



**Easy
Read**

Victim Service Standards

What victims can expect from the
Crown Prosecution Service



Easy Read



This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



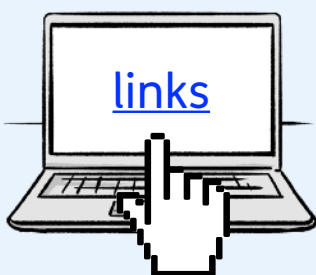
This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



[Blue and underlined](#) words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

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About this booklet



This booklet is from the **Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)**.

We are the organisation that takes criminal cases to court.



This booklet will tell you what you can expect from us if you are a **victim** of a crime.



A **victim** is someone who is harmed or injured because of a crime.



We know that being a victim is hard.



We want to make sure going to court is easy and comfortable for you.



See our online victims' guides for a clear explanation of what happens when a case comes to the CPS.



You can read the Easy Read versions of these guides here:

www.cps.gov.uk/information-and-support-victims-witnesses/easy-read

Victims and the CPS: what is our role?



The CPS is an **independent** organisation.

This means we are not part of the government or the police.



When a case is passed to us, we have to decide whether to take it to court.



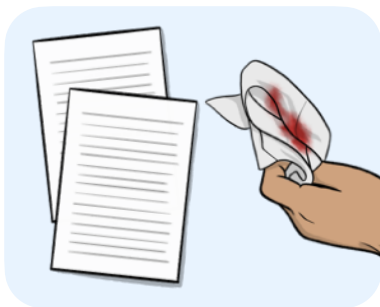
To help us decide, we look at **evidence**.

Evidence is information that shows what happened when a crime took place.



Evidence can be:

- Facts, including what people say happened.



- Objects and documents.

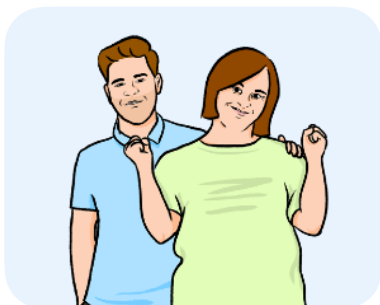


If we decide to take a case to court, we may ask **victims** and **witnesses** to tell the court what happened.

We call this **giving evidence**.



If we decide to take a case to court, it does not mean that we are the victim's lawyer.



But we will still support you if you are a victim. This booklet explains how we will support you.



If you are a victim, you may also be called a **witness** in the case.

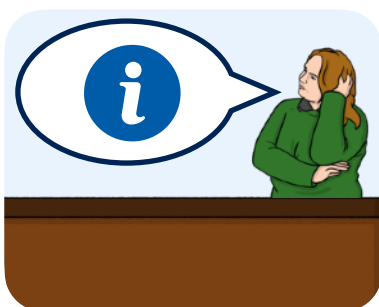


A **witness** is someone who tells the court what they know about the crime, like:

- What they saw.



- What they heard.



- Other information about what happened.

What you can expect from our service



The CPS has some things called **Victim Service Standards**. The Victim Service Standards explain how we will treat victims.

The 3 **standards** are:



1. **We will treat you with respect and talk to you kindly.**



That means we will be clear and kind when we communicate with you.



We will listen to your needs and meet them whenever we can.



- 2. We will always explain any decisions we make and why we have made them.**



That means we will contact you and give you information. If you need it, we'll give you that information in a different language or in Easy Read.



You might also hear from other organisations. We will work closely with them so that you get clear information from one place.



3. We will listen to what you have to say about our services.



This could be whether you are happy or unhappy. There is more information about this on page 27.

What help you can have from the CPS



You have **rights** if you are the victim of a crime.



Rights are things that every person should have by law. Like the right to be able to understand and to be understood.



You have the right to get certain kinds of help from the CPS.



These are the ways we can help you, starting on the next page:

We will answer your questions at court



You may be asked to give evidence in court.



Before you do this, someone from our **prosecution team** will introduce themselves to you.



Prosecution teams are teams of people who try to prove that someone committed a crime.



You can ask the person from our prosecution team any questions you have about giving evidence.



We can also support you by paying back any money you spend on giving evidence in court.



We will pay for you to get to court and home again.

You can also ask us to pay for:



- Someone to look after your children, if you have them.



- Money you lose because you cannot work while you are in court.



- Food and drink you buy when you are at court.

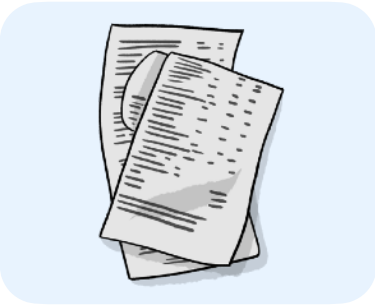


To ask us for this money back, you need to fill in a form after you have given evidence in court.



You can find the form here:

www.claim-witness-expenses.cps.gov.uk/



The form will ask you for receipts that prove what you have spent, so make sure you keep these safe.

Support with giving your evidence - Special Measures



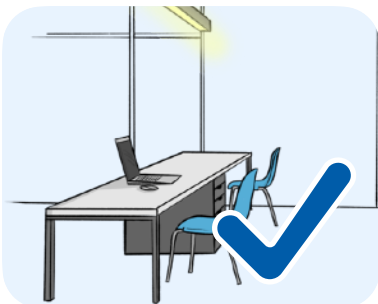
Special Measures are different ways of giving evidence in court to help you feel more comfortable.

Special Measures include things like:



- Giving evidence behind a screen so you cannot see the **defendant**.

The **defendant** is the person who has been accused of the crime.



- Giving evidence by video call from somewhere outside the courtroom.



- Recording your evidence on video.

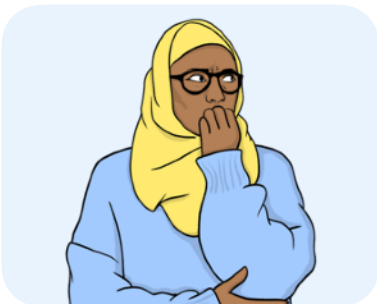
You can ask for Special Measures if any of these apply to you:



- You are under 18.



- You have a disability that would affect your evidence in court.



- You feel very scared about giving evidence in court.



- You are a victim of domestic abuse, rape or sexual assault.

There is more information about support for victims of rape or sexual assault in the next part.



- You are a victim of modern slavery.



You can also ask for Special Measures if you are a victim or witness of a crime involving a gun or a knife.



You can find out more about Special Measures in our guide for victims:

www.cps.gov.uk/information-and-support-victims-witnesses/easy-read

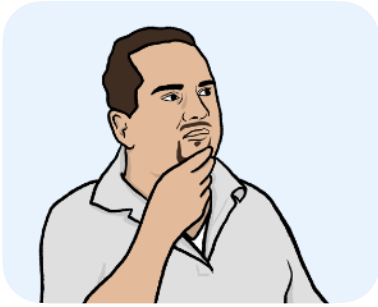
Support for victims of rape and serious sexual assault



If someone does something sexual to you, it is a crime if they do it without your **consent**.



Consent means that you have agreed to something.



Or, someone might honestly think that you had agreed to something. That's called having **reasonable belief** in your consent.



Rape is when someone has sex with you when you have not agreed to it.



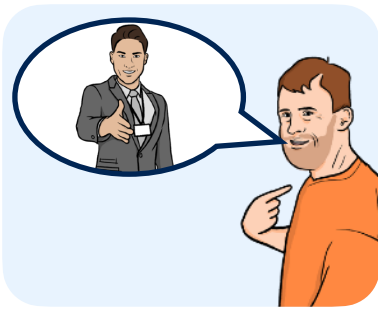
Sexual assault is when someone touches you in a sexual way that you have not agreed to.



If you are a victim of rape or sexual assault, we will give you a **Victim Liaison Officer**.



This is a person you can contact when you have a question about issues that involve us.



You can also ask for a meeting with someone from our prosecution team before you give evidence in court.



You can ask the person from our prosecution team any questions you have about giving evidence.



You can also read our online Easy Read victims' guide here:
<https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/RASSO-Victims-Guide-Easy-Read-WEB-ACCESSIBLE.pdf>

Support for families who have lost a loved one



In some cases, someone has died because of the crime.



We will offer to meet with families who have lost someone to explain the decisions we make and why we have made them.



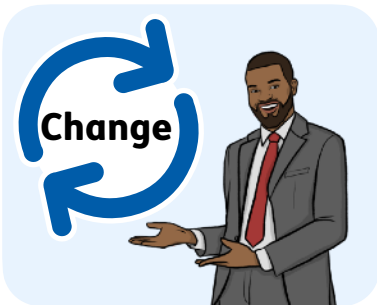
We will also offer to meet with families after the case is over, to talk about what happens next.

Being told about decisions

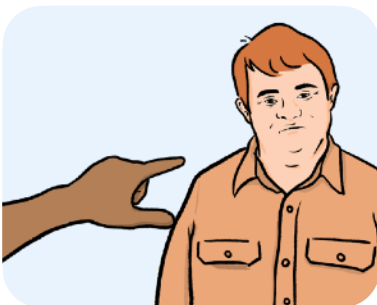
We will let you know if we decide to:



- Stop a case and not take it to court.



- Change the case, for example, change what we are officially **accusing** the defendant of doing.



Accusing means telling someone that you think a person has done something wrong.



Usually, we will let you know if we have made a new decision within 5 days.

We will let you know if we have made a new decision within 1 day if any of these apply to you:



- You are the victim of a very serious crime.



- You have been the victim of a crime over and over again.



- You are under 18.



- You have a disability.

Writing a victim personal statement



Before going to court, the police will ask you if you would like to write a **victim personal statement**.



A **victim personal statement** is a document that explains how the crime has affected you.



If it is proven that the defendant committed the crime, we will share your victim personal statement in court.



You can read out your victim personal statement yourself, or you can ask us to do it for you.



If you would like to read it out yourself, you can do this with the same Special Measures you had when giving evidence.

Asking for a review of our decision



Sometimes, we decide not to take a case to court.



If you are unhappy with this decision, you can ask us to look at the case again.

This is called asking for a **Victim's Right to Review**.



You do not need to give us a reason why you are asking for the review.



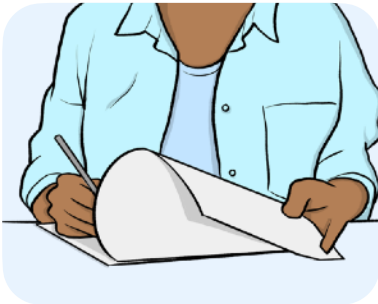
You should ask for a review within **10 working days** of finding out our decision.



Working days are Monday to Friday. Saturday and Sunday are not working days.



To ask for a review, please contact us.
You can find out how to contact us at the end of this booklet.



Someone new will look at your case again and write to you explaining what they have decided.



If it will help, we can speak to you in person or over the phone.



If you are still not happy, you can ask for another review.

This will be done by a different part of our organisation.

Tell us what you think of our services



If you are happy with our services, please tell us, so we can learn from that.



If you are unhappy, you can make a **complaint**.



A **complaint** is when you tell us you are unhappy with our services or any decisions we have made.



You should make a complaint within 6 months of the issue happening.



To tell us what you think, please contact us.

You can find out how to contact us at the end of this booklet.

Find out more



You can find more information about any of the things mentioned in this booklet in our victims' guides:

www.cps.gov.uk/information-and-support-victims-witnesses/easy-read

You can contact us by:



- Going to our website:
www.contact.cps.gov.uk/



- Sending a letter to:
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9EA



You can find the contact details of your local CPS here:

www.cps.gov.uk/about-cps/cps-areas-cps-direct-cps-central-casework-divisions-and-cps-proceeds-crime

More support



To find more support you can go to this website:

www.victimandwitnessinformation.org.uk/



You can also get support with your mental health from the NHS.



To find NHS support you can go to this website:

www.nhs.uk/mental-health/talking-therapies-medicine-treatments/talking-therapies-and-counselling/counselling/

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