

OUR GOAL

Victim Witness Services is here to assist you. We are committed to making your experience with the criminal justice system as comfortable as possible.

We have offices in each of the following areas staffed with Victim Advocates and Witness Managers. Please feel free to contact us Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

OFFICES AND PHONE NUMBERS

Titusville	(321) 264-6933
Cocoa	(321) 617-7555
Melbourne	(321) 617-7555
Sanford	(407) 665-6112

No person, on the grounds of race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex or disability shall be excluded from participation in; be denied proceeds or benefits of; or be otherwise subjected to discrimination.

NOW WHAT HAPPENS?

INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF CRIME



PHIL ARCHER

State Attorney
18th Judicial Circuit

Serving Brevard and Seminole Counties

MESSAGE FROM THE STATE ATTORNEY

Dear Victim:

In the aftermath of crime, victims often experience both emotional pain and trauma as well as confusion concerning the legal process. My staff and I are concerned and would like to offer you our assistance. Once you have read this brochure, I urge you to contact Victim Witness Services to see how we may assist you.

Phil Archer

STATE ATTORNEY
18TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
BREVARD AND SEMINOLE COUNTIES

RIGHTS OF A CRIME VICTIM:

- ▶ Notification of the arrest, release, or escape of the accused, if possible;
- ▶ Information on steps concerning freedom from intimidation;
- ▶ Advance notice of all court proceedings, if time permits;
- ▶ Prompt notification of the results of all court proceedings;
- ▶ To be informed, present and heard, when relevant, at all criminal or juvenile proceedings;
- ▶ Assistance in obtaining Florida Crime Victim Compensation, restitution, and other services to which you may be entitled;
- ▶ Upon request, notification to your employer and/or school when you must appear in court;
- ▶ Opportunity to submit an oral or written impact statement at the time of sentencing.

WHAT IS VICTIM WITNESS SERVICES?

Victim Witness Services is staffed with Victim Advocates and Witness Managers who are available to assist you with support, referrals and information regarding your case.

A **Victim Advocate** provides case information, referrals to other agencies, accompaniment to court and other required appearances, assistance with Crime Victim Compensation, and emotional support.

A **Witness Manager** is responsible for notifying witnesses of pending court dates, hearings, and changes in case status. They can also answer questions regarding subpoenas, and travel arrangements.

WHAT IS CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION?

This is a fund administered by the Bureau of Crime Victim Compensation in Tallahassee, FL. It is designed to assist victims with medical, psychological counseling and funeral expenses incurred as a direct result of the crime. Certain eligibility criteria must be met to be considered for an award.

WHAT DOES THE STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE DO FOR ME IN A CRIMINAL CASE?

State Attorney Phil Archer, with the help of Assistant State Attorneys, prosecute criminal cases.

WHAT IS A STATE ATTORNEY INVESTIGATION (S.A.I.) AND WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

A State Attorney Investigation (S.A.I.) is an informal interview. It is an opportunity for you to tell an Assistant State Attorney what you know about the case. However, an S.A.I. is not necessary in every case.

WHAT IS A SUBPOENA?

A subpoena is a court order to appear and give sworn testimony. Subpoenas are issued for a variety of reasons including S.A.I.'s, depositions, and trial. If you receive a subpoena, it is important that you call the phone number on the date and time indicated on the subpoena. A Witness Manager can answer any questions regarding subpoenas.

WHAT IS A DEPOSITION?

A deposition is a formal proceeding in which a victim/witness is placed under oath and questioned about their knowledge of a pending criminal case. A deposition is attended by an Assistant State Attorney, Defense Attorney (attorney for the accused), Court Reporter and, at the request of a victim, a Victim Advocate. After being placed under oath, the victim/witness is questioned by the attorneys about his/her knowledge of the case. The information obtained at this proceeding may be used at trial.

WHAT IF THE DEFENDANT, DEFENDANT'S ATTORNEY, OR DEFENDANT'S INVESTIGATOR CONTACTS ME?

If the defendant, their attorney or investigator attempts to contact you, you should contact the Assistant State Attorney assigned to your case immediately. You are only required to talk to them if you receive a subpoena for deposition, and the Assistant State Attorney is present.

HOW LONG WILL IT BE BEFORE MY CASE GOES TO TRIAL, AND HOW WILL I KNOW?

It is difficult to predict when a case may go to trial as no two cases are alike, and each takes time to prepare. However, your Victim Advocate and Witness Manager can provide you with the current status of your case.

WHERE DO I GO WHEN I GET TO THE COURTHOUSE TO TESTIFY?

Your subpoena will instruct you where to appear. Please read it carefully. You should report to the designated courthouse and remain outside the courtroom until you are called to testify. Please bring your subpoena with you. If you have any questions, call the Witness Center listed on your subpoena.

WHEN I AM AT TRIAL, STATE ATTORNEY INVESTIGATION (S.A.I.), OR DEPOSITION, DOES MY EMPLOYER HAVE TO PAY ME?

Your employer is not required to pay you for the time you are at an S.A.I., deposition, or in court. However, your Victim Advocate will, at your request, send a letter to your employer explaining your role in a criminal case, and that it may be necessary for you to miss some work.

DO I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT AT SENTENCING?

If you are a victim, you will be notified of the sentencing date. You are entitled to be present at the sentencing. However, if you wish to make an oral or written statement, you must notify your Victim Advocate or Assistant State Attorney at least one week in advance so that your request can be presented to the Judge.

AM I ENTITLED TO A WITNESS FEE/MILEAGE?

If you are subpoenaed for deposition or trial, you may be entitled to witness reimbursement. Your Witness Manager can assist you and answer any questions about reimbursement.