



YOUR VOICE IN COURT

Anything you include must be truthful, accurate and relevant to the crime for which the offender has been found guilty.

Who gets to see the Victim Impact Statement?

The prosecutor, the offender and the offender's lawyer must be given a copy of the VIS before it is presented to the Judge. You can be cross-examined (asked questions in court) on the contents by the offender's lawyer.

Who can help to prepare the Victim Impact Statement?

Usually victims prepare their own statements. Help is available from the Witness Assistance Service or Police. You can also have assistance from a counsellor, psychologist or psychiatrist.

For more information about completing a Victim Impact Statement or appearing in court visit: dpp.nt.gov.au or free call 1800 659 449

Interpreter Services

Interpreter services help people who have difficulty with English.

For help with an Aboriginal language phone (08) 8935 7500

For help with other languages phone (08) 8999 7566

A guide to making a Victim Impact Statement



DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS
NORTHERN TERRITORY



What is a Victim Impact Statement?

A Victim Impact Statement (VIS) explains how a crime has harmed the victim. It is usually a written statement signed by the victim and presented to the Judge in court before the offender is sentenced. (**Sentencing Act, Subdivision 2, victim impact statements and victim reports**)

Why make a Victim Impact Statement?

A VIS gives you the opportunity to tell the court how a crime has, or is still affecting you. The court can take this information into account when sentencing the offender.

Do I have to make a Victim Impact Statement?

The court wants to know how you have been affected by the offence. While it is voluntary, a VIS is your opportunity to tell the Judge and the offender in your own words how you have been affected.

If you don't provide a VIS, the prosecutor must provide a report to the court about the effect of the crime on you. This is called a Victim Report.

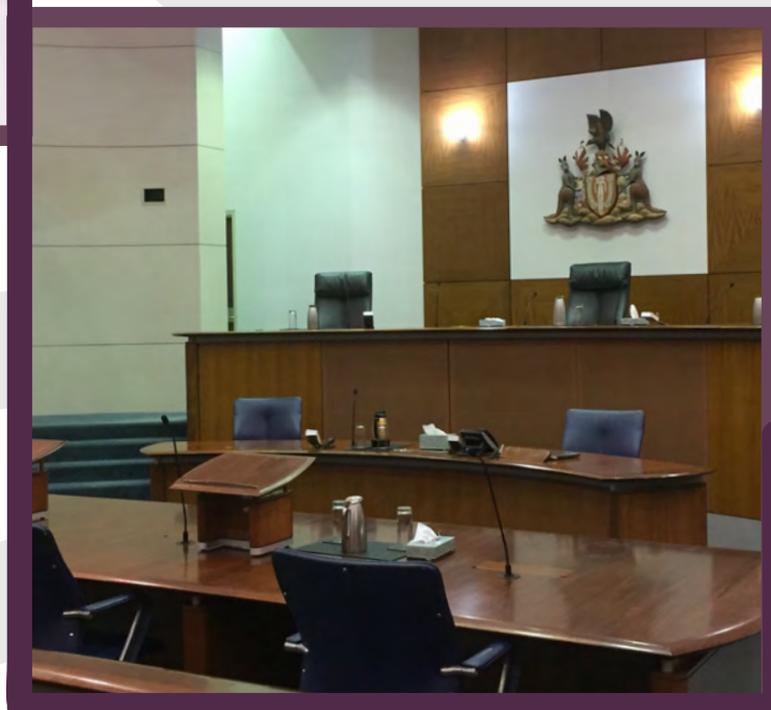
Who can make a Victim Impact Statement?

Anyone who is a victim of a crime or has been directly affected by a crime can make a statement.

Does the Victim Impact Statement have to be in writing?

The VIS is usually written or typed and you can add a letter, poem, drawing, photo or other attachment if it relates to how the crime has affected you.

You can provide an oral report. This means asking the Judge for permission to say in court how you have been affected by the crime. If the statement is in writing you will need to sign the document before it is given to the Judge.



Who presents the Victim Impact Statement in court?

The statement is usually presented to the Judge in court by the prosecutor. You may ask the Judge for permission to tell the court in your own words what effect the crime had on you.

When is the Victim Impact Statement prepared?

The statement can be prepared any time before the court sentencing date. You may also update your VIS at any time before the court sentences the offender.

What information should I include?

You should include details of any physical or mental harm and other loss or damage you suffered as result of the crime.

This may include:

- injuries such as broken bones, nerve damage
- how injuries have affected your daily life
- any long-term impacts of injuries on your life
- any medical treatment required, including future or ongoing medical treatment
- how the crime has affected any relationships with your partner, family, friends or co-workers
- any emotions or feelings related to the crime (such as hurt, anger, fear, frustration)
- effects on your lifestyle and activities (such as trouble sleeping, eating, working)
- any treatment such as counselling for depression, anxiety, stress
- loss of earnings
- medical treatment expenses needed because of the crime
- what order you would like the Judge to make in sentencing the offender



What information should I not include?

- Details of the offence, you do not need to explain how the crime happened. The Judge in court will already know that.
- Details of other offences
- Any inaccurate or untruthful statements
- An opinion of the personality or character of the offender
- Inappropriate or offensive language