

# Criminal justice and you

An essential guide for victims and witnesses

## After the trial

**By Temporary Detective Superintendent Steve Wray**

---

Hello. My name is Steve Wray and I'm a Temporary Detective Superintendent in charge of the Victim and Witness Care Units.

Following a trial at Magistrates' or Crown Court, you will be contacted by your assigned Witness Care Officer or a member of the Witness Care team via your preferred means of contact. They will assist you with any questions that you may have.

Your Witness Care Officer will: Provide you with the outcome of the trial, whether the defendant was found guilty or not guilty on the court result; Explain the sentencing outcome, including any court orders such as a restraining order and answer any questions you may have; Advise you of any compensation awarded by the court, giving information on the court compensation process.

If no compensation is awarded by the court, you may be able to claim compensation under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. If the case is adjourned for future sentencing hearing, you will again be given the opportunity to make or update your victim personal statements.

They will also check that you have had a CPS claims form to claim back expenses following attendance at court. This will cover loss of earnings, travel and accommodation costs. They will put you in touch with the Victim Care Unit, who can provide support or referrals to support services to help you cope and recover from the impacts of crime.

They will also discuss restorative justice and make any necessary referrals to the restorative justice coordinator. They will make a referral to probation under the Victim Contact Scheme for appropriate cases where the offender has been sentenced to 12 months or more. They will advise of the Victim's Right to Review scheme. This gives victims the right to request to review of a Crown Prosecution Service decision not to prosecute or to discontinue criminal proceedings.

# Criminal justice and you

## An essential guide for victims and witnesses

The defendant may decide to appeal against the conviction or sentence. The Crown Court or Appeal Court in London will consider this application. If granted, the victim will be informed and the required witnesses will be warned to attend the appeal hearing. Thank you. I hope this has been helpful.

### Useful links

[Victims' Right to Review](#)

### Glossary

**Magistrates court** – All criminal cases start in a magistrates' court. Cases are heard by either 2 or 3 magistrates; district judge. There is not a jury in a magistrates' court.

**Crown court** - A Crown Court: normally has a jury which decides if you're guilty or not (the 'verdict'); has a judge who decides what punishment (or 'sentence') you get.

**Sentencing** - If you are found guilty of a crime, your sentence will depend on a number of factors, including the type, seriousness and circumstances of the crime.

**Trial** - is the examination in a court of law of the facts of a case to decide whether a person is guilty of a crime or responsible for an injury to another person.

**Court order** - A court order is a judgement or ruling that is officially given by a judge. A court order can be final (at the end of a hearing) or interim (until a final order can be made). The contents of the order depend entirely on the case presented to the judge.

**Compensation** – the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority deal with claims from people who have been physically or mentally injured because they were the victim of a violent crime in England, Scotland or Wales

**Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)** – the CPS prosecutes criminal cases that have been investigated by the police and other investigative organisations in England and Wales. The CPS is independent and make their decisions independently of the police and government.

# Criminal justice and you

## An essential guide for victims and witnesses

**Victim Care Unit** – If you have reported a crime to Devon and Cornwall Police, there is a Victim Care Unit (VCU) which is partly funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner. This unit helps victims to understand the impact of the crime and the support options available. Support might include practice advice information, signposting or a referral to an appropriate independent support service. They can also provide advice and information in relation to rights as a victim of crime. Support is free and confidential and there is no time limit when this support can be accessed. The unit is available to help even if you initially said you didn't want support, or your case is already at court.

**Defendant** - a person or group against whom a criminal or civil action is brought: someone who is being sued or accused of committing a crime

**Appeal hearing** - If you think the decision was wrong, you can ask the court to reconsider a sentence or conviction.

**Conviction** – the act or process of finding a person guilty of a crime, especially in a court of law.