held before a judge. The judge decides whether the juvenile committed the charged offense.

SENTENCING: When a juvenile is found to have committed a delinquent act, the Court holds a dispositional hearing to determine which sanctions to impose on the juvenile. These sanctions range from community-based sanctions like probation or community services, up to residential commitment.

JUVENILES TRIED AS ADULTS: Juveniles who commit very serious crimes may be tried as adults. Those who are prosecuted as adults may be sentenced to adult or juvenile sanctions.

You may contact our office for additional information regarding the stages of the criminal and juvenile justice process.

THE DEFENDANT'S RELEASE OR ESCAPE FROM INCARCERATION

The Department of Corrections or the Jail Administrator makes every effort to advise victims, witnesses, parents or legal guardians of the escape or release of a defendant. The Office of the State Attorney victim advocates are also available to assist victims with the Victim Notification Program. The Department of Corrections may be reached at the following:

ADMISSION & RELEASE AUTHORITY
VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
2601 BLAIRSTONE RD.
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32399-2500
(850)488-9166 OR TOLL-FREE (877)884-2846

HIV TESTING

When you, your minor children, or a person for whom you are the legal guardian is the victim of certain crimes, you have the right to request that the person charged be tested for the HIV virus and have the results disclosed to you. Victims who are under the age of 18, disabled, or elderly have the right to request the Court to order the accused to undergo HIV testing regardless of whether the offense involves the transmission of bodily fluids. Upon request, the victim has the right to receive the results of the testing within two weeks of the Court's receipt of the results.

If you have questions about this right or the proper way to request the testing, contact your State Attorney Victim Advocate.

PHYSICAL INJURY AS A RESULT OF A CRIME

The Bureau of Victim Compensation offers financial assistance to innocent victims of violent crime who have suffered death or physical injury as a direct result of a crime. To be eligible, the death or physical injury must have resulted in a financial hardship to the victim or his/her dependents. Victim Compensation does not cover property loss unless you are elderly (60 or over) or disabled. This amount is limited to $500. Funeral expenses, medical expenses, professional counseling and loss of wages are items covered by Victim's Compensation.

Applications can be obtained through your local Victim/Witness Assistance Program. All applications are forwarded to Tallahassee where the claim is thoroughly investigated and processed. You may contact the Bureau directly by calling toll-free (800)226-6667, or (850)414-3300.

Victims of violent crimes where physical injury has occurred in which a suspect has not been identified nor charged may still be eligible for compensation. However, if criminal charges have been filed, the victim must cooperate fully with the prosecution of the case in order to remain eligible.

PROPERTY RETURN

If your property has been stolen in a crime, and it has been recovered, it may be necessary to hold it until the case goes to trial. Once the case is closed, any property being held will be returned to its owner unless there is compelling reason to hold it. If you need assistance with return of your property, please contact the Office of the State Attorney.

Specialized Programs Provided for crime victims

In addition to our other services, there are advocates to help individualized victim populations and offers assistance to witnesses and referrals as needed.

Sexual Assault (Rape) Victim Services – Gulf Coast Sexual Assault Program 866-218-4738

Domestic Violence Victim Services – Salvation Army Domestic Violence Program 850-769-7989

Domestic Violence hotline 800-252-2597

Florida Crime Victim Compensation Program 800-226-6667

MADD – Mothers Against Drunk Drivers 877-MADD-HELP

Seniors vs Crime 800-203-3099

VINE- Victim information and notification everyday service 877-VINE-4-FL

National Crime Victims' Rights Week is an annual commemoration of crime victims during the month of April

FAQ's

What is the Felony Division?

The Felony Division is were crimes are more serious than a misdemeanor, carrying a penalty of possible incarceration in a state prison facility.

What is the Misdemeanor Division?

This division prosecutes violations of criminal traffic laws, and misdemeanor offenses. A misdemeanor offense is defined by Florida Law as offenses punishable by a maximum sentence of incarceration of up to one year in county jail.

What is the Juvenile Division?

Juvenile is a Circuit Court Division handling all felony and misdemeanor cases committed by individuals under the age of 18. Standard sentence alternatives include probation and commitment programs administered by the Department of Juvenile Justice. In addition, there are many specialized diversion programs designed to address public safety concerns as well as the needs of the Juveniles. We believe that early intervention is the key to redirecting a youth toward a more positive future.

What is a Grand Jury?

The Grand Jury serves as a very special function in Florida's criminal courts. The only charge a State Attorney cannot file based on his or her constitutional authority is first-degree murder. All first-degree murder cases must be presented to a grand jury. A Grand Jury is an investigating, reporting, and accusing agency of the circuit court (or of the Florida Supreme Court in the case of the Statewide Grand Jury). It consists of citizens who have been summoned and empaneled by a judge of the circuit court (or by a judge appointed by the Florida Supreme Court, in the case of the Statewide Grand Jury). The importance of the grand jury's power is emphasized by the fact that it is one of the most independent bodies known to the law.

Things to remember before coming to court:

- Dress neatly and conservatively for court
- Do not memorize your testimony but review the facts before the trial.
- Relax, speak loudly and clearly, directing your answers to the jury.
- Do not lose your temper when answering questions.
- Do not discuss your testimony with other witnesses

BAY COUNTY DIRECTORY OF SERVICES

Abuse Registry
800-962-2873

Alcoholics Anonymous
850-784-7431

Anchorage Children's Home
850-763-7102
www.anchoragechildrenshome.org

Agency for Persons w/ Disabilities
850-872-7652
www.apd.myflorida.com

B.A.S.I.C. of NW Florida
850-785-1088
www.BASICNWFL.org

Bay County Council on Aging
850-769-3468
www.baycouncilonaging.org

Bay County Courthouse
850-763-9061
www.baycoclerk.com

Bay County Health Department
850-872-4455
www.baycountyhealthdepartment.com

Bay County Public Library
850-522-2138
www.NWRLS.com

Bay County Sheriff's Office
Victim Advocacy Program
850-747-4700 Ext. 2611
www.bayso.org

Bay County Veterans Service
850-784-4044

Bay Medical Center
850-769-1511
www.baymedical.org

Bay Town Trolley
850-769-0557 or 800-342-5557
www.baytowntrolley.org

Big Bend Community Based Care
850-747-5755
www.bigbendcbc.org/index.php

Blind Services Education Dept.
850-872-4181
www.dbs.myflorida.com

C.A.R.E.
850-872-7676
www.care4000.com

Catholic Social Services of
Panama City
850-763-0475
www.catholiccharitiesNWFL.org

Children's Medical Services
850-872-4700
www.doh.state.fl.us/cms

Department of Corrections State
Probation
850-872-4139
www.dc.state.fl.us

Department of Children and
Families
Child Protection Services
850-872-7600
www.state.fl.us/cf-web

Department of Children and
Families
Economic Assistance - Access
850-872-4185
www.myflorida.com/accessflorida

Doorways of NW Florida
850-481-5446
doorwaysnwfl.org

D.U.I. Program
850-872-7730
www.PCDUI.com

Early Education & Care, Inc
850-872-7550

Goodwill
850-769-8723

Guardian Ad Litem Program
850-747-5180
www.gal14.org

Gulf Coast Children's Advocacy Center
850-872-7760

Gulf Coast Sexual Assault Program
1-866-218-4738

HCA Gulf Coast Hospital
850-769-8341
www.egulfcoastmedical.com

Hidle House
850-784-1020
www.anchoragechildrenshome.org

Housing Authority of Panama City
850 769-2358

Housing Authority of Springfield
850-769-1596

Kid's Court
850-872-7760

Legal Services of North Florida
850-875-9881

Life Management Center of Northwest Florida
850-522-4485
www.lifemanagementcenter.org

Panama City Beach Police
850-233-5000

Panama City Police Department
850-872-3100

Panama City Rescue Mission
850-769-0783

Residential Substance Abuse
800-737-0933
www.genesishouse.ne

Salvation Army
Domestic Violence Program
24 hr. 850-763-0706 or 800-252-2597
Daytime - 850-769-7989

Second Chance of NW FL, Inc.
850-769-7779
secondchance@hotmail.com

Social Security Administration
800-772-1213

United Way
850-785-7521
www.unitedwaynwfl.org

V.I.N.E.
Victim Information Notification Everyday
877-846-3435
www.vinelink.com

Victim Compensation Program
Office of the Attorney General
800-226-6667
www.myfloridalegal.com

Vocational Rehabilitation
Department. of Education
800-451-4327
www.rehabworks.org

WIC Program
Department of Health
850-872-4666

CALHOUN COUNTY DIRECTORY OF SERVICES

Big Bend Community Based Care
850-482-9568
www.bigbendcbc.org

Blountstown Police Department
850-674-5987

C.A.R.E.
850-526-3133

Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce
850-674-4519
www.calhounco.org

Calhoun County Liberty Hospital
850-674-5411

Calhoun County Sheriff's Office
850-674-5049
www.calhounsheriff.com

Gulf Coast Sexual Assault Program
1-866-218-4738

Health Department
850-674-5645

Legal Services of North Florida
850-875-9881

Life Management
850-674-8790
www.lifemanagementcenter.org

Salvation Army Domestic Violence
800-252-2597
850-229-2901

Victim Compensation Program
Office of Attorney General
800-226-6667
www.myfloridalegal.com

V.I.N.E.
Victim Information Notification Everyday
877-846-3435
www.vinelink.com

Vocational Rehabilitation
Dept. of Education
800-451-4327
www.rehabworks.org

GULF COUNTY DIRECTORY OF SERVICES

C.A.R.E.
850-872-7676

C.A.R.E Detox
850-769-1632

Department of Children and Families
Child Protective Services
850-872-7600
www.state.fl.us/cf-web

Gulf Coast Sexual Assault Program
1-866-218-4738

Gulf County Courthouse
850-229-6112 (Port St. Joe)
850-639-2175 (Wewahitchka)
www.gulfclerk.com

Gulf County Health Department
850-227-1276
www.gulfchd.com

Gulf County Sheriff's Office
850-227-1115

Legal Services of North Florida
850-875-9881

Life Management Center
850-769-9481

Port St. Joe Police Department
850-229-8265

Sacred Heart Hospital
850-229-5600

Salvation Army Domestic Violence Program
850-763-0706
800-252-2597

Victim Compensation Program
Office of the Attorney General's Office
800-226-6667
www.myfloridalegal.com

V.I.N.E.
Victim Information Notification Everyday
877-846-3435
www.vinelink.com

Vocational Rehabilitation
Dept. of Education
800-451-4327
www.rehabworks.org

HOLMES COUNTY DIRECTORY OF SERVICES

Bonifay Police Department
850-547-3661

C.A.R.E
850-526-3133

Circuit Court Judge
850-547-1106

City Hall
850-547-4238

Clerk of Court
850-547-1100
www.holmesclerk.com

DCF/Abuse Registry
800-962-2873
850-547-3641

Doctor's Memorial Hospital
850-547-1120

Fire Department
850-547-2861

Gulf Coast Sexual Assault Program
1-866-218-4738

Holmes County Sheriff's Office
850-547-3681

Holmes County Sheriff's Office Victim Advocate
850-547-4421

Legal Services of North Florida
850-875-9881

Life Management Center
850-547-2472

Salvation Army
Domestic Violence Program
800-252-2597
Local Office of SADV 850-415-5999

Tri-County Community Council
850-547-3688

Victim Compensation Program
Office of the Attorney General
850-488-0848
800-226-6667
www.myfloridalegal.com

V.I.N.E.
Victim Information Notification Everyday
877-846-3435
www.vinelink.com

Vocational Rehabilitation
Dept. of Education
800-451-4327
www.rehabworks.org

JACKSON COUNTY DIRECTORY OF SERVICES

Aging & Adult Services
850-482-9568

C.A.R.E
850-526-3133

Career Service Chipola
850-845-0739

Catholic Charities NW Florida
850-763-0475

Chipola Baptist
850-526-4050

Clerk of Court
850-482-9552
www.jacksonclerk.com

Crime Stoppers of Jackson County
850-526-5000
www.crimestoppersofjacksoncounty.com

DCF/Abuse Line
800-962-2873

Dept. Of Children & Families
850-718-0529
www.dcf.state.fl.us

Elder Care Abuse
800-677-1116

Graceville Police Department
850-263-3944

Gulf Coast Sexual Assault Program
1-866-218-4738

Guardian Ad Litem
850-482-9127

Habilitative Services
850-482-5391

Habitat for Humanity
850-482-7997

Jackson County Chamber of Commerce
850-482-8060
www.jacksoncounty.com

Jackson County Hospital
850-526-2200

Jackson County Senior Citizens
850-482-5028

Jackson County Sheriff's Office
850-482-9624
www.jcsheriff.com

Life Management
850-482-7441
www.lifemanagementcenter.com

Legal Services of North Florida
850-875-9881

Marianna Police Department
850-526-3125

Salvation Army
Domestic Violence Hotline
800-252-2597 or 850-415-5999

Sneads Police Department850-593-6403

Victim Compensation Program
Office of the Attorney General
800-226-6667
www.myfloridalegal.com

V.I.N.E.
Victim Information Notification Everyday
877-846-3435
www.vinelink.com

Vocational Rehabilitation
Dept. of Education
800-451-4327
www.rehabworks.org

WASHINGTON COUNTY DIRECTORY OF SERVICES

C.A.R.E
850-526-3133

Career Service Chipola
850-845-0739

Chipley Housing Authority
850-638-0134

City Hall
850-638-6350

Clerk of Court
850-638-6285
www.washingtonclerk.com

Circuit Judge's Office
850-638-6255

County Judge's Office
850-638-6268

Council on Aging
850-638-6216

DCF/Abuse Registry
800-962-2873

Gulf Coast Sexual Assault Program
1-866-218-4738

NW Florida Community Hospital
850-638-1610

Chipley Police Department
850-638-6310

Salvation Army
Domestic Violence Program
800-252-2597 or 850-763-0706
Local Office of SADV 415-5999

Tri-County Community Council
850-638-4520

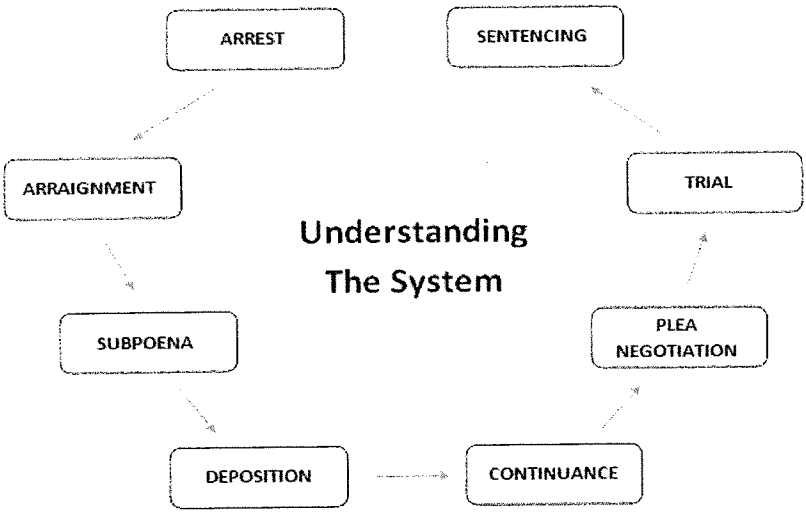
Victim Compensation Program
Office of the Attorney General
800-226-6667
www.myfloridalegal.com

V.I.N.E.
Victim Information Notification Everyday
877-846-3435
www.vinelink.com

Vocational Rehabilitation
Dept. of Education
800-451-4327

Washington County Sheriff's Office
850-638-6111

Overview of the Court Process



GLOSSARY OF LEGAL TERMS

ACQUITTAL: A judgment of Court, based on the decision of either a Judge or Jury that a person accused of a crime is not guilty.

ADJUDICATION: The judicial decision that ends a criminal proceeding by a judgment of acquittal, conviction, or dismissal of the case.

ADJUDICATION HEARING: A hearing by a judicial officer in the Juvenile Court to determine if there is enough evidence to support the claims made in the petition.

AFFIDAVIT: A written statement which the writer swears is true.

APPEAL: A request by either the defense or the prosecution that the results of a decision on certain motions or of a completed trial be reviewed by a higher Court.

ARRAIGNMENT: The appearance in Court of an accused person at which time the Court may inform the accused of the charges against him, advise him of his rights, appoint a lawyer for him, and hear his plea.

COMPLAINANT: The person who makes a formal criminal complaint; also the victim of the crimes described in the complaint.

COMPLAINT AFFIDAVIT: A formal written statement made by a person and filed in the Court to accuse a specific person with committing a specific crime.

CONTINUANCE: A delay or postponement of a Court hearing; the case is said to be "continued" when it has been delayed or postponed.

COUNT: Each separate offense listed in a complaint.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM: The government agencies charged with law enforcement, prosecution of alleged violations of the criminal law, the Court hearing of charges against accused, and the punishment and supervision of the convicted.

DEFENDANT: A person who has been formally charged with committing a crime.

DISPOSITION: The final decision which ends a criminal proceeding by a judgment of acquittal or dismissal, or which states the sentence if the accused is convicted.

FELONY: A serious crime for which the punishment may be imprisonment, usually in a state or federal prison.

GRAND JURY HEARING: A legal process where citizens are randomly selected and sworn to investigate criminal activity and to hear the evidence against accused persons, sit as a jury to decide if there is enough evidence to bring the accused to trial. Unlike Court trials, grand jury hearings are usually closed to the public and their proceedings, by law, are kept secret.

HABEAS CORPUS: A written order challenging, on constitutional grounds, the right of the state to continue to detain or imprison a person.

INDICTMENT: A formal written accusation made by a grand jury and filed in Court alleging that a specific person committed a specific crime.

INFORMATION: An accusation for some criminal offense in the nature if the indictment, but which is presented by a competent public officer instead of a grand jury.

MISDEMEANOR: A crime that is less serious than a felony and for which the punishment may be imprisonment for one year or less.

MOTION: A verbal or written request made by the prosecutor or the defense attorney before, during, or after a trial that the Court issues a rule or an order.

NOLO CONTENDERE: A defendant's formal answer to the Court, to the charge, in which he states that he does not contest the charges against him. It is not an admission of guilt, but it carries the same legal consequences as a guilty plea.

NOTICE: A written order to appear in Court at a certain time and place.

OFFENDER: An adult that has been convicted of a crime.

OFFENSE: A crime, technically, in some jurisdictions.

PAROLE: The conditional release of a convicted offender from a confinement facility before the end of his sentence with requirements for his behavior set and supervised by a parole agency.

PERJURY: Deliberate false testimony under oath.

PERSONAL RECOGNIZANCE: The promise of an accused person to the Court that he will return to Court when ordered to do so, given in exchange for release before and during the trial.

PLEA: A defendant's formal answer in Court to the charges against him.

PRE-SENTENCE INVESTIGATION: A document that details the past behavior, prior criminal history/convictions, family circumstances, and personality of an adult and gives information about the crime he committed. It is prepared by the Department of Corrections in order to assist the Court in determining the most appropriate sentence.

PROBATION: Conditional freedom granted to an offender by the Court after conviction or guilty plea with requirements for the offender's behavior set and supervised by the Court through the Department of Corrections.

RELEASE ON BAIL: The release of an accused person by a judicial officer before or during the trial of the accused upon the promise of the accused that he will pay a sum of money if he fails to return to Court when ordered to do so.

RELEASE ON OWN RECOGNIZANCE: The release of an accused person by a judicial officer before or during the trial of the accused upon the promise of the accused that he will return to Court when ordered to do so.

RELEASE TO THIRD PARTY: The release of an accused person by a judicial officer, before or during the trial of a juvenile, upon the promise of a third party that the accused will return to Court when ordered to do so.

SUBPOENA: A written order by a judicial officer requiring a specific person to appear in a designated Court at a specific time and place in order to serve as a witness in a case or to bring material to Court.

SUMMONS: A written order by a judicial officer requiring a person accused of a criminal offense to appear in a designated Court at a specific time and place to answer the charges against him.

SUSPENDED SENTENCE: A Court decision to postpone the pronouncing of a sentence on a convicted person or to postpone the execution of a sentence that has been pronounced by the Court

STATE ATTORNEY'S VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The State Attorney's Victim/Witness Assistance Program was implemented to assist you through the difficulties incurred as a result of the crime committed against you. The victim advocates work with the assistant state attorney of this office to answer your questions, assist in the preparation of the victim compensation applications, assistance in finding the proper professional services, counseling or support groups, or any need you or your family may have. They are available to explain the judicial process and provide Court accompaniment, transportation in certain cases, translators, as well as other general victim assistance. You may call the victim advocate for your area at the following locations:

Bay County
Lisa Lea Humpich
Denise Lash
Kim Limmer
Cynthia Williams
Panama City Office
(800) 842-0103 (FL only)
(850) 872-4473

Holmes County
Washington County
Nancy Williams
Bonifay Office
(850) 547-2262

Chipley Office
(800) 842-9867 (FL only)
(850) 638-6151

Calhoun County
Gulf County
Addie Little
Blountstown Office
(850) 674-4580

Port St. Joe Office
(850) 229-6131

Jackson County
Paula Thompson
Marianna Office
(800) 344-7532 (FL only)
(850) 482-9555