

West Palm Beach Police Department

Victim / Witness Rights Brochure

YOUR RIGHTS AS A VICTIM OR WITNESS;

We realize that for many persons, being a victim or Witness to a crime is their first experience with the Criminal and juvenile justice systems.....

As a victim or witness, you have certain rights within the system. This brochure is being provided to you to assist you with questions you may have regarding those rights. For further information regarding these rights please contact the State Attorney's Office and/or the appropriate Law Enforcement Agency handling your case.

Officer _____

Case Number _____

West Palm Beach Police Department
600 Banyan Boulevard
West Palm Beach, FL 33401
(561) 822-1900

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESS

The stages of the criminal justice system are as follows:

CRIME COMMITTED- After a crime is reported to law enforcement an investigation will be conducted. If law enforcement is able to collect enough evidence, they may make an arrest.

ARREST-The suspect(s) are taken to jail, fingerprinted, and photographed. Some are immediately released or have to post a bond to ensure they will show up in court.

(Or)

INTAKE- A Victim reports a crime to the local State Attorney's Office. If probable cause is found, the State Attorney's Office may choose to file charges and summon the suspect into court.

FIRST APPEARANCE - Occurs within 24 hours of an arrest. Each suspect kept in jail must appear before a Judge who establishes whether charges are reasonable. The Judge will also consider whether a bond should be set and if so how much. The Judge will also consider conditions of release and appoint a defense attorney if the suspect cannot afford one.

FILING OF FORMAL CHARGES - The State Attorney's Office may file formal charges after reviewing law enforcement arrest reports, and within 21 days in certain circumstances.

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

PLEA- Defendant pleads guilty or no contest without a trial.

TRIAL PREPARATIONS - The prosecutor and defense attorney interview witnesses and exchange evidence in preparation for trial.

TRIAL - The prosecutor presents evidence to either the judge or a jury about the case. The defendant may be found guilty or not guilty. The process ends if the defendant is found not guilty.

SENTENCING- If the defendant is found guilty; the Judge reviews sentencing guidelines, plea agreements, etc., and determines what type of sentence the defendant should receive.

JUVENILE JUSTICE PROCESS

CRIME COMMITTED- After a crime is reported to law enforcement an investigation will be conducted. If law enforcement is able to collect enough evidence, they may make an arrest.

ARREST-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 services program (JASP), or a treatment plan (Walker plan). 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 State Attorney's Office. The charge may be filed in either juvenile court or adult court, depending upon the crime and 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, conducted in front of a judge. The judge will decide whether the juvenile committed the charged offense(s).

DISPOSTIONAL HEARING (SENTENCING)- When a juvenile is found to have committed a delinquent act the court will hold a dispositional hearing to determine which sanctions to impose on the juvenile. The sanctions could range from community-based sanctions like probation and community services up to residential commitment.

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

You may contact your State Attorney or law enforcement agency for more information regarding the stages of the criminal and juvenile justice process.

YOUR RIGHTS IN THE CRIMINAL & JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEMS

If you are a victim of a crime or a witness because you have seen, heard, or know something about a crime that has been committed, you are important to the case. Your testimony may be necessary to establish the facts. Understandably, you might feel anxious about testifying in court, however, without your testimony the defendant might go unpunished.

VICTIM

A person against whom a crime was committed. Some victims suffer physical injury or property damage, and some have psychological injury or both. Victims have certain rights in Florida. Others who can claim these rights are the victim's parent or guardian if the victim is a minor, the lawful representative of the victim or of the victim's parent or guardian if the victim is a minor, and the next of kin of is a homicide victim.

Either you or the State Attorney's Office, with your consent, have standing to assert any legal rights of a crime victim as provided by law or The Florida Constitution.

As a victim of a crime, you have the following rights:

- The right to receive information on available crisis intervention services and local community services to include counseling, shelter, legal assistance, or other types of help, depending on the particular circumstances. Telephone numbers of these services are provided at the end of this brochure.
- The right to receive information regarding the role of the victim in the criminal or juvenile process, including what the victim may expect from the system as well as what the system may expect from the victim.
- The right to receive information regarding the stages of the criminal or juvenile justice process and the manner in which information about such stages may be obtained. Note: You cannot be notified if we cannot locate you. It is your responsibility to keep the State Attorney's Office informed of any changes in your address or telephone number.
- The right for victims (or their relatives where the victim is deceased) to receive information about the Victims Compensation Program. You may be eligible for financial compensation from the State of Florida. Information regarding eligibility may be obtained from the State Attorney's Office, local Witness Coordination Office (where available), law enforcement agency or from the Bureau of Crimes Compensation, Office of the Attorney General (1-800-226-6667).
- The right to be informed, present, and heard when relevant, at all crucial stages of a criminal or juvenile proceeding, to the extent the right does not interfere with the constitutional rights of the accused.

- The right, if you are incarcerated, to be informed and submit written statements at all crucial stages of the criminal and juvenile proceedings.
- The right to a prompt and timely disposition of the case as long as it does not interfere with the *constitutional rights of the accused*.
- The right to be notified of the arrest and release of the offender, including release to community control and/or work release. When an arrest is made in a reported case, the victim, witnesses, relatives of minor victims and witnesses and relatives of homicide victims, where those persons have provided current addresses and telephone numbers to the West Palm Beach Police Department shall be notified.
- The right to receive information on the steps available to law enforcement and the State Attorney's Office to protect you from intimidation and/or harassment. It is a third degree felony to knowingly use intimidation or physical force, or threaten another person, or attempt to do so, or engage in misleading conduct toward another person, or offer pecuniary benefit or gain to another person. If you are being threatened or intimidated, please contact the West Palm Beach Police Department or any law enforcement officer.
- The right of the victim of domestic violence to be informed of the address confidentiality program administered through the Attorney General's Office. You may contact the Attorney General's Office at 1-800-266-6667. The State Attorney's Office may assist with this paper work if necessary.
- The right of each victim or witness who has been scheduled to attend a criminal or juvenile justice proceeding to be notified as soon as possible by the agency or person scheduling his/her appearance of any change in scheduling which will affect the victim's appearance.
- The right of the victim to request the presence of a victim advocate during the forensic medical examination. An advocate from a certified rape crisis center shall be permitted to attend any forensic medical examination.
- No law enforcement officer, prosecuting attorney or government official shall ask or require a victim of a sexual offense to submit to a polygraph examination or other truth-telling device as a condition of the investigation.
- The right to receive advance notification of judicial and post judicial proceedings relating to the case, including all proceedings or hearings relating to:
 - The arrest of the accused.
 - The release of the accused pending judicial proceedings, any modification of release condition to include release to community control or work release.
 - Proceedings in the prosecution or petition for delinquency of the accused, including the filing of the accusatory instrument, the arraignment, disposition of the accusatory instrument, trial or adjudicatory hearing, sentencing or disposition hearing, appellate review, subsequent modification of sentence, collateral attack of a judgment, and when a term of imprisonment, detention, or involuntary commitment is imposed, the release of the defendant or juvenile offender from such imprisonment, detention or juvenile offender from such imprisonment, detention or commitment by expiration of sentence or parole and any meeting held to consider such release.
 - The right to not be excluded from any portion of any hearing, trial or proceeding pertaining to the offense based solely upon the fact that such person is subpoenaed to testify, unless the court determines otherwise.

In addition to the provisions of s. 921.143, F.S., the rights of the victim of a felony involving physical or emotional injury or trauma, or in a case in which the victim is a minor child or in a homicide, the guardian or family of the victim shall be consulted by the State Attorney in order to obtain the views of the victim or family about the disposition of any criminal or juvenile case brought about as a result of such crime, including their views about:

- The release of the accused pending judicial proceedings.
 - Plea Agreements.
 - Participation in pretrial diversion programs.
 - Sentencing of the accused.
 - The right to review certain portions of a pre-sentence investigation report for adult and youthful offenders prior to the sentencing of the accused.
- The right to a prompt return of property unless there is a compelling law enforcement need to retain it.
 - The right to request that the State Attorney or law enforcement agency help you explain to employers and creditors that you may face additional burdens by taking time off from work to assist law enforcement and you may undergo serious financial strain either because of the crime or by cooperating with authorities.
 - Law Enforcement agencies and the State Attorney shall inform you of your right to request and receive restitution and of your rights of enforcement in the event an offender does not pay. The State Attorney shall seek your assistance in the documentation of your losses for the purpose of requesting and receiving 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, or The Florida Bar on enforcing the civil lien or judgment.
 - The State Attorney shall inform you if and when restitution is ordered.
 - The right to submit an oral or written impact statement to the court, pursuant to s. 921.143 F.S., prior to sentencing of the offender. The State Attorney or any assistant state attorney shall advise all victims or, when appropriate, the victim's parent, guardian, next of kin, or lawful representative that statements, whether oral or written, shall relate to the facts of the case and the extent of any harm, including social, psychological, or physical harm, financial losses, loss of earnings directly or indirectly resulting from the crime for which the defendant is being sentenced, and any matter relevant to an appropriate disposition and sentence.
 - The right to receive reasonable consideration and assistance from employees of the West Palm Beach Police Department. When requested, you will be assisted in locating accessible transportation and parking, and shall be directed to separate pretrial waiting areas when such facilities are available. When requested, you shall receive assistance in attempting to locate translators when practicable.
 - The right of the victim who is not incarcerated to not be required to attend discovery depositions in any correctional facility.
 - The right to be notified when the offender escapes from custody. The State Attorney shall make every effort to advise the victim, material witness, parents or legal guardian of a minor who is a victim or witness, or immediate relative of a homicide victim of the escape of a criminal defendant. The State

Attorney shall also notify the Sheriff of the county where the criminal charge or petition for delinquency arose. The Sheriff shall offer assistance upon request.

- The right of the victim to request that a victim advocate be permitted to attend and be present during any deposition. The victim advocate may be designated by State Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office, or Municipal Police Department, or one representative from a not-for-profit victim services organization, including, but not limited to, rape crisis centers, domestic violence advocacy groups, and alcohol abuse or substance abuse groups.
- The right of the victim of a sexual offense to have the courtroom cleared, with certain exceptions during his or her testimony, regardless of the victim's age or mental capacity.
- 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. If the victim of an offense committed by a juvenile is a minor, and the victim or any sibling of the victim attends or is eligible to attend the same school as that of the offender, the Department of Juvenile Justice or the Department of Corrections shall notify the victim's parent or legal guardian of the right to attend the sentencing or disposition of the offender and request that the offender be required to attend a different school.
- The statutory obligation of the victim, or next of kin of a homicide victim, that any information gained pursuant to FS Chapter 960, regarding any case handled in juvenile court, must not be revealed to any outside party, except as reasonably necessary in pursuit of legal remedies.
- The right to know in certain cases and at the earliest possible opportunity, if the person charged with an offense has tested positive for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and the right of a victim to request Hepatitis testing in certain cases involving the transmission of body fluids from one person to another. In such cases, upon request of the victim or the victim's legal guardian, or the parent or legal guardian of the victim if the victim is a minor, the court shall order such person to undergo HIV testing. In some cases, you can be notified of the results of the test within two weeks of the court's receipt of the results.
- 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.

REFERRAL NUMBERS

Abuse Registry
(Children and Elderly)
1-800-962-2873

American Pregnancy Association
1-800-672-2296

Alcoholics Anonymous
(561)655-5700

Center for Family Services
(561)616-1222

**Center for Information &
Crisis Services**
(561)383-1112

Crimes Compensation
(Attorney General)
1-800-226-6667

Crisis Pregnancy Center
(561)672-2296

Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Source
1-800-342-8060

Narcotics Anonymous
(561)848-6262

Palm Beach County State Attorney
(561)355-7100

Rape Crisis/ Victim Services
561)833-7273 (561) 355-2418 x3

**Family Source of Florida Parent
Help Line/ Support Group**
1-800-352-5683

West Palm Beach Police Department
(561)822-1900

Drug Abuse Foundation
(561) 732-0800

Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-500-1119

Center for Information and Crisis Services
211

Victim's Bill of Rights
"Marsy's Rights"
Florida Constitution, Article 1, Section 16

The Florida Constitution defines a victim as a person who suffers direct or threatened physical, psychological, or financial harm because of the commission or attempted commission of a crime. The term victim includes the victim's lawful representative, the parent or guardian of a minor, or the next of kin of a homicide victim. Every victim is entitled to these rights, beginning at the time of his or her victimization.

1. Fairness and Respect To be treated with fairness and respect for his or her privacy and dignity, and to be free from intimidation, harassment, and abuse, throughout the criminal or juvenile justice process.

2. Protection from the Defendant To be reasonably protected from the defendant and persons acting on behalf of the defendant.

3. Victim Safety Consideration in Setting Bail and Release Conditions To have the safety of the victim and the victim's family considered in fixing the amount of bail and release conditions for the defendant.

4. The Prevention of the Disclosure of Confidential Information To prevent the disclosure of confidential information or records which could be used to locate or harass the victim or the victim's family, or which could disclose confidential or privileged information of the victim

5. Conference with the Prosecution and Notice of Pretrial Disposition To reasonable notice of and to reasonably confer with the prosecuting agency, upon request, regarding, the arrest of the defendant if known by the prosecutor, the charges filed, the determination whether to extradite the defendant, and, upon request, to be notified of and informed before any pretrial disposition of the case.

6. Notice of and Presence at Public Proceedings To reasonable notice of all public proceedings, including delinquency proceedings, upon request, at which the defendant and the prosecutor are entitled to be present and of all parole or other post-conviction release proceedings, and to be present at all such proceedings.

7. Appearance at Court Proceedings and Expression of Views To be heard, upon request, at any proceeding, including any delinquency proceeding, involving a post-arrest release decision, plea, sentencing, post-conviction release decision, or any proceeding in which a right of the victim is at issue.

8. Speedy Trial and Prompt Conclusion of the Case To a speedy trial and a prompt and final conclusion of the case and any related post-judgment proceedings.

9. Provision of Information to the Probation Department To provide information to a probation department official conducting a pre-sentence investigation concerning the impact of the offense on the victim and the victim's family and any sentencing recommendations before the sentencing of the defendant.

10. Receipt of Pre-Sentence Report To receive, upon request, the pre-sentence report when available to the defendant, except for those portions made confidential by law.

11. Information About Conviction, Sentence, Incarceration, Release, and Escape To be informed, upon request, of the conviction, sentence, place and time of incarceration, or other disposition of the defendant, the scheduled release date of the defendant, and the release of or the escape by the defendant from custody.

12. Restitution The right to full and timely restitution in every case and from each convicted offender for all losses suffered, both directly and indirectly, by the victim as a result of the criminal conduct.

13. The Prompt Return of Property To the prompt return of property when no longer needed as evidence.

14. Notice of Parole Procedures and Release on Parole To be informed of all parole procedures, to participate in the parole process, to provide information to the parole authority to be considered before the parole of the offender, and to be notified, upon request, of the parole or other release of the offender.

15. Clemency and Expungement The right to be informed of clemency and expungement procedures, 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 notified of such decision in advance of any release of the offender.

16. Information About These Rights To be informed of the rights. A victim, the retained attorney of a victim, a lawful representative of the victim, or the prosecuting attorney upon request of the victim, may enforce the above rights in any trial or appellate court with jurisdiction over the case as a matter of right. The court shall act promptly on such a request.

West Palm Beach Police Department

Marsy's Law (effective January 8, 2019), FL Constitution, Article 1, §16(b) Victim's Right to Confidentiality Form

West Palm Beach Police Department Case Number: _____

Florida Constitution, Article 1, Section 16(b)(5): Every victim is entitled to the following right, beginning at the time of his or her victimization: "The right to prevent disclosure of information or records that could be used to locate or harass the victim or the victim's family, or which could disclose confidential or privileged information of the victim."

I, _____, as the victim, hereby **(circle one: invoke / do not invoke)** my right to prevent disclosure of information or records that could be used to locate or harass the victim or the victim's family, or which could disclose confidential or privileged information of the victim.

I _____ as the victim received a copy of the Victim/Witness Rights Brochure Legal Rights and Remedies available from Name of Officer and ID _____
Victim's signature _____

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE ABOVE PARAGRAPH. I HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF MY RIGHT TO NOT HAVE MY PERSONAL INFORMATION BECOME A MATTER OF PUBLIC RECORD.

Victim Signature: _____ Date _____
(If the victim is under age 18, a parent or guardian's signature should be obtained)

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Witness (print/signature): _____

Name of Officer and I.D. # _____