

# VICTIM/WITNESS SERVICES

## Case Status

Current information on court cases may be obtained from the Victim/Witness Assistance Center. The dates of specific court hearings, along with final disposition information, is made readily available to victims, their families, and witnesses.

## Court Support

Victim/Witness personnel will accompany victims, witnesses, and family members to court hearings and remain there for support during the court proceedings, when needed. Transportation can also be provided, when necessary.

## Credit Intervention

As a victim, your injuries or court appearances may affect your earnings. Victim/Witness staff can intervene with creditors to explain your situation and encourage them to work with you.

## Crime Prevention

The Victim/Witness Assistance Center works closely with law enforcement agencies throughout the county. Each department has a Crime Prevention Program available to citizens in its jurisdiction. For further information on "Neighborhood Watch," and other areas of crime prevention, please contact your local law enforcement agency.

## Criminal Justice System Information

Victim/Witness personnel are available to explain your rights as a victim or witness, and provide information about the criminal justice system. Sometimes the criminal justice system can be a confusing, frustrating, and intimidating experience. Our office is here to assist you through the process.

## Crisis and Emergency Services

The San Luis Obispo County Victim/Witness Assistance Center offers emergency services designed to assist victims, witnesses, and family members to provide crisis counseling, emergency services such as food, shelter, transportation and referrals for victims of crime.

## Employer Intervention

Our staff can intercede with your employer and explain why you must miss work for court and other related reasons. We can also help your employer understand the emotional stress you may be experiencing as a crime victim. In these ways, misunderstandings can be reduced between you and your employer.

## Property Return

In some criminal cases, personal property is held by law enforcement or by the court as evidence. Assistance can be provided in securing the release and return of the property to you.

## Referral Counseling

Victim/Witness personnel are familiar with local, state, and national resources which may be of benefit to you. We can assist you by providing the information necessary to obtain the specific help you need.

## Restitution Assistance

If you have suffered a financial or property loss as a direct result of a crime, Victim/Witness can assist you in attempting to recover your loss by having you complete a restitution request form.

Additionally, we can put you in contact with the District Attorney's Small Claims Advisor who may help you recover your loss.

## Support for Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Specialized assistance is available to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Victim/Witness advocates work closely with the San Luis Obispo Women's Shelter Program and RISE, a sexual assault and intimate partner violence program, to ensure the safety of victims through emergency shelter and to provide counseling support and other helpful services. Additionally, advocates guide and assist victims through the criminal justice system.

## Support for Underserved Victims

Specialized staff are available to provide information, support and other assistance to victims who are seniors, dependent adults, or victims with disabilities. Victim Coordinators work with Adult Protection Services, the Ombudsman, and other local agencies and community resources to help victims and families cope with the effects of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

## Victim Compensation Claims

Victims of crime or their families may be eligible for reimbursement by the State for out-of-pocket expenses. Coverage may include loss of wages, medical and funeral expenses, and mental health counseling.

Victim/Witness staff are available to review the merits of a possible claim and, if appropriate, assist with preparing and submitting the claim to the State on your behalf.

## Witness Coordination and Assistance

Victim/Witness staff are available to help you coordinate your scheduled appearances, let you know just what to expect in the judicial process, and in some cases, go with you to court to provide support during proceedings.

## Witness Waiting Room

A witness waiting area is available in Room 384 of the Courthouse Annex. A children's waiting room is available for ages 3 to 5 years by calling (805) 594-1752.

**The Victim/Witness Assistance Center  
Office of the District Attorney  
San Luis Obispo County  
1035 Palm St., Room 384  
San Luis Obispo, California 93408  
Toll-Free (866) 781-5821  
(805) 781-5821  
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Internet: [www.slocounty.ca.gov](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov)**

## San Luis Obispo County Victim/Witness Assistance Center



*Help for Victims and  
Witnesses of Crime*

**Dan Dow**  
District Attorney  
San Luis Obispo County